



URBAN  
BARBARIAN

# DAN PANOSIAN

AND MIKE  
MANLEY  
TALK SHOP &

**DRAW!**

INTERVIEW WITH  
BILLY DOGMA'S  
WRITER/ARTIST

DEAN  
HASPIEL

BY DANNY  
FINGEROTH

ARTIST/INKER

BOB  
McLEOD

CRITIQUES A  
NEWCOMER'S  
WORK

Plus:  
MIKE MANLEY &  
BRET BLEVINS'

COMIC ART BOOTCAMP

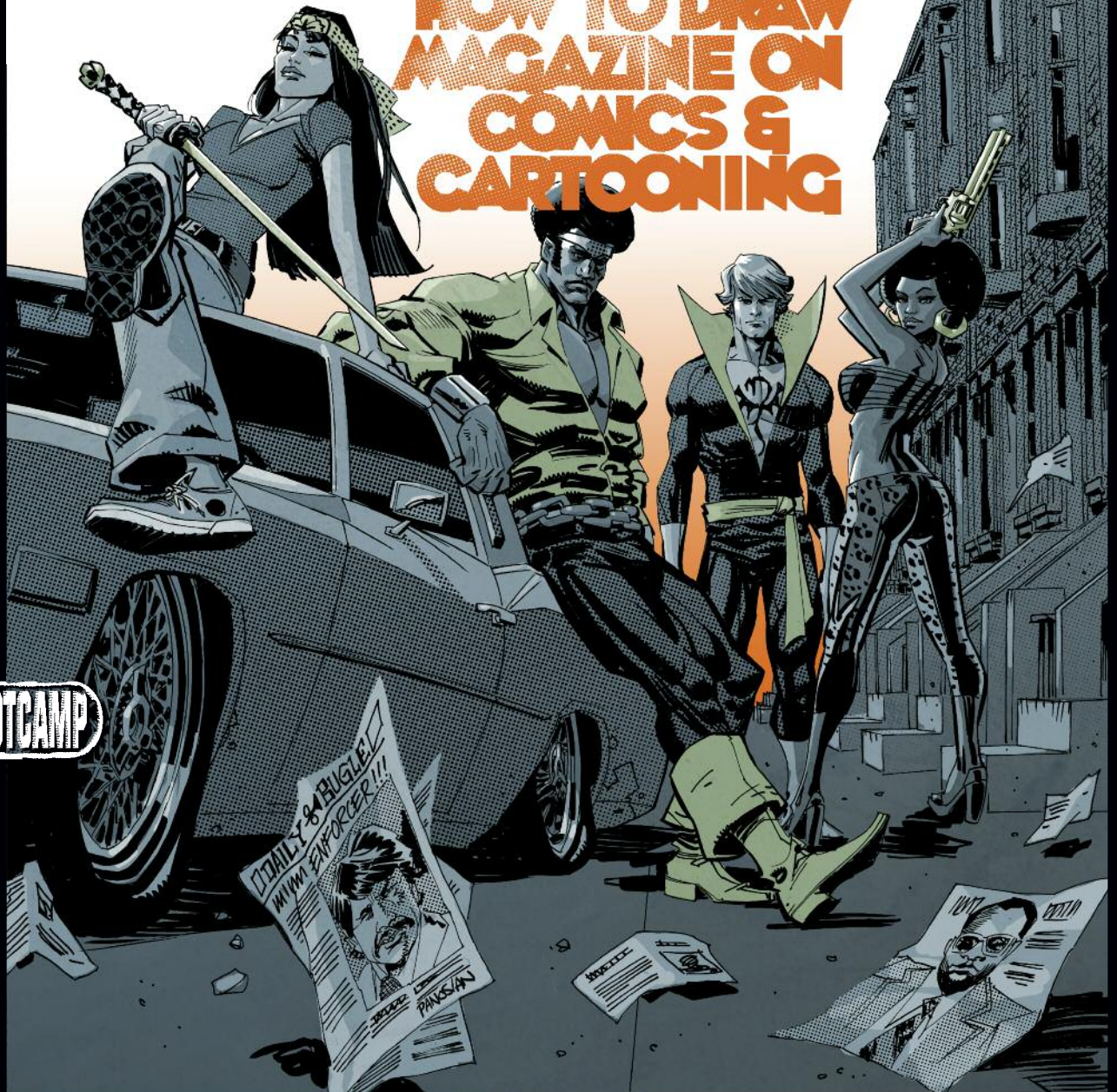


#21  
Fall 2011

\$7.95  
In The US

# DRAW!

THE PROFESSIONAL  
"HOW TO DRAW"  
MAGAZINE ON  
COMICS &  
CARTOONING





# DRAW!

WWW.DRAWMAGAZINE.COM

THE PROFESSIONAL  
"HOW-TO" MAGAZINE ON  
COMICS & CARTOONING

FALL 2011  
VOL. 1, NO. 21

Editor-in-Chief • Michael Manley  
Designer • Eric Nolen-Weathington  
Publisher • John Morrow  
Logo Design • John Costanza  
Proofreader • Eric Nolen-Weathington  
Front Cover Illustration • Dan  
Panosian

DRAW! Fall 2011, Vol. 1, No. 21 was produced by Action Planet, Inc. and published by TwoMorrows Publishing. Michael Manley, Editor, John Morrow, Publisher. Editorial Address is P.O. Box 2129, Upper Darby, PA 19082. Subscription Address: TwoMorrows Publishing, 10407 Bedfordtown Dr., Raleigh, NC 27614.

DRAW! and its logo are trademarks of Action Planet, Inc. All contributions herein are copyright 2011 by their respective contributors.

Action Planet, Inc. and TwoMorrows Publishing accept no responsibility for unsolicited submissions. All artwork herein is copyright the year of production, its creator (if work-for-hire, the entity which contracted said artwork); the characters featured in said artwork are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners; and said artwork or other trademarked material is printed in these pages with the consent of the copyright holder and/or for journalistic, educational and historical purposes with no infringement intended or implied.

This entire issue is © 2011 Action Planet Inc. and TwoMorrows Publishing and may not be reprinted or retransmitted without written permission of the copyright holders. ISSN 1932-6882. Printed in Canada. **FIRST PRINTING.**

## CONTENTS

3

### DAN PANOSIAN

Mike Manley interviews the  
Urban Barbarian .....



42

### ROUGH CRITIQUE

Bob McLeod gives practical advice  
and tips on how to improve your work .....



48

### DEAN HASPIEL

Danny Fingeroth interviews  
Brooklyn's Renaissance Man .....



68

### THE CRUSTY CRITIC

Jamar Nicholas reviews the tools of the trade.  
This month: Fanboy's comic book art boards.



70

### COMIC ART BOOTCAMP

"Designing Hair"  
by Bret Blevins and Mike Manley .....



Interview conducted by Mike Manley  
and transcribed by Steven Tice

**DRAW:** Why don't you tell me what you're working on right now? I know you've started moving over from being mainly an inker the last couple of years to doing everything, penciling and inking your own work, mostly for Marvel, right?

**DAN PANOSIAN:** Well, actually, these days, for DC and now Dark Horse, so... Yeah, I was doing tons and tons of advertising work. I got out of comics for about ten years or so. I thought I was learning how to draw, because I did inking, and I was learning a lot, and I was working with a lot of really talented pencilers, and thought I was absorbing more than I really was. But then I started doing advertising. It was kind of a wake-up call doing the storyboarding, and design work, and commercial jobs.

**DRAW:** In what regard? In the fact that you feel like your drawing—?

**DP:** The whole blank page thing, starting with a blank page. [laughter]

**DRAW:** So you didn't have something already existing there.

**DP:** Yeah, exactly. It was a tough one. I would be working with pencilers at Marvel and DC, and I'd go, "Oh, my God, I can draw better than this person, and I gotta fix them in my inks." And what you don't realize is that they're starting with a blank page, and it's always easy to critique something that's already drawn. You could probably critique Michelangelo, I guess.

**DRAW:** Yeah, you can come in and be a plastic surgeon with the pen or the brush and go, "No, that nose is just a little bit too big."

**DP:** Yeah, "What are they thinking? I need to fix that. I'll show 'em." I'm sure there are lot of talented artists that I've inked that would like to break my fingers today.

**DRAW:** I remember meeting you in Howard Mackie's office because we were working on *Quasar*.

**DP:** Yeah, that's one of my favorite stories I tell people. How I landed that job, and working with you on that project.

**DRAW:** Aw, Dan, you shouldn't. [laughs]





(above and below) Cap and Red Skull sketch cards for the *Captain America: The First Avenger* trading card series.  
(next page) Page 7 of Marvel's *Chaos War: God Squad* (Feb., 2011) one-shot, penciled and inked by Dan.

ALL CHARACTERS™ AND © MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC.

**DP:** Well, no, that was, like, my first actual Marvel book, you know?

**DRAW:** That's funny, because that was *my* first Marvel book.

**DP:** Really? Your first regular series.

**DRAW:** Yeah, as a regular series. I had jumped around a lot, and then I think Paul Ryan had done the first several issues, and then he left, and they were looking for somebody. I guess Gruenwald and Mackie liked my work, so they hired me. That was also a time when there were a lot of changes and people jumping ships and everything.

**DP:** Oh, yeah, that was just the very beginning of Marvel and DC and all the comic book companies really making those big fortunes.

**DRAW:** Right, right. I remember being in the office one day and the rumor was, "So-and-so just got enough money in a royalty check to go buy a house!"

**DP:** Yeah, those were the days. We popped in at the perfect time.

**DRAW:** Right. So I remember meeting you in Howard's office. Had you worked in advertising or anything before that, or were you just coming straight—

**DP:** When I was 14 years old, I got that *Marvel Comics Try-Out* oversized book.

**DRAW:** Right, with the John Romita, Jr., stuff.

**DP:** I sent Marvel an inking sample—obviously the inking stuff was better because I'm inking over John Romita, Jr. I sent the samples in, and at the time, Len Kaminski was the submissions editor. He got them, and I didn't include my age on there, and he sent me back all these letters, "Great job. You need a little bit more work, but this is what you can expect from Marvel in the future. Here's our health plan, here's how much money you'll make." [Mike laughs] I'm 14 years old.



**DRAW:** "Wow! I'm 14 years old and I have a health plan!" [laughter]

**DP:** Yeah, right, "Wow, I'll be making more money than my dad." So, at 14, I had it in my mind, "Oh, I'll be working for Marvel," so my grades ended up slipping. I ended up goofing off a lot in class. And I started getting published by smaller companies like Blackthorne when I was a junior in high school, and Malibu—I think it was Malibu—with Evan Dorkin on

*Wild Knights* and things like that, thanks to Mike Turner, who passed away recently, but he got me the job there. But I bumped around, and when I was 21 I finally decided that, "It's now or never, if I'm ever going to make this happen with Marvel Comics, I have to move to New York." So I moved to New York, and everything changed.

**DRAW:** Where did you move from?

**DP:** I was living in Indialantic, a city in Florida. Which is right next to Cape Canaveral, where they shoot the space shuttle off.

**DRAW:** Oh, okay. So you bootstrapped yourself up to New York and you showed up in the offices?

**DP:** Well, I showed up at a convention. I had done this indie comic book for Joe Naftali. I had a little mail-order RPG art business, and he asked me to illustrate a comic book idea of his. Once it was published, he said, "Why don't you come up and sign at one of those Fred Greenberg shows?" So I went there, and I met Neal Adams and Walt Simonson that day. Neal decided to hire me—I don't know why—so I started working for Neal that week!

**DRAW:** He saw that eager glint in your eye. [laughs]

**DP:** I think so. I don't know if it was pity, if he was being a humanitarian. And then Walt Simonson saw the samples I had brought, and thought I was already working at Marvel. So he asked, "Which book are you on?" "I wish I was working on a Marvel book!" I said. So he called up Ralph Macchio and I got back-up stories to ink that same week.

**DRAW:** Oh, that's awesome.

**DP:** Yeah, I was inking *Captain America* and *Thor* back-ups. I was in heaven. So, basically, Len Kaminski was now Howard's assistant editor, and he had remembered me from when I was 14, because I sent him back a "thank you" drawing. He had it on his office wall near his desk. He had saved it for about seven years.

**DRAW:** Wow.

**DP:** And that's how I got that job inking you on *Quasar*.

**DRAW:** I guess that tells you, also, really, how different the business was back then. It was smaller, and editors lasted in their jobs more than six months, you know?

**DP:** Yeah, and they actually had a submissions editor who could one day be your actual comic book editor.

**DRAW:** So you did start out doing your own stuff, so inking sort of happened as—

**DP:** I thought, "Oh, I'll get my foot in the door, inking-wise, and then I'll start my tremendous penciling." I wanted to be John Byrne. I wanted to have that legacy where, "How many books has that guy drawn over the years?" I wanted to do that. [laughs] Now, at age 42, I'm thinking, "Wow, that's never going to happen."

**DRAW:** No, you'll just have to work until you're 82. Come on. [laughter]

**DP:** Yeah, exactly. And do two books a month. [laughs]

**DRAW:** Along the way, how did you go about training yourself?

**DP:** Oh, well, my dad helped in a lot of ways. He was a commercial artist and he loved comic books. I think the way I went about getting my father's attention was by attempting to do all the things he enjoyed. He was also a professional boxer when he was young; he loved boxing. And he loved and studied illustration and he loved comic books. So I thought if I could do those things well, he would approve of me.

**DRAW:** So did you become a professional cartoonist instead of a boxer?

**DP:** Well, I tried the boxing route. That's not an easy route... After too many shots I wouldn't be much of an artist!

**DRAW:** Kind of hard on the old head after a while.

**DP:** Yeah, after a while. Nobody realizes how much training goes into that, how many shots you're taking in practice and sparring. It's not just the matches where you get knocked around the ring. That's a tough life. But, I don't know, I wanted to do everything he did. He used to come home from work and he would draw one page, or just like, basically, one splash page of a Batman book. I was, like, five years old, and by the end of a month, I would have a whole Batman book that he had written and illustrated for



(above and next page) More pages from the *Chaos War: God Squad* one-shot.  
ALL CHARACTERS™ AND © MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC.



(above and next page) Inks and finished colors for a two-page spread for an as-yet-unpublished creator-owned story.

© JONATHAN DAVIS, DAN PANOSIAN & ANDY BOURNE.

me. It was kind of inspiring, and so I was always doodling as a kid, inspired by that. Always drawing. He never wanted me to be an artist, though. I don't know if you're going to agree, but it's a tough life. *[laughter]* It's a very tough life being a commercial artist, or any kind of artist. So when I started taking an interest in drawing, he didn't want to give me drawing lessons. He would only critique me. He would say, "This is wrong, and that's wrong." But he wouldn't sit down and give me art lessons or anything.

**DRAW:** Were you also studying on your own at that time?

**DP:** Yeah. Basically, the only lesson he gave me was how to draw the stick figure and then applying the geometric shapes on that stick figure, like a triangle for the torso, and rectangles for the legs and arms, a square for the head, or circle. That was the drawing lesson I got. After that, he was like, "I don't want you to get too interested in this."

**DRAW:** But too late, too late.

**DP:** Yeah, too late. Yeah, exactly.

**DRAW:** So how did you go about training yourself, since I take it you didn't go to art school, right?

**DP:** No, I didn't go to art school. I went to a little bit of community college, because I thought, still, in the back of my mind, I thought maybe I'd get a business degree to fall back on. I never finished that, by the way.

**DRAW:** Because you started working when you were 21 as a cartoonist.

**DP:** Yeah, until I was 21, I was doing construction, waiting tables, driving trucks, all sorts of jobs I didn't fit well doing. I was horrible at construction. I always felt bad for every single condominium I worked on. *[Mike laughs]* I was like, "People are going to move in here, and they're going to pay hard-earned money, and this place looks awful." The work I did was terrible. I was part of a big construction team, and, um, awful. Just awful.

**DRAW:** "Thanks, Dan Panosian, you really do great superheroes, but my shower sucks." *[laughter]*

**DP:** Yeah, it was horrible. *[laughs]* No, I kind of trained myself from that Marvel Comics how-to-draw book. Everything's in there, more or less. I'm an avid comic book collector, and I would read those "Marvel Bullpen Bulletins," everything I could manage to get my hands on to learn about the business. The fairy-tale business that you kind of hear about through the pages of what used to be the "Marvel Bullpen Bulletins," which—you thought Marvel was like, everybody playing practical jokes on each other and no-prizes being handed out everywhere.

**DRAW:** Did you also go to conventions and meet other professionals before you—?

**DP:** Yeah, I was lucky enough to meet John Beatty pretty early on. He lived at Daytona Beach at the time. There was a thing called Orlando Con that Bill Black put together, and I think even





Jerry Ordway was there, but I didn't know who Jerry was at the time. He was still doing work for Americomics, which was Bill Black's publishing company.

**DRAW:** Oh, okay.

**DP:** Coincidentally, I think Erik Larsen did some work for Americomics, and I think Erik may have inked my very first comic book page. Bill Black let me draw a few pages in one of his Americomics comic books. I was about 14 years old, 15. And I think Erik Larsen inked them. It was only two pages, and they weren't calling me to do any more. They were horrible pages, obviously.

**DRAW:** Guys breaking in today don't have the same type of opportunities, because the business is really different. You don't have as many small companies now, just because of the minimum orders you have to have from the distributor or whatever. But back then, you had a lot of guys who would get together and—there was a guy in Michigan who did Power Comics, and...

**DP:** Exactly.

**DRAW:** So you meet people, you start seeing the other side. You start doing work. You're finally up in New York, you're working with Neal Adams, and then you're working at Marvel.

**DP:** Yeah, and I also worked for DC, and that was with Joe Quesada, his first comic book for them. He worked for Valiant prior to that. But he started out penciling a TSR-licensed book called *Spelljammer*. I think I started on issue #1 with Mike Collins penciling. Mike left the book after a few issues and I

stayed on the book. Joe Quesada started penciling it, and he already showed a lot of promise. So I was working for Marvel and DC, primarily.

**DRAW:** You weren't really penciling then, though, you were mostly inking.

**DP:** No. I was inking, and then I'd beg for the occasional pin-up or short story which I would pencil and ink. Man, it was hard. I could always ink a lot of pages, because I had been doing it since I was so young, but a blank page, and the script, and you're not drawing the stuff you want to draw, you're drawing stuff that serves the story. So you may have never drawn an elephant before in your life; now you're drawing an elephant.

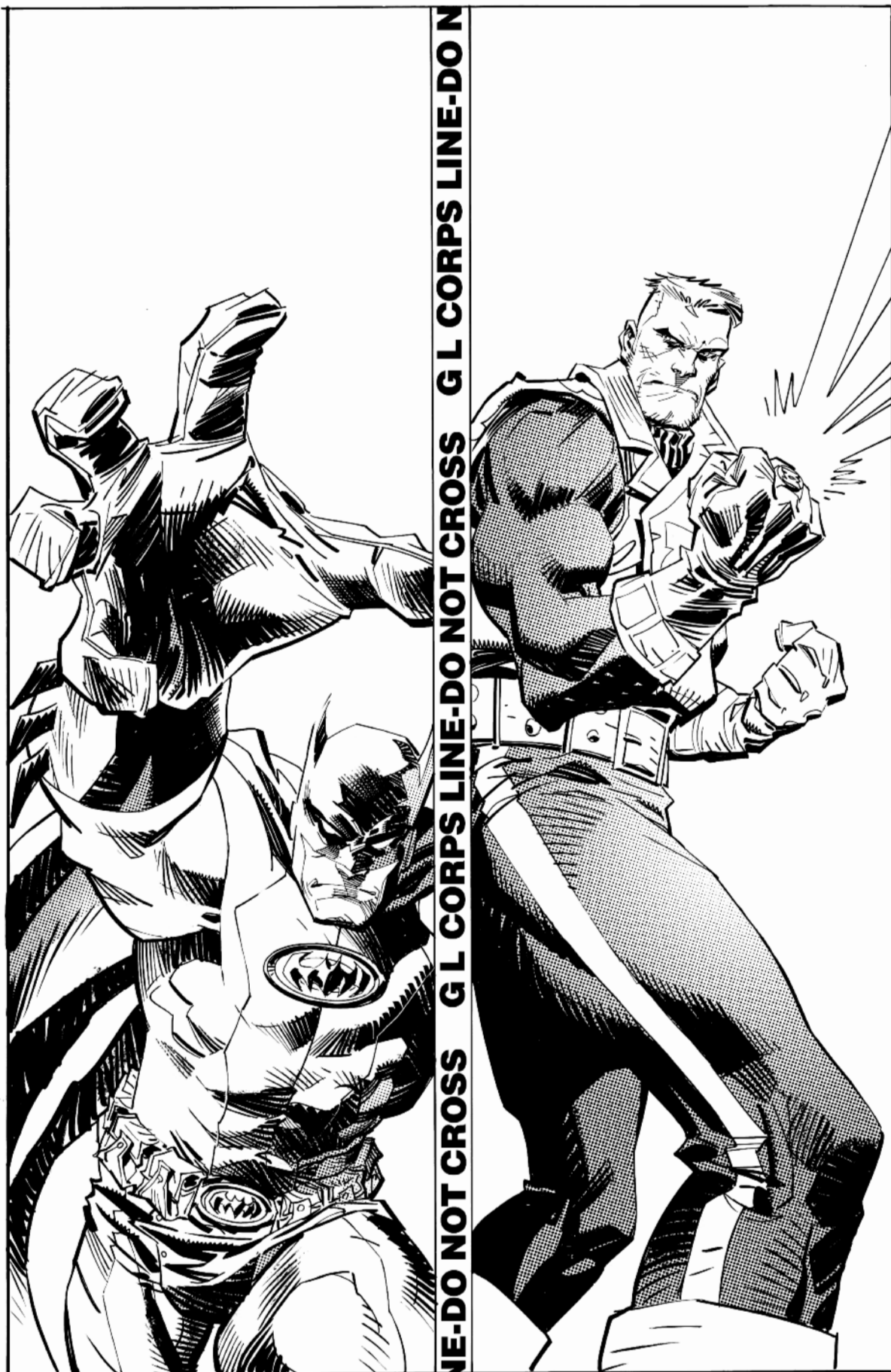
**DRAW:** Right. Again, I think that's one of the crucial barriers that we all go through, becoming professionals, going from drawing what you like, how you like it, when you like it, if you like it, to all of a sudden, "What? I have to draw four pages of a guy wearing a suit talking to somebody in an elevator?"

**DP:** Yeah. "And I've gotta make it work, and I have to—"

**DRAW:** Yeah. "I would never choose to ever draw that, but," yeah.

**DP:** Yeah, and a good artist can take that and make it the most interesting man talking in the world. That's the challenge.

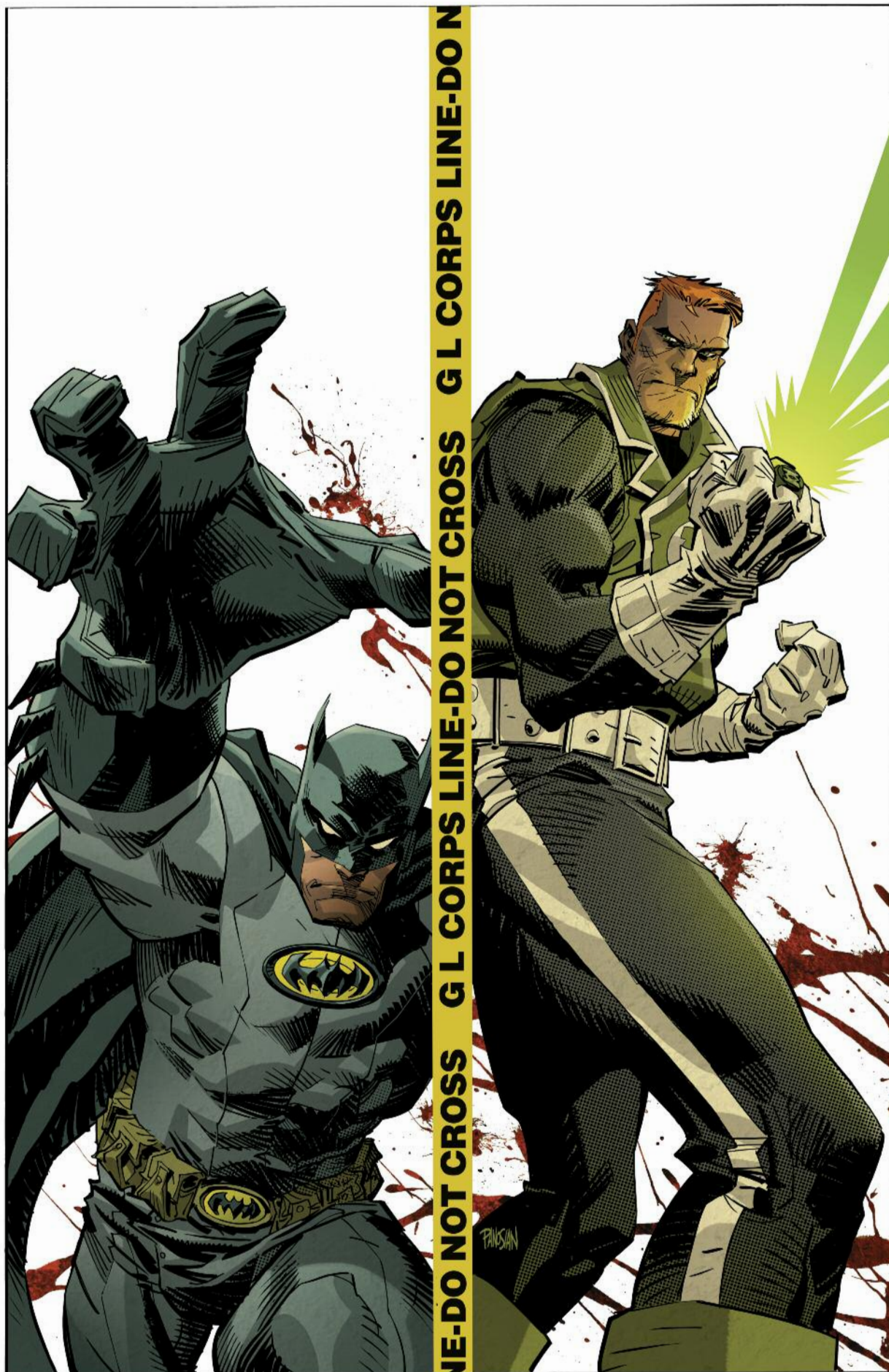
**DRAW:** So you went from working on such illustrious titles as *Quasar*, and then it wasn't too long after that that the whole Image thing started happening.



(above and next page) Inks and finished color for the cover of *Green Lantern: Emerald Warriors* #13.

BATMAN, GUY GARDNER™ AND © DC COMICS.









(this page) Sketch cards for the *Captain America: The First Avenger* and *Marvel Beginnings* trading card series.

(next page) Promotional ad using Dan's cover art for the *X-Men Origins: Sabretooth* one-shot.

ALL CHARACTERS™ AND © MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC.







# ROUGH Critique

**Constructive  
analysis and  
criticism of a  
newcomer's work  
by  
BOB McLEOD**

**T**his issue, my rough critique features a somewhat different kind of submission. I normally critique a comic book sample page drawn by an aspiring artist hoping to get work at Marvel or DC. But this time, our sample page is from a currently online web comic called *Odyssey* being drawn by Samantha Gough and written by Eric Guindon. You can read part one (and some of part two by the time this is published) online at [dreamoutloud-comics.com/index.php?pagenum=1](http://dreamoutloud-comics.com/index.php?pagenum=1). If you don't know who I am, if you're in fact thinking right now, "Well who does this McLeod guy think he is, to be critiquing anyone," I invite you to visit my web site, [www.bobmcLeod.com](http://www.bobmcLeod.com).

Samantha admitted to me that she was confident to the point of arrogance until she actually started to draw this web comic... and then she realized there is a lot more to it than she thought. That was exactly my own experience when I first tried to get into comics. "A comic book?" I thought, "How hard can that be?" Heh. Sequential art requires many more skills than simple drawing ability. At least in comic books, those requirements are usually split up among several people: the editor, the writer, the penciler, the letterer, the inker, and the colorist. But many web comics are done entirely by one person! It's very much like making a movie all by yourself; imagine producing, directing, writing the script, working the camera, doing the lighting, designing the sets and costumes, and acting all of the roles yourself! What kind of egomaniac would ever even attempt that? Well, hundreds of us, as it turns out.

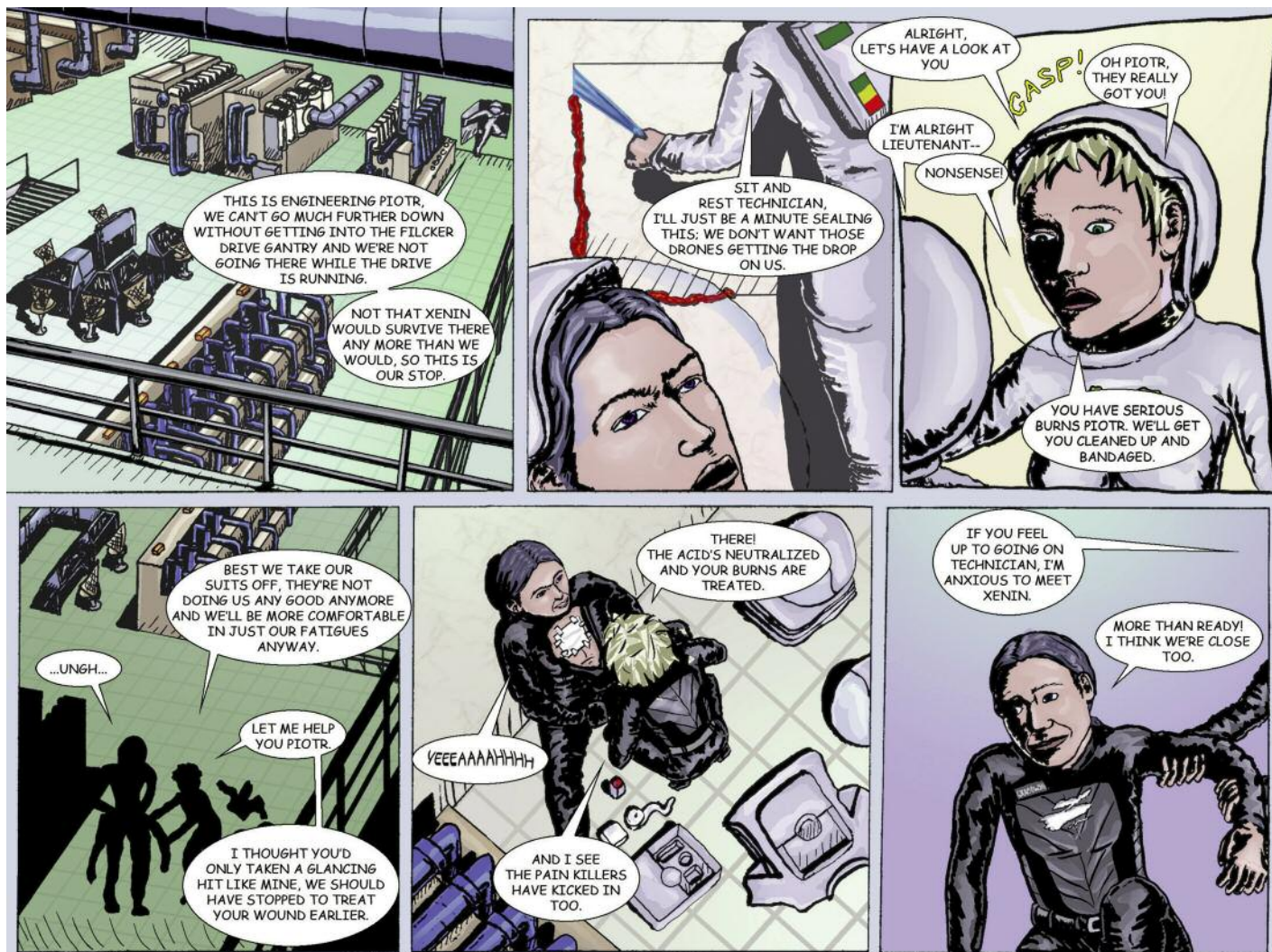
Samantha is a talented artist, and she is doing a lot of things well, of course. She's varying the camera angles, using close-ups, long shots, down shots, up shots; she's even using silhouettes, and trying to do dramatic high-contrast lighting. She's working hard and putting in a lot of detail, with good, convincing backgrounds. But she's making a lot of the usual mistakes we all make early on. Some of these mistakes are easily fixed, so I think I can help her solve a lot of her problems right away and make a huge leap up to a new level on her very next strip. I don't have unlimited

space or time, so I may not be as tactful as I'd like with regard to compliments versus criticism. This column is called "Rough Critique," after all. I'll do my best to keep my comments constructive, but sometimes I do need to be blunt to get my point across. Remember that you should be your own harshest critic. Let's start with the most fundamental, important things and progress to the relatively less important.

The main practical difference between web comics and comic books is the page format. Most web comics are in a horizontal format, because our computer monitors are horizontal, whereas comic pages are more vertically formatted, like books. This affects the layout options you have, making it more difficult to draw tall, vertical panels, but easier to draw long, horizontal scenes. Of course, there's usually really no actual format restriction at all for web comics. The comic can change format from strip to strip, because we can scroll down and left or right. But most web comics choose a consistent horizontal format just because it's easier. You don't get paid more for making your job more difficult, and many web comic artists don't get paid at all.

Either way, though, you need to consider your panel shapes and sizes. Good graphic design would suggest that you make some panels wider than others, if only for variety's sake, and stagger the gutters (the space between panels). Samantha's doing that here, but her panels on the far right are a bit too evenly stacked. Her last panel could have been wider, and the one before it thinner. That way, we could get the blonde into the panel. For some reason, she chose to extend panel one on the left and top. We do this in comic books so the art "bleeds" off the page rather than remains enclosed within the panel borders. But that can't happen on a computer monitor, so it makes little sense. If you want to bleed a panel of a web comic, the thing to do would be to bleed it behind the adjacent panels, turning them into overlapping or inset panels. She also used an oddly shaped, handdrawn border for panel three. I'm guessing she did this to emphasize the character's shock at her partner's burns.

**"I'll do my best to keep my  
comments constructive, but  
sometimes I do need to be  
blunt to get my point across.  
Remember that you should  
be your own harshest critic."**



Page 17 of *Odyssey*, a web comic drawn by Samantha Gough and written by Eric Guindon.

ODYSSEY™ AND © ERIC GUINDON AND SAMANTHA GOUGH.

But it's not clear that that's her intent, so the panel shape becomes distracting and takes the reader out of the story while they ponder its purpose. The number one rule in all aspects of comic art is clarity. Don't confuse the reader unintentionally. The odd shape doesn't add enough dramatic effect to compensate for the distraction, so it's better to just use a standard border. It's good to vary your layout from a standard grid of rectangles, but give it some more thought and try to make it more effective. Look at other artists to see how they're doing it. Too often, beginners try to re-invent the wheel rather than learn from their predecessors.

The next most obvious and easily corrected things are the lettering font and word balloons. Contrary to what you might think, lettering is very important in comics. And by very important, I mean extremely important. It's right there, integrated into the art, and therefore becomes part of the art. Hand lettering is really the way to go if you want to add a real personal, artistic touch. But what am I, a dinosaur? Even very few comic books or newspaper strips use that anymore. Computer lettering is simply much faster and easier. However, the choice of font still makes a big difference. You want to use a font that has some visual appeal, and a comic art feel to it. What you don't want to do is what Samantha's done here, and use the dreaded Comic Sans MS. It's on everyone's computer, and because it has the word "comic" in the name,

everyone thinks, "Aha, here's a good comic font." Well, no, it isn't. It's borrrrrring. There are a few other, more attractive free fonts available if you take the trouble to look. But if you're going to go to the trouble of doing a web comic, go ahead and spend the 20 bucks and buy a real comic font from [www.blambot.com](http://www.blambot.com). After all, you're not drawing the strip with crayons, are you? Do you want it to look professional or not? You're putting a lot of time and effort into the art. Don't negate that by skimping on the lettering.

Sound effect fonts can be purchased, too, or you can draw them. They really add interest, so don't miss this chance to be artistic. People love sound effects. Have fun with them. And don't forget to use boldface italic to emphasize certain words, instead of making every word the same, like a monotone computer voice. There's a lot of text in this strip, so make it as interesting and fun to read as possible. And then, of course, there's the problem of the word balloons. It's easy enough to use the ellipse tool in Photoshop, but see how that creates a balloon that's often either too tight around the lettering, or has too much empty space at the top and bottom? You need to spend some time creating balloons of various shapes and sizes by piecing together different ellipses. It takes some time at first, but you can then copy and paste them as needed, and manipulate them to make them just right. As my mother always said, "Anything worth doing is worth doing right."





## BROOKLYN'S RENAISSANCE MAN



# the **DEAN HASPIEL** interview

**Interview conducted via phone  
by Danny Fingeroth on March 22, 2011  
and transcribed by Steven Tice**

Emmy award-winning artist, Dean Haspiel, is a native New Yorker who created the Eisner Award-nominated *Billy Dogma*, the semi-autobiographical *Street Code*, and helped pioneer personal webcomics with the invention of ACT-I-VATE. Dino has collaborated on many great superhero and semi-autobiographical comic books published by Marvel, DC, Vertigo, Dark Horse, Image, Top Shelf, Scholastic, Toon Books, and *The New York Times*, including collaborations with Harvey Pekar, Jonathan Ames, and Inverna Lockpez, and draws for HBO's *Bored to Death*, for which he won an Emmy for his contributions to the opening title sequence. Dean is a founding member of Hang Dai Studios in Brooklyn, NY and steeps in psychotronic movies, cosmic electronica, and Jack Kirby pulp. His website is [www.deanhaspiel.com](http://www.deanhaspiel.com).



SPIDER-MAN™ AND © MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC.

**DANNY FINGEROTH:** Let's start with some of the basic questions, Dean. Where did you grow up, and were you a comics fan as a kid?

**DEAN HASPIEL:** I was born in New York Hospital, so I'm a true-blue New Yorker, and my first address was around 71st Street on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, and I believe, a year or so later, when my brother arrived, we moved to 79th Street and Broadway. There were two competing newsstands catty-corner to each other that sold comic books, and I don't know if somebody gave me a comic book, or I saw it on the newsstand because they were so prominent and colorful, but I remember at age twelve declaring that I was going to become a cartoonist no matter what, because I loved comics so much. I think my very first memories of having loyalty for comics, or certain titles, were *Fantastic Four*, and what at that time was called *Shazam!*, because I believe that DC didn't have the right to call it "Captain Marvel" because of the word "Marvel."

And, of course, I read *Spider-Man*, *Iron Man*, *Marvel Two-in-One*, maybe some *Batman* and *Green Lantern*, but I also remember becoming much more of a Marvel fan over DC. I don't know why. Maybe I was getting my *Batman* from the *Batman* TV series, and I thought it was kind of corny.

**DF:** Where would you have seen the *Batman* TV series? You were born after the *Batman* TV series.

**DH:** If you remember, there was a deluge of reruns. Like, how could I have watched the original *Star Trek* series? *Batman* was being rerun all the time, and, ultimately, there was horror from the *Chiller Theater* reruns, as well, late at night. So I grew up on Hammer horror, Universal Pictures, *Godzilla*, *Planet of the Apes*, *The Abbott and Costello Show*—the Saturday morning cartoons. That was my "Golden Age" of pop culture.

**DF:** Were you drawing before you saw comics, or did comics make you want to draw?

**DH:** I was drawing before comics, and I also distinctly remember seeing ads, maybe for toy soldiers, or a battleship—painted ads of people going into battle or something like that. I would take the gauntlet that had been thrown down in these images and tell these little stories of these soldiers going off to war. I drew little mini-war comics as a kid, but I never read war comics, which is odd. I guess, again, I was kind of reaching out for the things that weren't always in my life. So if I saw a *Batman* TV show, it didn't necessarily encourage me to go read a *Batman* comic, because I was already getting my stories of *Batman* that way. But then, I'd pick up other stuff in other mediums just to kind of get a collective whole, as it were.

**DF:** So, with that declaration at age twelve, did you take art classes in school?

**DH:** Like lunch and gym, there was a basic art class in my elementary and junior high school years, but I majored in art at Music & Art cum LaGuardia High School where the teachers always shunned comics. Comics weren't "real" art. Real art was painting, and sculpture, and photography. And I remember, at that point, feeling a little rebellious. Like, "Really? You don't like comic books because you have this perception that they're only power fantasies for twelve-year-old boys?" And, y'know, to be frank, a lot of them were.

**DF:** Of course, you were a twelve-year-old boy at the time.

**DH:** And I was a twelve-year-old boy. But, a few years later, I remember having another kind of milestone moment when I went down to Soho, and there was a store called Soho Zat. It was largely a clothing/hipster kind of store—jewelry and all this kind of stuff. But I remember they had comic books and records and maybe some movies. That's where I discovered Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor* and Chester Brown's *Yummy Fur*.

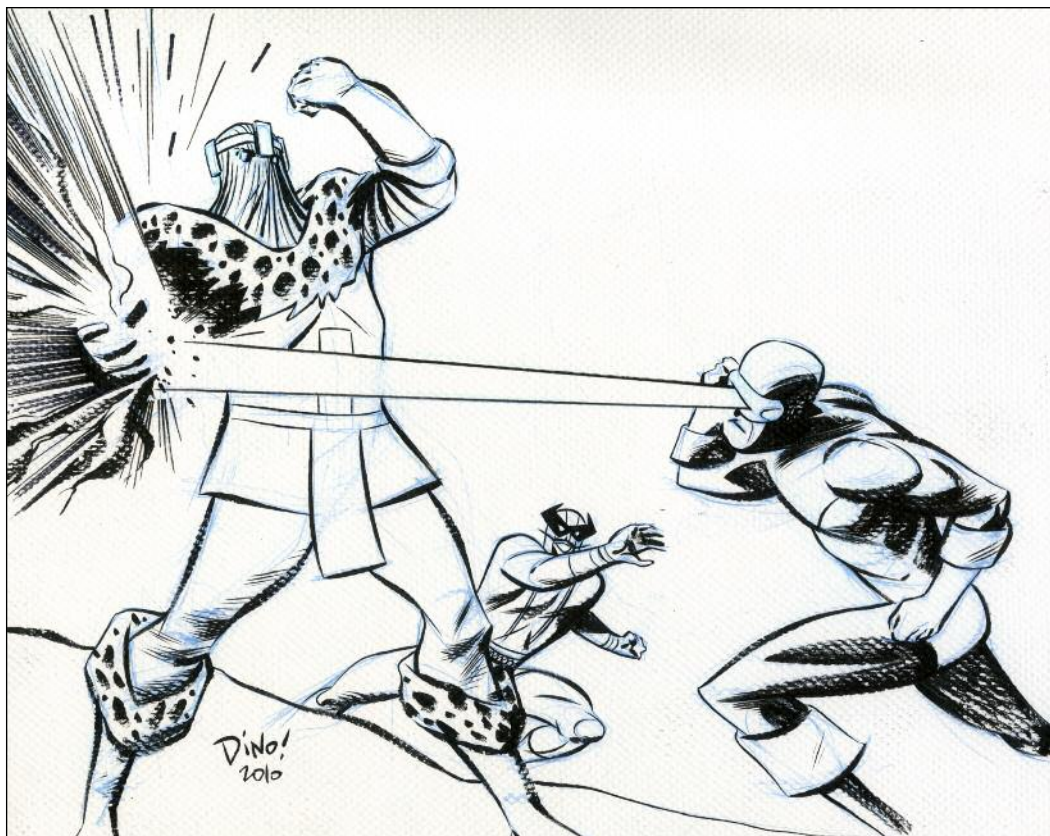


Panels from Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor*.  
AMERICAN SPLENDOR™ AND © HARVEY PEKAR.

**DF:** So they had underground comics there.

**DH:** I had heard of underground comics, and I was probably aware of R. Crumb. Maybe I didn't know his name at the time, but I remember on the Upper West Side there was a tobacco store that sold funny-looking paraphernalia in the back with these little clips with fur and these weird glass tubes and stuff, and I think they might have sold some oddball comics behind the glass case. But I never reached my hand over and asked to see them. Maybe I was just more locked into the superhero mode, at the time, as a kid. And those comics behind the glass case felt like adult comics when I looked at them, so I kind of respected that was for grown-ups. I mean, I came to [novelist] Charles Bukowski in my late 30s, so I was not diving into that kind of thing as a kid—although my father, who is a movie buff and film aficionado, would show me adult films. And I don't mean porno, but stuff that maybe kids weren't necessarily watching, like old Hollywood noirs, spaghetti westerns, Marilyn Monroe, and musicals. That's where my love for film comes from, my father. So, going back to comics, my declaration, it kind of made me unemployable in that





**Cyclops faces off against classic Captain America villains, Baron Zemo and Batroc in this panel from 2011's *Cyclops* #1.**

ALL CHARACTERS™ AND © MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC.

often because my father knew a bunch of people, Hollywood actors. My godmother was Shelley Winters. My mother was the deputy director for the New York State Council of the Arts. My father knew Marilyn Monroe. My brother was going to the Actor's Studio to study acting. So I was always around really good storytellers.

**DF:** Didn't you go to school with Larry O'Neil?

**DH:** High school is where I met Larry O'Neil, who is the son of famous comics writer/editor, Denny O'Neil.

**DF:** Did you go to one of those specialized high schools?

I was fixated. When you're weighing your options of who to be and how to be—I was fixated on storytelling, on becoming a cartoonist.

**DF:** So you went to SUNY [State University of New York] at Purchase, which is an arts-oriented school, right?

**DH:** Yeah. I basically rejected college after high school for about two years, and I worked odd jobs like construction management. I was a takeout manager at a health food restaurant, stuff like that. And I wound up almost every weekend, or every other weekend, going to the college that my best friends went to that was close by, and that was SUNY Purchase. So, in a weird way, by proxy, I started to become the "fifth Beatle" of my friends in the university to the point where I finally broke down and said, "All right, I guess I'll try to get into college." But, of course, I couldn't afford anything, because, at that point, my parents had split, and my brother went to live with my mom in Brooklyn, and I stayed with my father in the Upper West Side of Manhattan, so money was tight. But once I expressed interest in going to college, both my parents decided they would figure out a way to get me into SUNY Purchase if I could get in. And I did, and luckily, SUNY Purchase at that time was one of the more affordable colleges to get into. I obviously got in for art, but at that point, when I was about 20 years old, I loved comics and I still kind of drew comics and dabbled in the form, but my interest had transitioned to film. Again, storytelling. If it's not static fiction, it's moving pictures with sound. Yes, they're completely different mediums, but a light bulb went on over my head and I decided, "Oh, I want to show stories." So, whether comics or movies, television or theater, it was something I'd been interested in. I grew up in a household where my parents were great orators. My dad could spin a good yarn, my mom told great stories, we were surrounded by actors

**DH:** We went to Music & Art. And then, in our senior year, Music & Art got married to Performing Arts and became LaGuardia High School. That was 1985. In 1985 Denny alerted Larry, who was also a budding cartoonist/filmmaker, that Howard Chaykin was looking for an assistant. Howard shared a studio in the Garment District of New York with Walter Simonson and Jim Sherman. Previous studio-mates were Frank Miller and Jim Starlin.

**DF:** Bill Sienkiewicz was in that building, also?

**DH:** Well, this is what happened. Larry got the gig as Howard's assistant. He started working, when he got wind that Bill Sienkiewicz had moved down the hall with Denys Cowan and Michael Davis, and Bill said he wanted an assistant. I remember walking into the office and getting the gig with Bill and thinking, gosh, my art style at that point was nothing like Bill's, and I was wondering, "How is this going to work out?" But Bill was very kind and allowed me to do a bunch of backgrounds on *New Mutants*. I was honored to be working on something that I felt I really wasn't ready for.

I aired my frustrations of working with Bill, because, on the one hand, he was allowing me to do backgrounds, but he wasn't necessarily teaching me anything, and he was often either not at his own studio, or on the phone talking to writers or whoever. So I would go hang out with Larry and Howard, especially on days when Bill wasn't there, and I was just working on stuff. And then, eventually, Howard took pity on me. He was working on a monthly book, *American Flagg!*, and I think the schedule was getting tough. So he decided to hire me away from Bill. Eventually Bill split from his own studio, anyway. I think he was coming in from Connecticut all the time. He wanted to be in Manhattan and feel the vibe, as it were, get energized by the

whole tradition of making comics in New York City, but I believe that he just split back to Connecticut, and then eventually I think he moved to California. Anyway, I had become friendly with Denys Cowan and Michael Davis, and I remember Denys was working on *V*, the comic for the TV show, and on *Vigilante*, both for DC Comics.

**DF:** Were you aware of how groundbreaking and how different *American Flagg!* was when you were working on it?

**DH:** I was. I really was. In fact, when I even look at it in today, it's still groundbreaking. *American Flagg!* is still ahead of its time. It's magical. It's incredible. And, yes, I do remember feeling honored to be working on a book that was going to probably stand the test of time. And Howard actually taught me by proxy how to make comics. He's the master of the inset panel, and I remember seeing insets before, but never really employed them in my own work until working on *American Flagg!* for Howard. And then there was the whole art of Craftint, which was a whole other thing. It's kind of a lost art, especially now, with Photoshop. So Larry and I were painting Craftint, doing backgrounds. And we'd have to get reference for the backgrounds. And, you know, back then, we didn't have Google and the Internet, so Howard and Walter both had these huge file cabinets of clippings they would have in folders.

**DF:** That's what they used to call "swipe files."

**DH:** Exactly. And if you didn't have a book that had a lot of good reference in it, there would be clippings from magazines. Back then, they would subscribe to a bunch of magazines, and whenever they could get a piece of good reference, it would be filed away under a specific title. It was a really exciting time. I remember learning perspective. You know, this was always after school, during my senior year of high school, so we'd split school around three o'clock. Larry and I would split school together, grab a slice of pizza, hop on the subway from, like, 67th Street or whatever it was in Lincoln Center, down to the Garment District—I think the studio was on 29th Street—and work for, say, three hours, until Howard and/or Walter would split for the night and balance their career with their home life. Nowadays, geez, I wish I could leave my studio at seven o'clock at night. I'm usually leaving around ten or eleven, sometimes one in the morning.

**DF:** Were you doing the same kind of things for Walt?

**DH:** I was in a room with Larry, Howard, Walter, and Jim Sherman. Jim was a really cool, mellow dude. So, we're working with Howard and getting friendly with Walter, who, for all intents and purposes, I dubbed the "Mr. Rogers of comics" because he's just so giving and sweet. But I think what happened is that he had had a couple of assistants and they had left to go to college or something like that, or maybe they weren't working out or something, but once in a while I would help Walter, who is so stylized and has a very particular way he draws. There's this machine called an Artograph. The Artograph basically would take a thumbnail layout, let's say, that could be a few inches tall, or it could even be as large as an 8 1/2" x 11" piece of paper, and you could use it to draw the same thing at a larger size. Walt would have me transfer his layouts to two-ply Bristol board paper. At that time, he was working on *Thor*. My job was to try and capture the energy of what

he was going for in his own thumbnails, which, again, was really hard—to wrap your hand and your mind around another artist's sensibility and just be able to transfer that. So the idea was to take those thumbnails, transfer them to the boards so that he could then go to full pencils, and make whatever tweaks he had to make from there. That was about the extent of my helping out Walter. It's possible that I did a background building or two or something, I don't recall now. But I remember feeling like I did a lot more heavy lifting for Howard on *American Flagg!* with the backgrounds versus Walter, where he had truly created a visual lexicon. It was his toaster, it would be



Billy Dogma receives a message from his girl, Jane Legit.

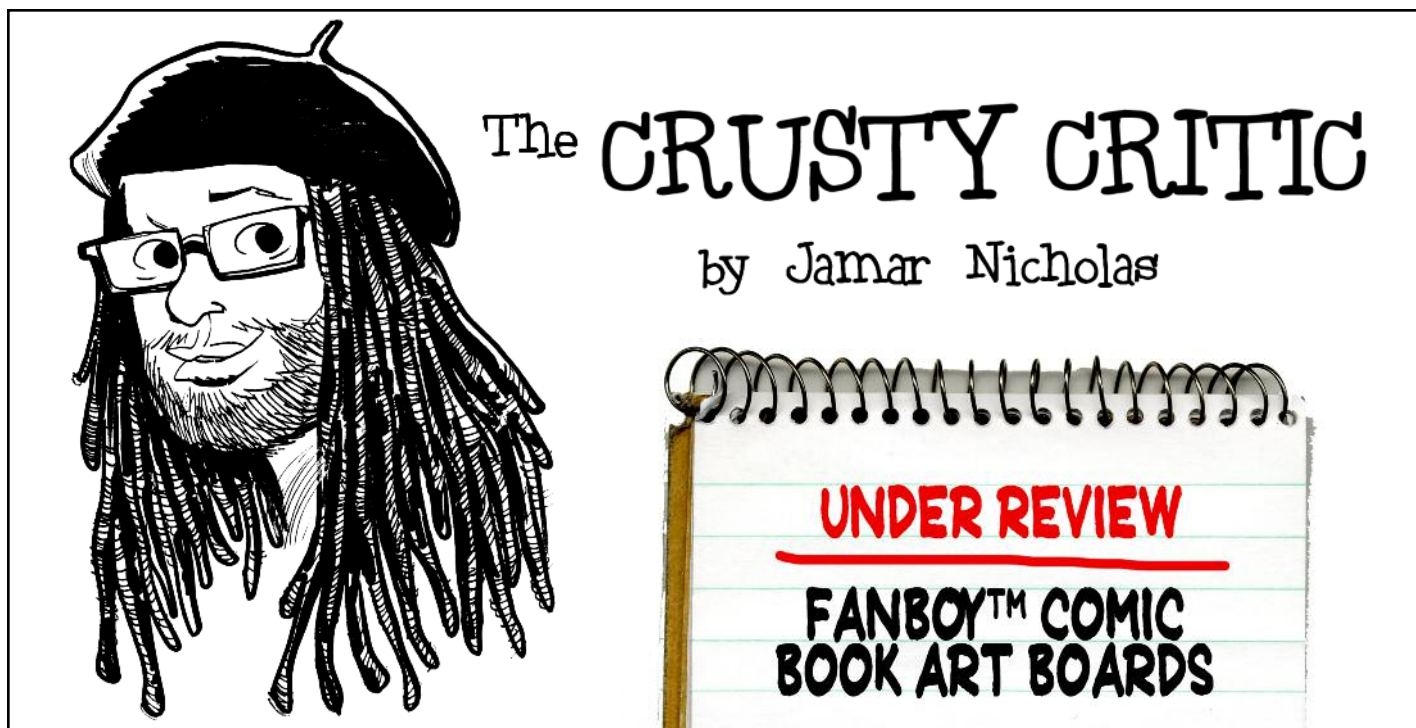
BILLY DOGMA™ AND © DEAN HASPIEL

his person, his Thor, his frog, his fantasy, and his reality. It was really hard to ape that, especially as a student.

**DF:** Did you help either one with writing at all, or plotting?

**DH:** I might have thrown an idea or a reaction or two. Nothing substantial. I mean, Howard is so specific, his characterizations and his ideas, his "totalitarian utopia." [laughter] And then there's Walter doing his groundbreaking run on *Thor* that he'd been wanting to do since high school. Walt was doing his riff on Jack Kirby and much more. I think at the time I was aware of Jack Kirby, but I hadn't become as impacted and loyal to Kirby as I am now. So I was still reading whatever my peers were reading and digging the likes of Ron Wilson, Kerry Gammill, and Keith Pollard, the superhero artists of my youth. This British-Canadian, John Byrne,



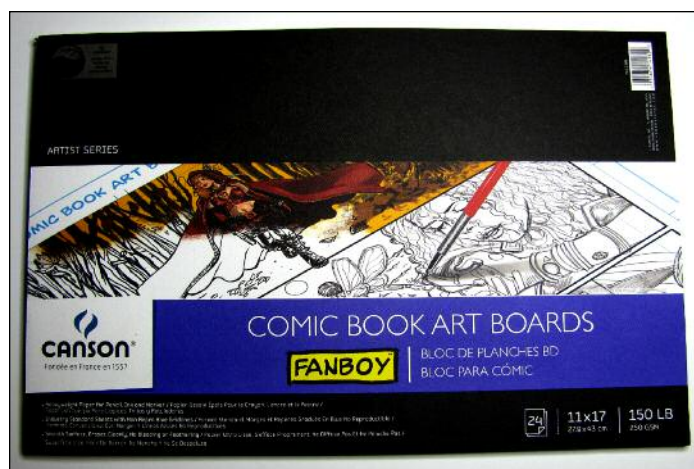


Welcome, once again to all and sundry! Your Crusty Critic has returned to give you my take on the world of art supplies, places, and things that every artist needs to know or procure in his toolbox. This time, my article will shine light on a popular line of art supplies under the French Canson product umbrella.

As cartooning and manga has gained notoriety in the States, companies have begun to diversify their product lines to attract and service this niche artist, and the Fanboy line of comic supplies was created to fill this need. The Fanboy brand has recently changed its packaging. Its original mascot was a cartoon nerdy kid with buckteeth and glasses and its tagline, “Get out of the Basement!” rudely inferring that this product line is directed at a population I’m not sure exists as perceived by the company—that comic book nerds want to draw comic books hasn’t been proved as far as this critic is concerned—and that this line of paper will help them attain that goal. Instead of that backhanded diss at the consumer, Canson now has new packaging, showing dynamic comic art, much like the new line of Strathmore comic illustration products. You shouldn’t have to be insulted by the paper you use, so I’m glad they have addressed this.

There is something for every comic-drawing discipline in this line: Canson carries everything from a “Create Your Own Comic Book” beginner’s kit that includes a small set of Micron pigma pens, two 11" x 17" comic cover pages, 10 art boards, some layout sheets, and more, to special-sized Manga Comic Board, which mirrors the smaller drawing area that manga-ka utilizes for Eastern art creation. I will focus on the official Comic Book Art Board, which comes in pads of 24 sheets of 150-pound Bristol, pre-lined with blue-line guides and borders.

The practice of buying pre-ruled comic board has now become more widely accepted with comic creators, though a lot of older pros are still married to the process of buying 14" x 17" board, then trimming it to size and ruling out their own borders. As we all know, sometimes your biggest enemy is the clock, so any way you can shave some time off of your day helps.



## WHAT’S BETTER?

There are several Bristol papers on the market that come in 11" x 17" size and pre-ruled for comic art. Some of the major manufacturers are Eon, Blue Line, Strathmore, and now Canson. I know that the Blue Line and Canson brands carry different paper weights and surfaces, so if you enjoy a heavier stock, there may be other brands out there that speak to you besides Canson. As of this writing, Fanboy comic board is only available in 150-pound weight, while Strathmore’s board is labeled in “Series,” such as 300 and 400—which translates to 100- and 140-pound weight, respectively. You may be confused about what paper is the right fit for you, but Fanboy eliminates the confusion by not offering choices.

## PROS

■ Even though the board is fairly thin, it’s workable and can hold blacks well with technical pens and some heavy brushwork, which may come close to bleeding through the back of the board, but stops short.



COMIC ART BOOTCAMP

# Drawing Hair

by BRET BLEVINS and MIKE MANLEY

Whether it's the curled lock of a hero's mane, the sultry locks and tresses of a superheroine or bad girl, or the oddly spiked do of the typical anime character, hair is a big part of a character's look, design, and appeal. So drawing hair well is very important to the cartoonist or animator. It's especially important when drawing the female characters, as it plays a big part of their sexiness and appeal.

A lot of characters can be identified by their hair alone—or lack thereof. Lex Luthor and Homer Simpson share a lot in common. So in this Bootcamp installment, Bret and I will focus in on the curls and locks and the how-to of illustrating the hairdos of comics and animation.

To start with, I think we need to really get into the historical angle on this drawing issue. The illustrating of popular hairstyles has always been a very important item for the artist to keep up with. From the days of the golden age of illustration, artists have always tried to keep up with, and in many cases set the trends of fashion. The Gibson Girl and the Arrow Collar Man are just two examples where the artist actually helped set the fashion trends of their day and were hugely influential.

Both J.C. Lyendecker (the Arrow shirt ads) and Charles Dana Gibson (The Gibson Girl) were leading illustrators whose work was seen by millions of readers, as well as probably thousands of artists. Their influence was immense, and you can see their stylistic influence on the early artists who emulated their style in the comics of the '20s, '30s, and on.

Their success in illustration came from real life observation of the models and the stylization based on that observation, and

that will be a key principle we will operate with here. In order to have a true understanding of something like hair, it is not enough to simply copy the style of other artists who do hair well and to give it your own twist, you need to do some drawing from observation as well.

In this case, working from photos is great, and I suggest buying the current fashion magazines. There are even magazines devoted only to hair styles. It's essential to stay up with the current fashion in styles to keep your work looking contemporary. It's all too clear when looking at an artist's work if they are running on a default model of drawing hairstyles based on old comic work.

We can sometimes forget that when so many of the iconic characters were created or the important work was done on a series the artists behind that work were drawing contemporary styles of fashion and hairstyles. Who knows if Siegel and Shuster would design Superman today the same way that they did in the late '30s.

However, no matter the decade, there are guiding principles that will help when illustrating hair:

- Hair conforms to the planes of the head.
- Hair reacts to gravity at all times, even in motion.



■ Women's hair flows away from the head; it's not pasted on.

■ Simplify: Break the hair down into simpler strands or bands of hair. Less is more, and it looks sleeker and sexier. (In animation, simplification of a character's hair is essential to keep the drawing easier and consistently on model. Also, unlike comics where you can cheat things more, the hair has to work in all views for the complete character turnaround.)

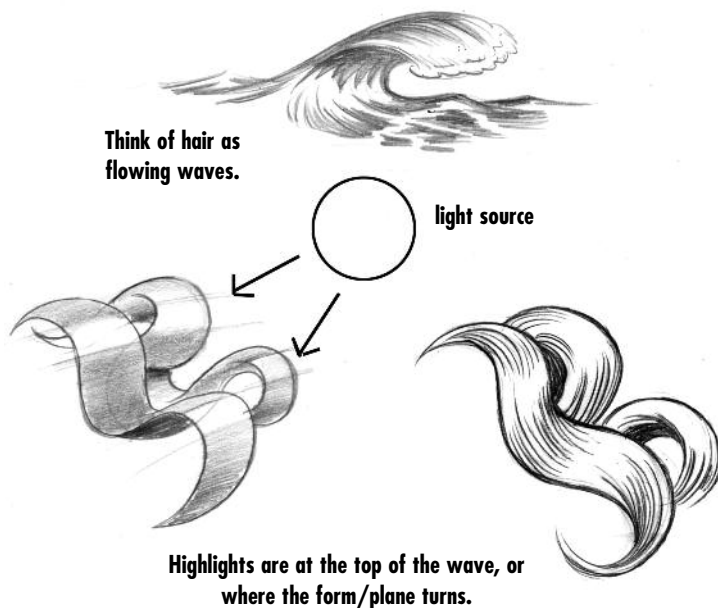
■ Wavy or curly hair is like a wave in the water. There is a peak and a valley to each curl, the highlight occurring at the peak that is facing the light source.

■ Highlights in hair, dark or light, reflect the light source. Keep a consistent light source across the form. This rule applies no matter what the drawing style, be it anime or more realistic illustration.

■ Texture: The detail of a character's hair can vary. The texture in the hair can really add spice or lushness, especially when illustrating women or monsters, witches and other strange characters. With comics and illustration, the amount of texture or middle tone rendering can show the difference between a blonde and a red head without the use of color.



Draw hair as overlapping bands or strands.



Think of hair as flowing waves.

light source

Highlights are at the top of the wave, or where the form/plane turns.

In cartoony or anime style drawings, the highlights can be a simple band of reflection.

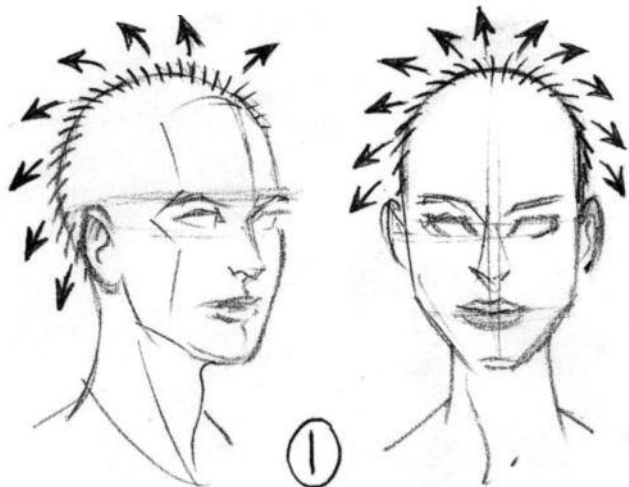


In visual art the appearance of hair is usually most effective if treated primarily as an arrangement of shape(s) that suggest its nature and character, rather than attempting to render it naturalistically. There is simply too much detail to cope with if one holds in mind the literal fact of so many separate, extremely fine forms; thinking of the problem as an uncountable mass of individual hairs conforming to create an overall shape is more difficult and confusing than conceiving the hair as a solid shape in which an occasional strand or lock is discernible. The second approach also has more visual appeal. It reads quickly, doesn't draw attention to itself, and more clearly defines other important information: the shape and direction of movement (or stillness) of the head; the distinction between a breeze, wind or gale; and the character of the specific hair itself—wet, oily, dry, thin, thick,

naturally hanging or stiffened and shaped into a specific style/effect, and so on.

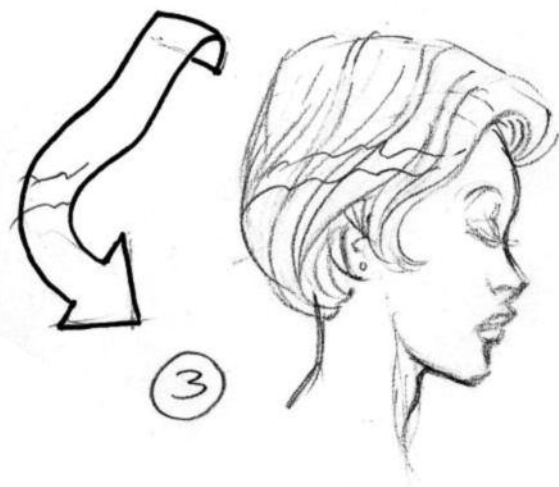
Hair is a necessary and useful device in a purely aesthetic sense as well. The flowing shapes of long hair are useful for creating a peaceful, alluring, gentle or mysterious mood. Wildly blowing hair can suggest action, wildness, fright, instability, nervousness. Tight, rigid coiffures can suggest inhibition, lack of empathy, cruelty, severity. Loose, casual hair might suggest an easy-going nature, relaxed comfort, a friendly attitude—or perhaps a careless, slovenly, distracted, or absentminded personality. In short, the hair is another tool for storytelling, for creating and communicating character, beyond the obvious factual information of setting, time, and place via its particular style or fashion.

## HELPFUL REMINDERS WHEN DRAWING HAIR:



1. The hair does not emanate uniformly from the scalp. As the sides of the head drop steeply away from the crown, the angle of the follicles change, as seen in these diagrams. This is why the hair rises up from a part along the top plane of the head, then hangs closer to the surface as the downward planes drop toward and past the ears.

2. In this chart you can see how the mass of hair lifts from the top of the head, then gravity and the turning angles of the follicles cause the hair to hang steeply downward.



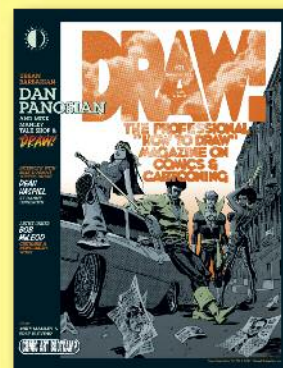
3. The arrow here describes the flow of her hair—up from the scalp, then curving over, down, and curving again forward towards her face. This can be a natural tendency of an individual's hair or shaped by conditioning. Also indicated here is the highlight, which always follows the most protruding plane (usually where a form or plane changes direction).

4. The arrows here trace the direction of the form, showing the highlight on the foremost edge of the plane, nearest the light source.



5. The diagrams here show how the fluid mass is much lighter than the head, of course, but its undulating wave pattern and interlocking, overlapping large "grouping" of massed hair described by the arrows reveals not only its own character, but the direction the wind is blowing.

**IF YOU ENJOYED THIS PREVIEW, CLICK THE LINK TO ORDER THIS ISSUE IN PRINT OR DIGITAL FORMAT!**



### **DRAW #21**

Urban Barbarian **DAN PANOSIAN** talks shop with editor **MIKE MANLEY** about his gritty, design-inspired work. **DANNY FIN-GEROTH** interviews "Billy Dogma" writer/artist **DEAN HASPIEL**, plus more of **MIKE MANLEY** and **BRET BLEVINS'** "Comic Art Bootcamp", a "Rough Critique" of a newcomer's work by **BOB McLEOD**, product and art supply reviews by **JAMAR NICHOLAS**, and more!

(84-page magazine with COLOR) \$7.95  
(Digital edition) \$2.95

[http://twomorrows.com/index.php?main\\_page=product\\_info&products\\_id=982](http://twomorrows.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=982)