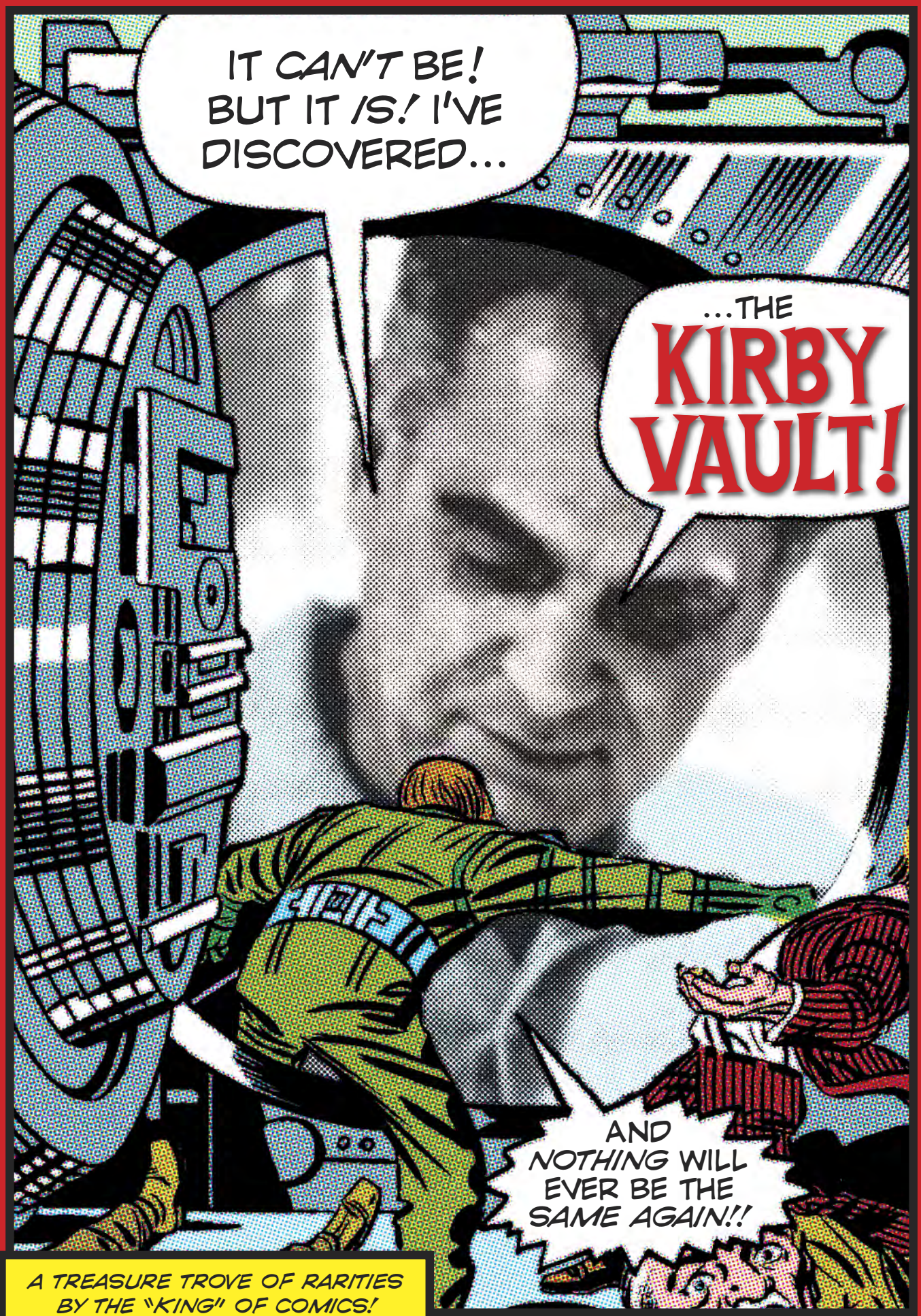


A TREASURE TROVE OF RARITIES BY THE "KING" OF COMICS!

JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR FIFTY-NINE $10.95

CONTENTS

THE KIRBY VAULT!

Front cover inks: **JOE SINNOTT**

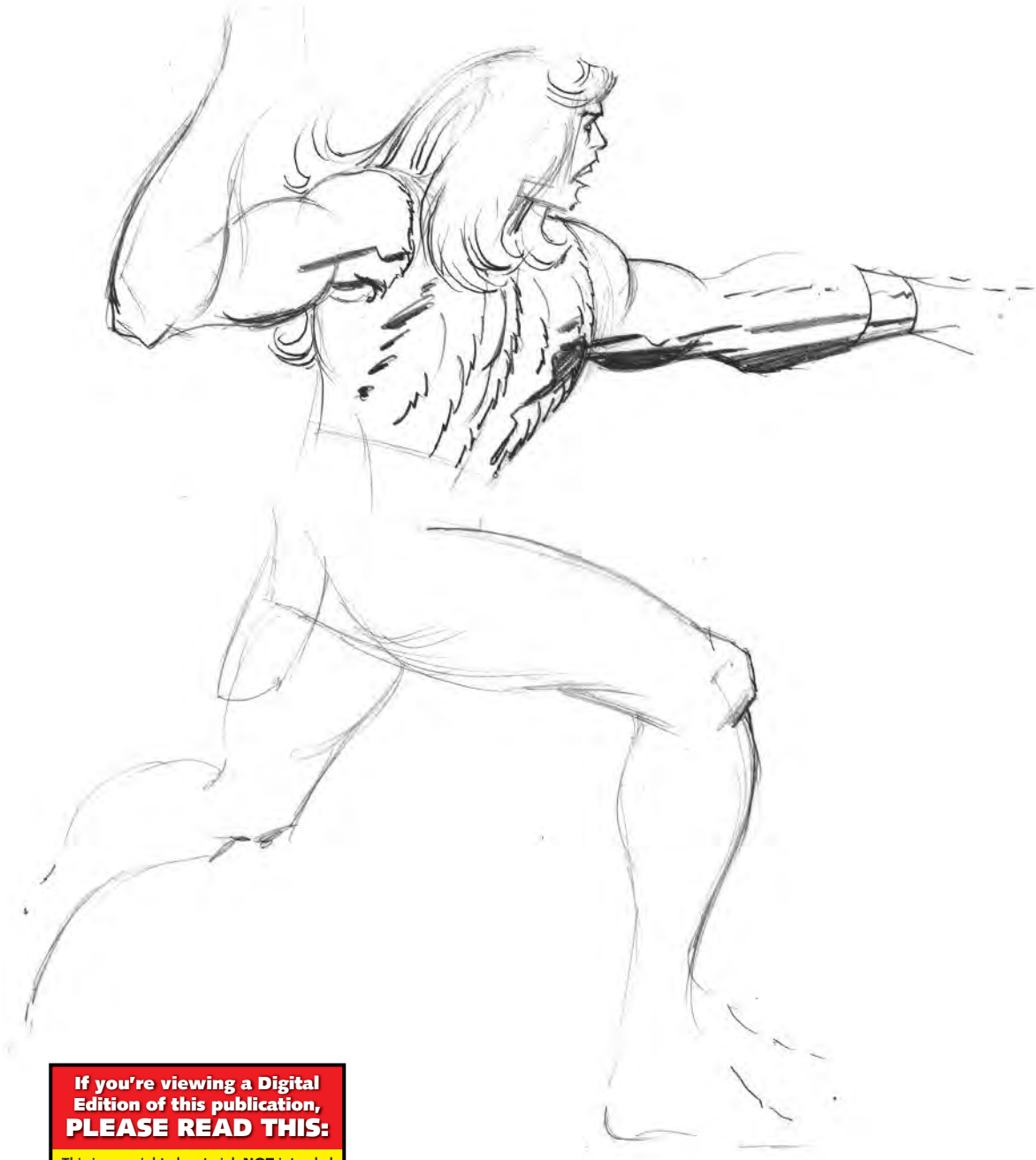
Back cover inks: **DON HECK**
Back cover colors: **JACK KIRBY**
(an unused 1966 promotional piece, courtesy of Heritage Auctions)

This issue would not have been possible without the help of the JACK KIRBY MUSEUM & RESEARCH CENTER (www.kirbymuseum.org) and www.whatifkirby.com—thanks!

The Jack Kirby Collector, Vol. 19, No. 59, Summer 2012. Published quarterly (didn't say which quarters) by and ©2012 TwoMorrows Publishing, 10407 Bedfordtown Drive, Raleigh, NC 27614, USA. 919-449-0344. John Morrow, Editor/Publisher. Single issues: $14 postpaid ($18 elsewhere). Four-issue subscriptions: $50 US, $65 Canada, $72 elsewhere. Editorial package ©2012 TwoMorrows Publishing, a division of TwoMorrows Inc. All characters are trademarks of their respective companies. All artwork is ©2012 Jack Kirby Estate unless otherwise noted. All editorial matter is ©2012 the respective authors. First printing. PRINTED IN CANADA. ISSN 1932-6912

THE OLD(?) JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR

ISSUE #59, SUMMER 2012



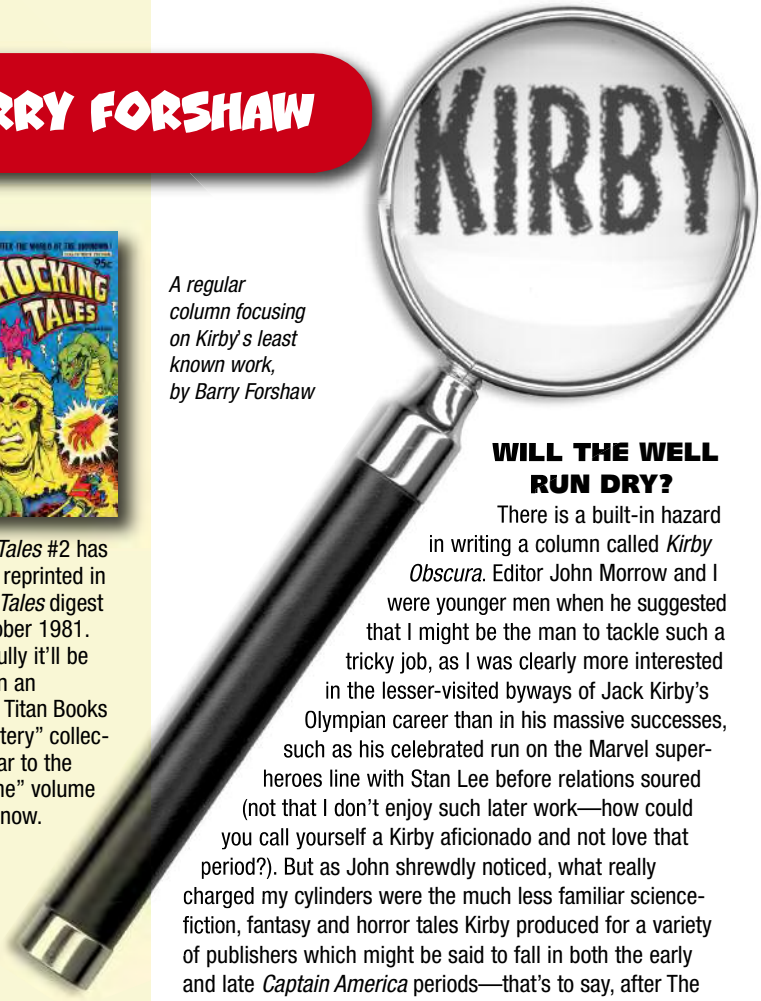
(above) Unfinished *Thundarr The Barbarian* illo, circa 1980.
TM & ©2012 Ruby-Spears Productions • Scan courtesy Rand Hoppe at the Jack Kirby Museum (www.kirbymuseum.org)

KIRBY OBSCURA

BARRY FORSHAW

Alarming Tales #2 has only been reprinted in *Shocking Tales* digest #1 in October 1981. But hopefully it'll be included in an upcoming Titan Books S&K "Mystery" collection, similar to the new "Crime" volume that's out now.

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



WILL THE WELL RUN DRY?

There is a built-in hazard in writing a column called *Kirby Obscura*. Editor John Morrow and I were younger men when he suggested that I might be the man to tackle such a tricky job, as I was clearly more interested in the lesser-visited byways of Jack Kirby's Olympian career than in his massive successes, such as his celebrated run on the Marvel superheroes line with Stan Lee before relations soured (not that I don't enjoy such later work—how could you call yourself a Kirby aficionado and not love that period?). But as John shrewdly noticed, what really charged my cylinders were the much less familiar science-fiction, fantasy and horror tales Kirby produced for a variety of publishers which might be said to fall in both the early and late *Captain America* periods—that's to say, after The King's original work on the character with Joe Simon and his later revival with Stan Lee in The Marvel Age.

For me, it is the short, beautifully turned tales which do not feature returning characters, that seemed to give Kirby a chance to really expand his imagination both in terms of his visual imagery and (when he was involved in the writing process) his other, more diverse creative impulses. Today, these concise pieces are something like that first kiss we always remember—you may enjoy equally pleasant experiences as the years roll on, but it's that first rush of pleasure that really stays with you. So I was more than happy to say yes to John when he suggested inaugurating this column—but I have to say that even in that long-ago, prehistoric period, something occurred to me: this was a job with a built-in obsolescence. Sooner or later, I would have covered everything by Kirby which might be described as 'obscure'. And, what's more, as greater quantities of vintage material by the King make a welcome reappearance (for instance in such handsome volumes as the Titan reprint series), the soubriquet "Obscura" becomes harder to justify.

Having said that, however, there is still a way to go yet, as I will prove in this latest missive. Read on, and you will hear about some remarkable Jack Kirby work which may be new to you, but absolutely demands a place in your collection—if, that is, you are a *bona fide,* card-carrying hardcore Kirby collector. And if you aren't, why you reading this magazine?

A LIVING, BREATHING THING...

If we're talking obscure, *Alarming Tales* #2, published in November 1957 by Harvey, should qualify by any definition of the word. The short-lived series of titles that Simon and Kirby created for the company in the mid-to-late '50s are largely forgotten by all but comics historians, and are rarely mentioned in any consideration of Jack Kirby's career—which is a great shame, as among the pages of these neglected books are some of the great glories of this *non-pareil* illustrator. If the cover for this issue of *Alarming Tales* (while striking) does not suggest the guiding hand of Jack Kirby, that's because it is, largely speaking, a Joe Simon creation. But regarding this cover, I realize that I have to tread carefully, as the provenance of this creation has been a subject of some debate.

A man stands in swampy water, clutching a lantern. In the black sky above him, a series of green glowing fireballs rain down from the sky. One of them has fierily burst open, and out of it, arms stretched towards the observer, is a grinning green gargoyle ('.... from outer space,' shouts the blurb, 'a living breathing thing burst out of the fire balls!'). While the inking hand is clearly that of Joe Simon, one might be forgiven for thinking that the initial pencils were the work of the King—but scholarship by Harry Mendryk at the Jack Kirby Museum has revealed that Joe Simon appears to have lifted the threatening alien figure from an earlier panel by an alumnus of the Simon and Kirby studio, Mort Meskin (from *Black Magic* #5, in fact).

DON'T FRIGHTEN THE CHILDREN

To the English eye, what strikes one about this cover is the distinctly non-sinister face of the alien gargoyle. Don't forget that the Comics Code logo is clearly to be seen (albeit hidden behind the 'g' of the word 'Alarming'), so we are now firmly past the period when threatening creatures from outer space could have appropriately frightening features: hence the rather ridiculous, idiotic grin of the creature, notably unthreatening. The reason I say that such a thing will be intriguing to the English reader is the fact that during this period, we in the UK became familiar with the artistic censorship visited upon reprinted American horror comics, whereby monstrous pre-code faces were crassly redrawn to make them as inoffensive as possible—and no DC redrawing of a Kirby Superman face was ever as crudely done as these attempts to shield British schoolchildren from corrupting American horrors. The ludicrous grin on the alien's face

MARK EVANIER

JACK F.A.Q.s

A column of Frequently Asked Questions about Kirby

We start this time with some questions from Michael Wohl:

I have read all the articles and opinions about Vince Colletta and seen the examples of how he took shortcuts and erased parts of Kirby's pencils that seemed too difficult to ink. I wonder if you could tell us who you liked to see inking Jack and also how did Kirby feel about this? And while we're at it, how did Stan "cast" inkers? How did he decide that Sinnott should ink this book while Giacoia should ink that one? And why did Steve Ditko ink an issue of Sgt. Fury *over Dick Ayers?*

Taking the last question first and working backwards... I have no direct knowledge on why Ditko inked that *Sgt. Fury* but I can give you a pretty good theory. Imagine the following.

Ditko walks into the Marvel offices to pick up work. Ordinarily at this point, he and Stan would sit down and decide what the next Spider-Man or Dr. Strange story should be about so he can go off and pencil it, but Stan can't. Maybe he's too busy. Maybe he's home sick. Whatever the reason, Ditko can't leave with a plot to draw, so someone—maybe Stan, maybe Production Manager Sol Brodsky—decides to give him something to ink so he can earn some money the next few days, by which time Stan will be ready to start him on the pencils of a story.

That issue of *Sgt. Fury* (#15) is sitting there, ready to be inked, but no one has been assigned to it yet. George Roussos, working under the name "George Bell," had been more or less the regular inker on the book, but it was around this time that Stan became unhappy with his inking and DC, where he did the bulk of his work and all his penciling, began making noises like, "If you work for Stan, you don't work for us." And Roussos is antsy that someone there will figure out Bell is Roussos and vice-versa. So George has stopped working for Marvel for a while.

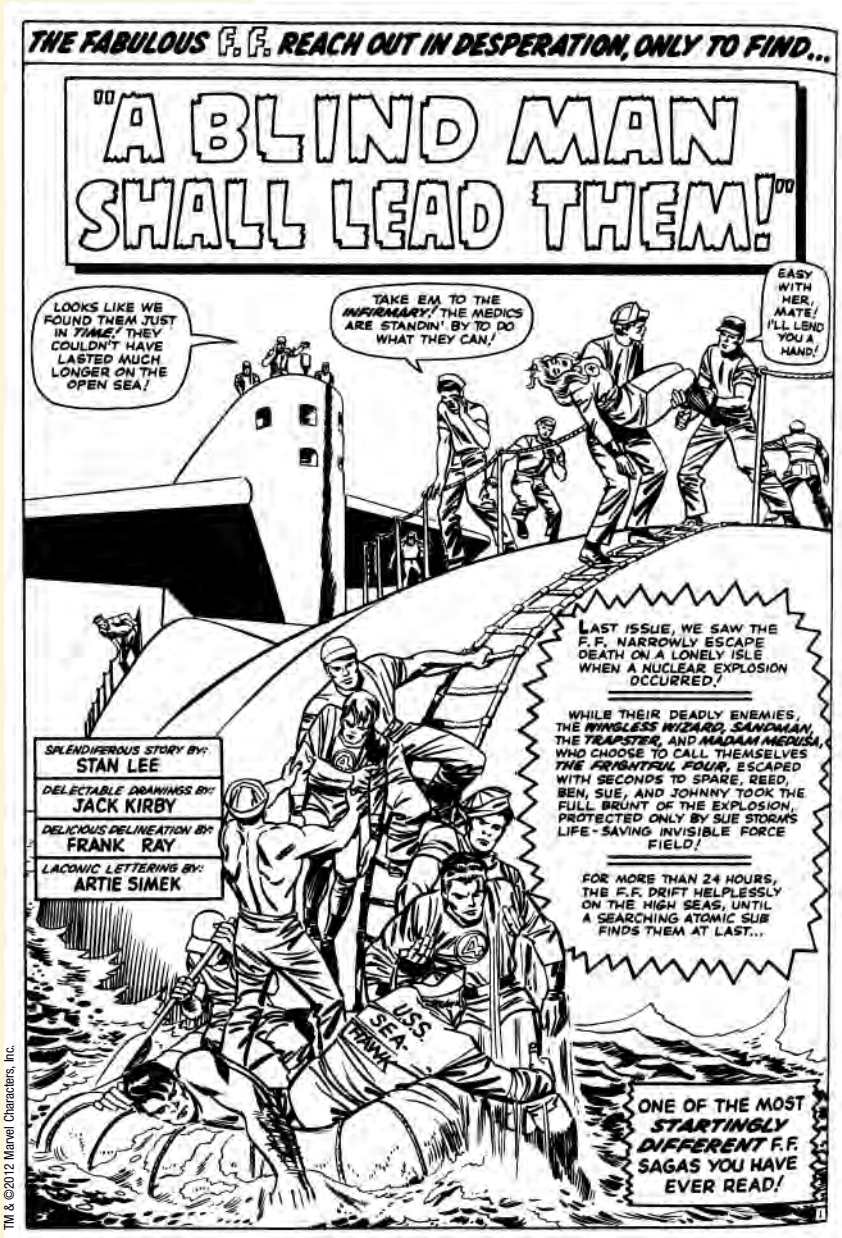
Maybe it's getting late to get someone else started on that issue of *Sgt. Fury,* so Ditko will also be doing the company a favor by getting it done. But I'll bet you the main reason is that Ditko needs something to do and Stan isn't able to work out a plot with him at that moment. Not long after this, Steve takes over the entire plotting of *Spider-Man* and "Dr. Strange." He never again inks someone else's pencils at Marvel since it's never again necessary for him to wait for Stan in order to start working on an issue.

Anyway, I'll wager it was something like that.

"Casting" inkers, as you call it, was not a big deal at Marvel back in the sixties because there usually weren't a lot of choices. They worked with a small talent pool and if you want to draw up a little chart, you can see that there were times when Stan had available to him the services of about four inkers—like Frank Giacoia, Chic Stone, Vince Colletta and Mike Esposito—and whatever Don Heck and Dick Ayers might do when they weren't penciling. Wally Wood was in there for a while too, but once Roussos departed, there weren't many more options for a while.

An awful lot of the inking assignments on Marvel's books then were simply a matter of who was available at the moment and who needed work. Stan tried to steer certain inkers to the major comics, selecting them because he thought they were right for the material. Colletta did not ink Kirby on *Thor* because Stan felt Colletta was the best inker for Kirby pencils. Whether he was or was not, the line of thinking there was that Colletta was the best inker for *Thor*.

(below) Splash page from *Fantastic Four* #39 (June 1965). Note the extra space between the inker's first and last name, and how it's all off-center. It originally was lettered with Frank Giacoia's full name, but he didn't want Marvel's competitors to know he was working for them, so had it changed to the pseudonym "Ray."



Stan's favorite inker for a time was Giacoia. My sense from interviewing most of these guys over the years is that he was also the favorite of the pencilers... the guy they were happiest to have inking their work. Later when Joe Sinnott was lured back with a page rate increase, Sinnott and Giacoia were the two guys who got all the ink work they could handle. They were the two guys Stan and Sol (Sol had some say in this) felt could ink any penciler and any strip, though there were certain strips they liked having them on—Sinnott on *Fantastic Four*, for example.

When they had the "split" books—*Tales of Suspense, Tales to Astonish* and *Strange Tales*—Giacoia was more likely to be assigned to stories in them. Frank, though a tremendous talent and a very nice man, had occasional deadline problems. When it was possible, Stan preferred to assign him to the 10-page stories in books like that as opposed to the 20-page stories in other titles.

(One thing I always found interesting is that like some other inkers, Frank often called on friends to help him with jobs when he was behind. His run inking Gene Colan on *Daredevil* has a lot of that with whole pages inked largely by others, though it looks like Frank did some work on every page, especially when rendering the title character. Those issues are full of help from Mike Peppe, Joe Giella, Mike Esposito and others and he did this on most jobs he did for Marvel. The big exception is when he inked Kirby. He almost never let anyone touch Jack's pages. *Fantastic Four* #39 where Wally Wood inked the Daredevil figures is not an exception to this since it was Stan who enlisted Wally, not Frank.)

So Stan would try to steer *FF* to Sinnott, which would usually be no problem since Jack was prolific and the book was usually well ahead of schedule. If Joe had time to ink something else, they'd give him something else to ink, but for much of the sixties, Joe was also inking for Archie and doing work for *Treasure Chest* so some months, it was all he could do to squeeze in *Fantastic Four.*

And Colletta would get *Thor* which, being Kirby, was usually ahead so it could wait until Vince had time to get to it. And there were a few other books with preferred inkers but basically, it was a question of who needed work at the right moment.

If you look carefully at the credits of Marvel comics in the sixties, you may notice that the inker's name is often not lettered by the same person who lettered the rest of the names there. Sometimes, the spacing is a dead giveaway that they hadn't designed the credit box for a name that short or that long.

That means that when the credits were lettered—probably but a matter of days before the job was given to an inker—they didn't know who that inker would be. They either expected it would be someone else and had that name lettered in there and later had to change it... or they didn't have anyone in mind so they left it blank and filled it in later.

If you're curious as to whether this way of doling out jobs meant that Stan ever had to give a job to someone he didn't think would do a great job, the answer is yes. Many times. There were two factors at work there.

One was a simple matter of deadlines. You have an issue of something sitting there in pencil. If it's going to get to press on time, it's going to have to be inked in the next two weeks. Ideally, you'd like Inker A or Inker B or Inker C but they're all tied up and unavailable. So you settle for Inker W. Everyone who ever edits any significant number of comics occasionally has to settle for Inker W or Letterer Y.

The other factor was keeping people working. This was especially a concern in comics back in the era where the Talent Pool was all guys who'd grown up in the Great Depression (the one in 1929, not the current one) and

(top) Kirby in the Marvel offices in the mid-1960s. Courtesy of the Jack Kirby Museum (www.kirbymuseum.org).

(above) *Tales of Suspense* #77 splash (May 1966). Frank "Ray" Giacoia even seems to downplay his brush-heavy style here, perhaps to make it less recognizeable to DC Comics.

THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR
PRESENTS

The AUTEUR THEORY of COMICS

Stan Lee, 1968. BACKGROUND: Jack Kirby, circa 1970.

THE RECENT *COURT LOSS* FOR THE *JACK KIRBY* ESTATE IN ITS BATTLE WITH *DISNEY, MARVEL COMICS'* CORPORATE OWNER, OVER *COPYRIGHT/OWNERSHIP* OF THE MARVEL CHARACTERS, REVEALED *STAN LEE'S* TESTIMONY AS BEING THE USUAL *LYNCHPIN* IN DECIDING THE CASE IN *HIS,* AND *MARVEL'S,* FAVOR--THAT TESTIMONY ESSENTIALLY PROMULGATING THE SAME *MISCONCEPTION* THAT *HE,* NOT *KIRBY,* WAS THE *TRUE AUTHOR* OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE BY DINT OF HIS *SALARIED* ROLE AS *EDITOR* AND *WRITER,* AND *KIRBY'S* PROFESSIONAL STATUS AS A *WORK-FOR-HIRE* EMPLOYEE. THIS *MISCONCEPTION* IGNORES THE *ACTUAL* ROLE KIRBY PLAYED IN THE *CREATION* OF THOSE COMIC BOOKS WITH LEE, AS THE *AUTEUR* ("AUTHOR" IN FRENCH) OF THEIR *SEMINAL* STORIES. . .

by ARLEN SCHUMER
AUTHOR/DESIGNER, *THE SILVER AGE OF COMIC BOOK ART*

CAHIERS DU CINÉMA

"AUTEUR" IN THE SAME WAY FRANCO-CINEMAPHILES IN THE 1950s--FIRST FRANCOIS TRUFFAUT IN THE FILM JOURNAL CAHIERS DU CINEMA, AND THEN AMERICAN COUNTERPARTS LIKE VILLAGE VOICE FILM CRITIC ANDREW SARRIS--POSITED THEIR AUTEUR THEORY OF FILM, THAT A FILM'S DIRECTOR, AND NOT ITS SCREENWRITER, AS WAS PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT, WAS A FILM'S TRUE AUTHOR.

SO TOO CAN THE AUTEUR THEORY OF FILM BE ACCURATELY APPLIED TO THE "MARVEL METHOD" OF COMIC BOOK AUTHORSHIP, INSTITUTED BY LEE, WHO GAVE HIS ARTISTS (ORIGINALLY AND PRIMARILY KIRBY AND SPIDER-MAN CO-CREATOR STEVE DITKO) ANYTHING FROM A TYPED SYNOPSIS OF A STORY TO A VERBAL SPRINGBOARD OF AN IDEA--THE EQUIVALENT OF THE SCREENPLAY IN FILM--AND THE ARTISTS DREW/PLOTTED/STAGED/PACED THE STORY "SILENTLY" TO FILL THE PAGE COUNT GIVEN, USING TWO-DIMENSIONAL VERSIONS OF THE SAME TOOLS AND DEVICES A MOVIE DIRECTOR USES TO CRAFT A FILM: CASTING, EDITING, LIGHTING, SOUND, CHOREOGRAPHY--AFTER WHICH LEE WOULD ADD DIALOGUE AND CAPTIONS TO THE ARTWORK. LEE'S INTERVIEWS FROM THE '60s, WHICH STAND IN CONTRAST, AND SOMEWHAT OF A CONTRADICTION, TO HIS TESTIMONY IN THIS CASE, WERE SUBMITTED IN DOCUMENTS--ALL EVENTUALLY THROWN OUT BY THE JUDGE--DURING KIRBY EXPERTS JOHN MORROW (PUBLISHER OF THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR) AND KIRBY BIOGRAPHER MARK EVANIER'S TESTIMONY; HERE'S AN EXAMPLE:

"I WOULD TELL JACK THE MAIN IDEA THAT I WANTED, AND THEN WE WOULD TALK ABOUT IT, AND WE'D COME UP WITH SOMETHING. I WOULD GIVE HIM THE OUTLINE FOR THE STORY. AS WE WENT ON, AND WE HAD BEEN WORKING TOGETHER FOR YEARS, THE OUTLINES I GAVE HIM WERE SKIMPIER AND SKIMPIER. I MIGHT SAY SOMETHING LIKE, 'IN THIS STORY LET'S HAVE DR. DOOM KIDNAP SUE STORM, AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAS TO GO OUT AND RESCUE THEM. AND IN THE END, DOOM DOES THIS AND THAT.'"

★ REVUE MENSUELLE DU CINÉMA ● AOUT - SEPTEMBRE 1956 ●

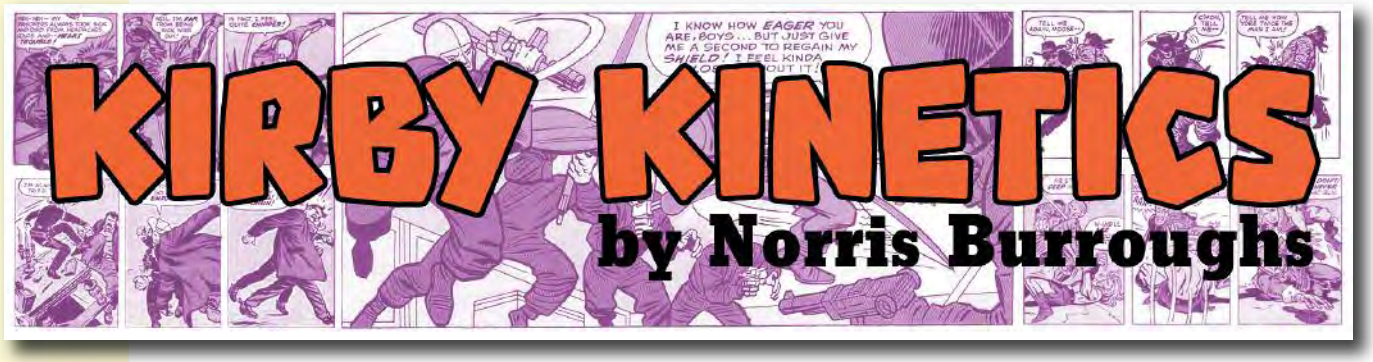
Francois Truffaut, circa 1959.

"AND THA ALL I WO A 20-PAGE ST

...WAS 20 PAGE 20 BEAUTIFUL PENCIL WHICH

JACK WOULD DETAILS AND THEN IT WAS

...A CROSSWO THE PANELS BA IN THE DIALOG



Margin Notes

From what we know about Jack Kirby, he was generally happiest working more or less independently of other writers. The King was essentially a creator, an artist who plotted stories as he drew, with the natural flow that came easily to him. However, there are many who believe that Kirby's best and certainly most commercially successful work was in collaboration with writer Stan Lee. There has been a good bit of ink used discussing just who did what in that process. In conventional comic production involving a separate writer and artist team, the writer usually provides the artist with a full script to work from. Lee is famous for having instituted the Marvel Method, wherein an artist would plot a story based on the sketchiest of outlines provided by the writer. Once the story was drawn the artist would supply the writer with explanatory notes in the page's margin, whereupon the writer would fill in the final script. Lee believed that his artists were strong plotters and allowing them creative freedom would result in a better story. Certainly, in the case of Jack Kirby, he was correct.

Recently, I saw a film clip of Stan Lee looking at Jack Kirby's original artwork for *Fantastic four* #12 for the first time since it had been published. One of the first things that caught Lee's eye were the margin notes in the panel borders, which he initially assumed belonged to Kirby. Lee started to explain the Marvel Method of writing, wherein he would give Kirby a rough idea of the plot, Kirby would elaborate the plot, pencil the book and deliver to Lee with Kirby's notes for scripting in the margins. Halfway through his explanation, Lee realized that the margin notes were his own, written as reminders to him, prior to final scripting.

(below) Original art to *Fantastic Four* #12 (March 1963), showing a detail of Stan Lee's margin notes.
Scan courtesy Heritage Auctions.

This exchange raises an interesting question. Just when did the process known as the Marvel Method actually begin, and what was the nature of the creative process prior to its inception? Several comic book historians allege that in the beginning, Stan Lee provided his artists with full scripts. Lee's brother, Larry Lieber has stated in interviews that he wrote full scripts for Kirby as well. However, Kirby and several of his co-workers

WHAT'S THE POINT

OF A ROUND SHIELD?

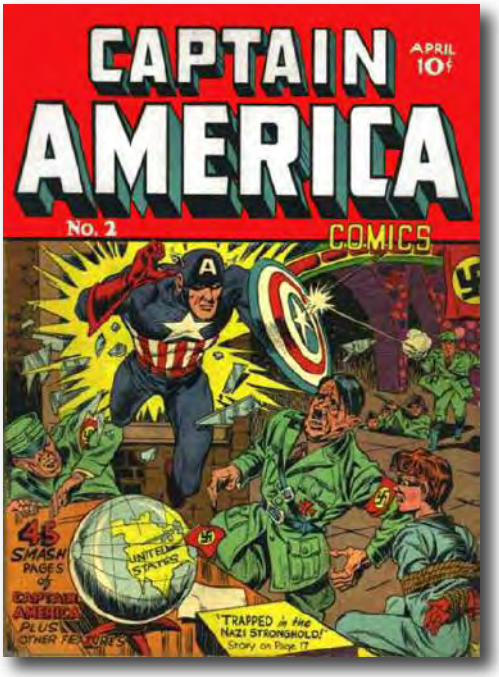
INCIDENTAL ICONOGRAPHY

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

While Captain America was not the first patriotic superhero, he quickly became the most popular. The cover of *Captain America Comics* #1 expressed a widely held, but largely unspoken, sentiment in the U.S. at the time—recall that the issue debuted months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the country's formal entry into World War II. But while the original design for Captain America was by Joe Simon (see his original sketch at right), Jack Kirby became more associated with the character and returned to detailing his exploits several times throughout his career. Jack remained remarkably (for him) consistent in how he drew Cap, but he did make several design changes to the iconic shield, most of which have gone unnoticed.

The original shield design, by Simon, was largely triangular in shape, with a scalloped top. It featured three stars and seven red, white and blue stripes. The splash page of that first issue sports what is basically just a somewhat tighter version of Simon's original sketch. Though the number of stripes varies a bit throughout the first issue, Jack generally kept things consistent.

The first issue of *Captain America Comics* was wildly popular and garnered a lot of attention—including from John Goldwater, the dominant partner in MLJ Publications (now known as Archie Comics) whose own patriotic hero, The Shield, had debuted a year earlier. Simon notes in his autobiography that Goldwater was "admittedly upset that Captain America had far surpassed his hero" and he objected to the shape of Cap's shield because he felt it was too similar to The Shield's chest insignia. Martin Goodman, who published *Captain America Comics*, was leary of legal action. Simon quotes him as saying, ."... lawsuits are expensive and we'd better go over there to talk to him." To avoid a lawsuit, they agreed to change the shield to a circular design.



(Interestingly, they found themselves in Goldwater's offices again the following year when he threatened to file suit over a villain in *Captain America Comics* #6 called The Hangman, feeling it infringed on the MLJ character of the same name. That Goodman backed down a second time and promised to never use the character again speaks volumes to the relationship between the two publishers.)

What seems to go unnoticed by many fans, however, is that the convex circular shield that debuted in *Captain America Comics* #2 is not the same design they're familiar with. Throughout Jack's work on the stories in the 1940s, he drew Cap's shield with two red bands and two white bands. All of the shield artwork after the company became formally known as Marvel in the 1960s displays two red bands and only a single white band. A minor distinction, perhaps, but it does have an impact on the overall visual.

The round shield became more of an offensive weapon as well. Cap does backhand one crook with the triangular shield in his first issue, but the shield was largely incidental in that fight; Cap's fist would have been there if the shield wasn't. With the round shield, he begins to use it as a battering ram and large, blunt object, eventually throwing it for the first time in *Captain America Comics* #4. It's thrown a second time in #6, and becomes something of a regular tactic beginning in #8.

Jack came back to Captain America in the 1960s in the pages of *Strange Tales*. In issue #114, a villain called The Acrobat poses as Cap using a three color band shield. As noted at the end of the story, it was a test to see if fans wanted a return of the original character, who later made his famous return in *Avengers* #4. In both *Strange Tales* and *Avengers*, while readers see a three-color-band shield for the first time, it's still not what they're likely most familiar with. Unlike the four-color-band shield from

OBSCURE COVERAGE

Kirby covers you probably haven't seen, featuring art reconstruction and color by Harry Mendryk

Shield-Wizard Comics #7 (Summer 1942, inks by Irv Novick, and starring The Shield, MLJ's less popular predecessor of Cap). Was this S&K's payback for getting bumped off *Captain America*?

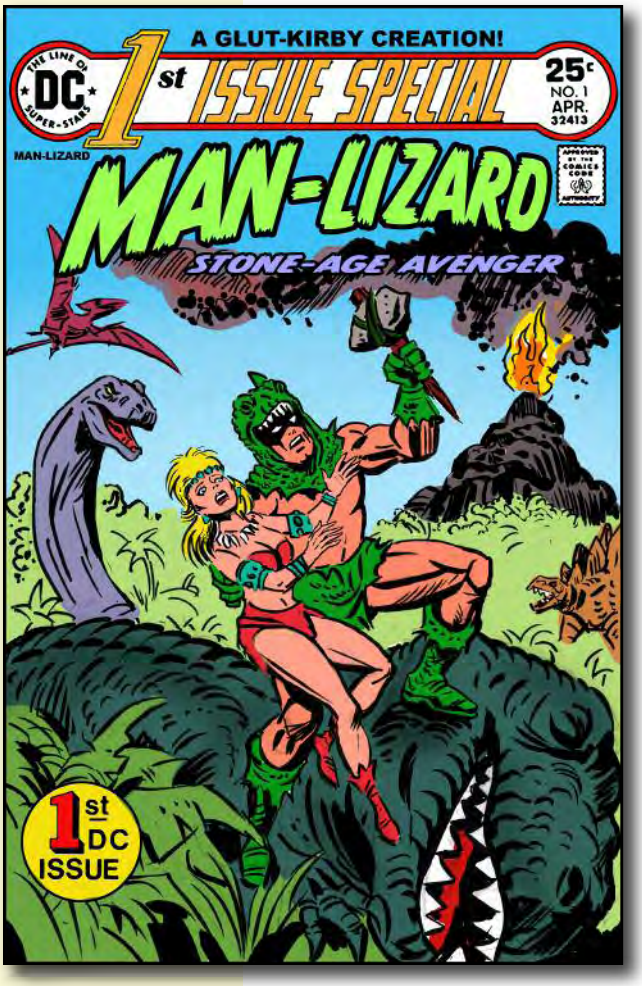
DEVIL IN THE DETAILS?

Don Glut interviewed by Pete Von Sholly

(below) Pete Von Sholly, himself an accomplished storyboard artist in Hollywood, drew this cover just for our article. Check out his reminiscences of Hollywood at *www.vonshollywood.com,* and check out his upcoming digital tome from TwoMorrows, *Pete Von Sholly's MONSTERBOOK,* available later this year.

[Don Glut is a professional movie director, screenwriter, and author, perhaps best known for writing the novelization of Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back. *He's done screenwriting for such shows as* Shazam!, Land of the Lost, Transformers, Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends, Duck Tales, G.I. Joe, X-Men, *and many more. He was also responsible for creating some of the characters and much of the backstory for the Masters of the Universe toy line. He took time out to speak to his friend Pete Von Sholly about his experiences with Kirby.}*

PETE VON SHOLLY: You almost collaborated in a way with Jack Kirby! *TJKC* would like to know about that.
DON GLUT: We didn't really collaborate as much as thrash one of my old projects around. I'd met Jack in the early 1970s at the San Diego Comic-Con shortly after he moved to Southern California. This was one of his first San Diego convention appearances. I liked him from the start, a really down-to-Earth, no-pretentions kind of guy. He reminded me of one of the Newsboy Legion or Boy Commandos grown up. I told him I had a project I'd appreciate his looking at and he invited me up to his house in Thousand Oaks so I could show it to him. So, of course, I took him up on his invitation. It was a long drive from my Studio City apartment, but almost all freeway—and worth going the distance. When I arrived, he told me that I'd just missed Jim Steranko, who had just left—and who, in later years, become a good friend.



VON SHOLLY: I know he sent you a nice Fantastic Four drawing as a result on an early fan letter to Marvel.
GLUT: Yes, I was a big fan of *Fantastic Four.* I mailed Jack a cover I'd torn off of an issue of *FF*—the one featuring the "Infant Terrible"—and asked him if he would sign it, and also if he might do a sketch of the FF for me. I mailed it to the address listed in the comic book. To my delight he honored both of my requests, which included a very nice pencil drawing of all four FF members.

VON SHOLLY: How did you come to actually know Jack?
GLUT: I never knew Jack *really* well, although we'd see each other at conventions, parties, CAPS meetings and other events. We always talked a bit, but never for any great length of time. He always had a lot of fans—and pros—around him, so I tried not to play the fanboy by monopolizing his time.

VON SHOLLY: What project did you and he interact on and was it your own creation?
GLUT: It was a project of my own called *Man-Lizard*. The character was supposed to be Earth's first superhero, a "Stone Age Avenger," who lived in prehistoric times, wore a costume made of the skin of a *Ceratosaurus* and the hair of a mammoth (yes, this was one of those mythical time periods I made up where humans and dinosaur coexisted), and had reptile-based super powers. It would have been the first of its kind—but then Hanna-Barbera later came up with *Mightor*, and you also had a character similar in some ways, *Tyranostar.*

VON SHOLLY: Was it created for a specific publisher?
GLUT: No, it started out as just a fan project when I was still living in Chicago. I wrote and drew the origin story, pretty amateurishly. At that time I didn't even really think of selling it as a professional feature. People in Chicago, at least the ones I've known, don't generally get such grandiose ideas. It wasn't until after I moved to California—and even wrote a screenplay based on the character as an assignment for my screenwriting class at USC film school—that I started seeing the potential in doing something professional with *Man-Lizard*. In the late 1960s I had an "in" at Prestige Publications, the company that put out *Modern Monsters* magazine. Prestige was going to do an issue of a magazine called *Ka-Pow!* that Larry Byrd and I created and were to produce—a kind of *Creepy* or *Eerie,* but featuring various off-beat superheroes. But although some splash pages and scripts got produced, the magazine never really got started.

VON SHOLLY: What prompted you to bring the idea up with Jack?

INNERVIEW

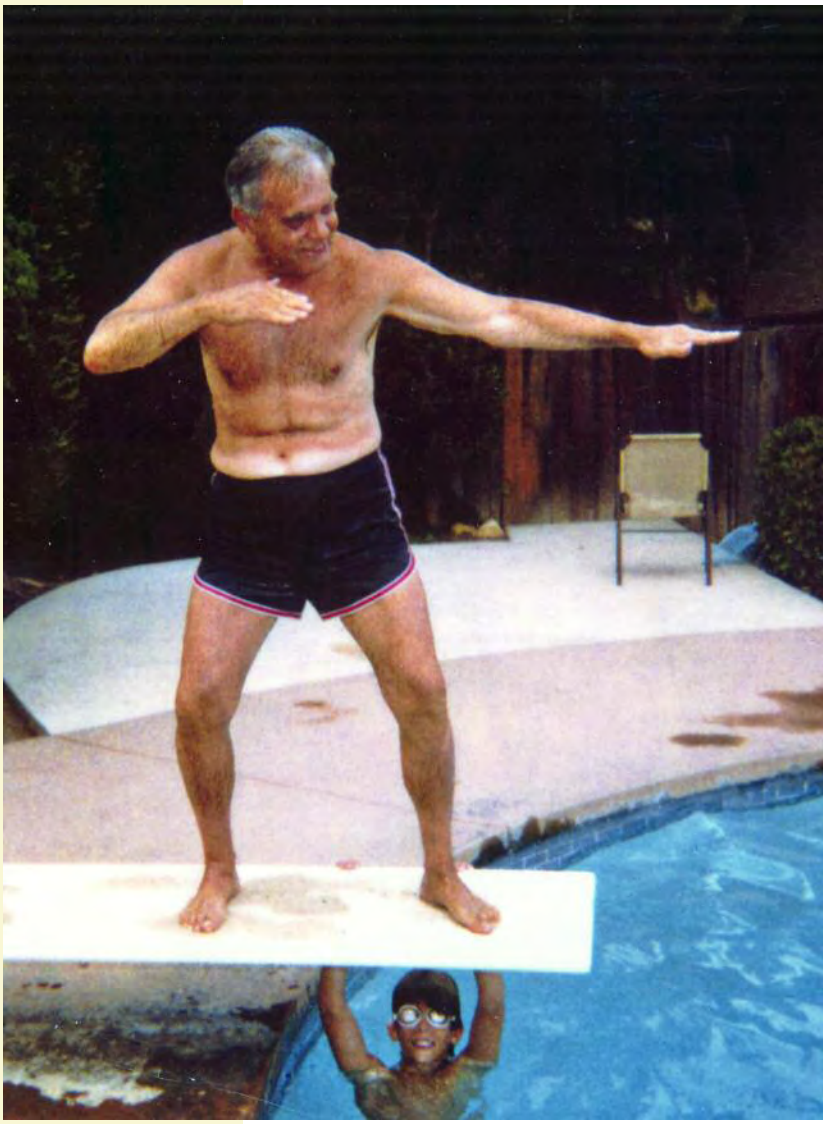
LITTLE KNOWN HAPPENSTANCES

Interview with Kirby family friend Scott Fresina, by Jerry Boyd

(Entertainment wasn't limited to the penciled page with the King. His superlative work in the field of sequential art endeared him to millions of admirers over time, and sometimes they connected with the Kirby family, providing Jack and Roz with some memorable moments! And thanks to Scott Free(-sina)'s steel-trap memory banks, here are a few obscure funny stories starring just... the happy couple! This interview was conducted on March 22, 2007.)

TJKC: Jack was/is known for his energy. Do you feel that's an accurate statement?
SCOTT FRESINA: He spent a lot of time with us, I gotta tell you! It'd be 9-9:30 at night, quarter to ten, and he had this energy. I dunno, he'd sleep in the day and work in the night, whatever—and Roz' d come in and clap her hands and say, "C'mon boys, time to go!" *(laughter)* And Jack would still be talking, God bless him. As we're driving away, he'd come out to the driveway behind us and wave goodbye. I can still see him. He was super-accessible. Guys as well known as he was, I was... just surprised that his phone number was listed. Roz used to tell me, "I don't believe how Jack could do this. One guy would call in... he was autistic, or had a speech impediment—it was hard to understand him. I've tried talking to him but it's frustrating, but Jack would hang on the phone with the guy for an hour!"

Jack heard this from the other room and came in smiling, and said, "And that's not all!" Jack told me there was another fan who'd call him from a psychiatric ward somewhere *(laughter)* and he'd ramble on about the Negative Zone! Apparently, this guy believed he had pierced the veil! As Jack told me this, I fell out laughing and I finally said, "I think you're kidding!" Jack answered, "No, no, no! One time he called me, he suddenly stopped and shouted, 'Oh, no—they see me! I gotta hang up now! I'll call you later!'"



(below) Jack hangs ten in the late 1980s at his backyard pool in Thousand Oaks, California. That's his grandson Jeremy hanging onto the diving board.

A funny anecdote I remember about Jack's studio *(chuckles)*... Jack had stopped driving after a while. Roz did all the driving. I don't think Jack's eyesight had been failing so much, but he'd had a few minor accidents and fender-benders. But then Roz's eyesight started to fail. She had these really thick eyeglasses. I can say happily that before she died, she had some eye surgery and corrected it, so she needed no glasses and could see perfectly. But prior to that, Jack told me he was in the studio working, and the car comes bursting through the wall! *(laughter)* Roz couldn't see where the wall was and she was bringing the car into the garage and BWWW-WOOOWWWW!! Right through the wall! And there Jack is sitting, drawing, and I had to stop laughing and apologize *(to him)*! I said, "Y'know, I can't help it, but whenever you describe something like this, I... just know how you would've drawn it!"

Roz told me once that they got a letter from a Jesuit priest around the time Jack announced work on "The Hunger Dogs." Roz said, "We were so surprised to find the priest had enjoyed Jack's work on *The New Gods* books! He had taken the vow of silence, and to pass time, he read copies of the *New Gods*...." He'd read the Fourth World titles in the early '80s, I guess, so he was set for "The Hunger Dogs." Jack added, "He made some interesting observations about some of it *(Kirby's concepts)*. He felt the Mother Box was very prophetic; he saw it as a computer that a life form needs to survive in the immediate environment and that future computers would be there to shield us from different things. He was glad the book was back." Jack and Roz were sweating out the phone call at first when the guy introduced himself as a priest, but later they were extremely relieved they hadn't offended the Catholic Church! *(laughter)*

Okay, we're gonna get a tad *risqué* here. It's not too bad. Mike Thibodeaux and I were looking over the unpublished (at that point) pages to *Galaxy Green (see* Kirby Collector *#20)*. Kirby was showing them to us

CUT-UPS

KIRBY'S COLLAGES IN CONTEXT

by Steven Brower

(This piece originally appeared in Imprint, *the daily design blog from* Print *magazine, and can be found online at:* http://imprint.printmag.com/illustration/jack-kirby%E2%80%99s-collages-in-context/*)*

Jack Kirby had choices to make, especially considering he could do it all: writing, penciling, inking, coloring. Along the way he found it prudent to concentrate on what he could do best: dream big and render those flights of fancy in graphite. Why then would he choose to break his stride and search through various magazines in search of the *right* image, rubber cement in hand?

Kirby's entrée into the world of collage did not begin with the *Fantastic Four*, or even by his own hand. Richard Hamilton included a (Simon &) Kirby *Young Romance* splash page in his seminal 1956 collage "Just What Is It that Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?" launching both Pop Art and Kirby into the fine art world. "High" culture had begun to give sway to pop culture through the most democratic of visual art forms, collage.

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(above) *"Just What Is It that Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?"* by Richard Hamilton, 1956.

(below) "*Compotier avec fruits, violon et verre"* by Pablo Picasso, 1912.

(right) Rodchenko, Russian Constructivism.

All collage images TM & ©2012 the respective owners.

True, its origins could be traced back to ancient Japan, and examples exist during the thirteenth century in Persia, spreading to Turkey and eventually Europe by the 1600s. The modern version that first captured the public's attention was created in 1912, when Pablo Picasso glued newspaper clippings into a Cubist painting. The artist's and general public's fascination with collage had begun. Artists of the Russian Constructivist, Bauhaus, Dada and Surrealist movements pushed the form further. When Henri Matisse's eyesight began to fail, he turned to cut paper collage, producing "Jazz," celebrating the other 20th century art form that employed improvisation and spontaneity as a main ingredient. During the Abstract Impression movement of the 1950s, Rauschenberg, Reinhart and Motherwell explored the medium further.

Artists more widely known for their other talents, such as William S. Burroughs, John Cage and Louis Armstrong all created collage. In comics, the ever-inventive Will Eisner employed the technique in *The Spirit* in "The Story of Gerhard Shnobble" in 1948. However this featured a single aerial cityscape with drawn figures and captions on top, to connote flight, rather than fully realized collaged elements. If anything, as dramatic as the effect was, this could be seen as a shortcut on the part of the artist, as much time was saved rendering architecture. Never one to take the easy way out, Jack Kirby was the first in comics to utilize collage as entirely something new and explore its full potential, despite the crude printing techniques of the time.

Beginning in 1964 with the *Fantastic Four*, Kirby created collages to convey fanciful scenes of cosmic dimensions. These early comic collages were used to further the storytelling and appear to be created concurrently. However, according to former assistant and Kirby biographer Mark Evanier, by the 1970s Kirby would often create collages from his collection of photographic magazines such as *National Geographic* and *Life,* whenever the mood struck him, and make good use of them at

GALLERY 1

THE KING OF COLLAGE

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(above) When Kirby returned to Marvel in 1975, he continued using collage, as here for his adaptation of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey.*

(right) *Fantastic Four* #39, 1965.

(below) *Marvelmania Portfolio*, 1970.

Kirby's first published collage art appeared in *Fantastic Four* #24 (cover-dated March 1964). Jack would've likely produced and handed in the artwork to Marvel in late 1963, at the height of the Pop Art hysteria. He would continue creating collages for the next two decades, with his final piece produced specifically for comics appearing in the 1985 *Hunger Dogs* graphic novel (at last, finally being reproduced in full-color with quality paper and printing).

Friends and family say Jack found the art of collage relaxing and therapeutic. Fans found them fascinating in print, but until recently, his collages have brought only modest prices on the original art market (and generally only are in demand if they were published in an actual comic book). That seems to be changing, as even his unpublished collages (such as "Goddesses" shown on page 52 of this issue) are fetching higher prices—sometimes more than the cost of pages from some of his less popular comics series.

In that spirit, we present the following checklist of Kirby's published collage work, in chronological order of the date of publication.

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- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #24, March 1964 (first published collage art, 2 panels)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #29, Aug. 1964 (1 collage page)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #32, Nov. 1964 (1 collage page)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #33, Dec. 1964 (1 collage page)
- **SGT. FURY** #13, Dec. 1964 (1 collage panel)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #37, April 1965 (1 collage page)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #39, June 1965 (1 collage page, shown at right))
- **FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL** #3, 1965 (1 collage page)
- **JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY** #120, Sept. 1965 (1 collage panel)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #48, March 1966 (1 collage page)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #51, June 1966 (1 collage page)
- **THOR** #131, Aug. 1966 (1 collage panel)
- **THOR** #132, Sept. 1966 (1 collage page)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #55, Oct. 1966 (1 collage panel)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #62, May 1967 (2 collage pages)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR SPECIAL** #6, Nov. 1968 (2 collage pages)
- **THOR** #160, Jan. 1969 (1 collage page)
- **THOR** #161, Feb. 1969 (2 collage pages)
- **THOR** #162, March 1969 (2 collage pages)
- **FANTASTIC FOUR** #89, Aug. 1969 (1 collage page)
- **MARVELMANIA PORTFOLIO**, 1970 (right) (collage of astronaut riding spacecraft)
- **SUPERMAN'S PAL JIMMY OLSEN** #134, Dec. 1970 (2 collage pages)

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GALLERY 2

UNUSED AT DC

The unseen and unused pages from Kirby's 1971-75 tenure at DC Comics.

Some were discarded because of a shortened page count, and Jack needed to lose a page. Other times he just miscounted. Some are concept drawings to sell the idea, never intended for the public. Either way, these are a fascinating glimpse into Kirby's mind and working process in the early-to-mid 1970s.

Below: *OMAC* presentation piece, circa 1973.
Art from the Jack Kirby Museum's Original Art Digital Archive (www.kirbymuseum.org).

Page 57: *Demon* #2 rejected page, 1972.

Page 58-59: *Demon* #1 unused pages, 1972.

Page 60: Unused *Mister Miracle* #7 cover, 1972.

Page 61: Jettisoned *Mister Miracle* #12 page, 1973.

Page 62: *Manhunter* concept drawings, circa 1974. Scan courtesy Jeremy Kirby.

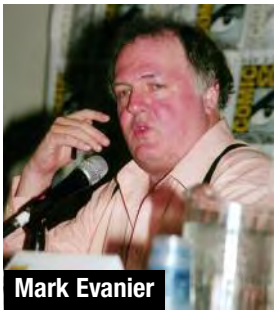
Page 63: Page from the never-published story "The Maid" drawn for *True Divorce Cases* #1, 1971.

TRIBUTE

2011 KIRBY TRIBUTE PANEL

Transcribed by Steven Tice, and edited by John Morrow • Photos by Chris Ng

Held Sunday, July 24, 2011. Moderated by Mark Evanier, and featuring Walter Simonson, Erik Larsen, Richard Kyle, Mike Royer, and Jonathan Ross.


Mark Evanier

MARK EVANIER: This is the Jack Kirby tribute panel. Guess who I am? *[laughter]* One of the neatest things at this convention that I've learned is that I can patch my iPad into the projection screen here. I want to show you a photo that I found too late to put into my book on Jack. *[pause, laughter]*

This is Steve Sherman, who's sitting over there. Steve Sherman, ladies and gentlemen, *[applause]* and myself, and I think this may have been Jack's Irvine house. Roz, I am sure, took this photo, and this was in—Lisa Kirby gave me every photo she could find of Jack; I prowled

(below) Unfinished version of the cover for *Tales of Suspense* #92 (Aug. 1967). Kirby pasted a collage over it; see page 52.

(next page, bottom) One positive side effect of the Marvel/Kirby lawsuit is this unused *FF* page surfaced during depositions.

through them and prowled through them, and somehow I missed this one the first time through and found it when I reorganized the photos to give back to her after the book went to press. I think I'm 17 in this?

STEVE SHERMAN: Probably, and I'm probably 19. You look happy! *[laughter]*

EVANIER: Jack looks happy, that's the nice part. It's a good shot of him in his natural habitat, at the drawing table.

We do these panels every year because I spend an awful lot of my time at this convention talking about Jack, and I'm sure I'm not the only one. You walk around that room downstairs and you see his influence everywhere. And I don't mean just, you see a lot of people in Galactus masks, or Thor merchandise, or Captain America memorabilia. What you see is Jack's definition of comics, which transcended those things printed on cheap newsprint. You see that definition of comics all over the room, and... the oddest things remind me of him. There were people downstairs doing this science-fiction-y dance last night, and I—don't you just love the fact that nobody in a costume seems to be able to take a picture anywhere, except right where we want to walk in the aisles? *[laughter]* But they're doing this science-fiction number, and I remember—Steve, do you remember how Jack had this thing about dance as a... "comics as dance"?

SHERMAN: Right.

EVANIER: I thought of it, kind of shrugged and thought, "Okay, that doesn't make a lot of sense," but some of the things Jack said didn't make a lot of sense at that moment. And there's "comics as dance," they're doing an interpretive ballet in the aisles at a comic convention, and it is comics, somehow, on a strange level.

So we're going to talk about Jack for a while. I'll start it by asking everybody in the audience who has a Kirby-related announcement about something that they're publishing or producing to offer it. Let me introduce to you the dais at this moment. On the far side is one of my favorite collaborators and a gentleman who has become an amazing artist in this business with his comic *The Savage Dragon.* This is Mr. Erik Larsen. *[applause]* And I've known this next gentleman for an awful long time, and I asked him to come here. One of the themes of the convention this year is fifty years of comic fandom, and Richard was a pioneer of comic fandom. There are some who credit him with being the first person to use the term "graphic story" in an article about comics, and in the early seventies he had a bookstore in Long Beach, which was the center of intelligentsia in Southern California for people who understood what comics could be. He imported foreign comics, one of the first people to do that. Any time you went to his store, there were great writers and artists hanging around and talking. Just to go there was like a mini-comic-convention, but with really smart people. This is Mr. Richard Kyle. *[applause]* I'll be asking Richard to relate the story of a project he did with Jack that you all are familiar with. And a person I've known even longer than I have known Richard, and who was another one of those people who was often hanging around the store, Mr. Mike Royer, ladies and gentlemen. *[applause]* Another artist who I admire tremendously—


Steve Sherman

many of you have seen a brand new book that is reprinting his *Thor* work off the original art and—is it the exact same size you did it? The exact same size it was done. This is Mr. Walt Simonson. *[applause]* And rushing here from another meeting, so he will probably be late and may not get here much before the panel ends, but I asked British TV personality and devout comic fan Jonathan Ross to join us, and he says he will, and we'll talk about stuff until he gets here. Let me take this off the screen. We've got a couple more photos here, if I can remember how to do this. Here's one with Joe Simon. *[Mark flips through several photos on-screen]* In the background you can see this was a traveling exhibit that Neal Kirby put together of Jack's original art at a couple of conventions, and it looks like a San Diego con from the badge they're wearing.

Let me introduce you to the publisher of the *Jack Kirby Collector,* Mr. John Morrow. *[applause]*

This is the trustee, curator of the Kirby Online Museum, Mr. Rand Hoppe. *[applause]*

RAND HOPPE: I received some phone calls recently from a movie studio in Hollywood. I don't know if you're familiar with the story, but Jack did some drawings for a theme park movie project called *The Lord of Light* back in the eighties, I think? Or seventies. And apparently the story is that those drawings were used to get hostages out of Iran by the CIA, because the CIA created a fake movie production company, and went to Iran looking

Unused cover pencils for *The Comic Reader* #100 (Aug. 1973), and the final version that was used (below).
Art from the Jack Kirby Museum's Original Art Digital Archive (www.kirbymuseum.org).

JONATHAN ROSS: I apologize for being late, I was stuck behind people with capes outside the Omni hotel, *[laughter]* which isn't a bad place to be. But I guess Mark invited me because he knows what a devoted Kirby fan I am, and always have been. My son, who is here as well, his middle name is Kirby. I named him after the greats, Harvey Kirby Ross. I wanted him to be Wolf Cthulhu Kirby Galactus Ross *[laughter]*, but my wife said, "Idiot." But he tells it well, "That's what my name was going to be!" But he's so proud his name's Kirby. Like most kids, he loves comics, but he's kind of equally excited about videogames and stuff like that, but certainly he loves and admires Jack's work, and he feels very honored to have borrowed your family name, so thank you for the love. And I also have—I don't know whether to talk about it, but I also have a huge collection of Kirby artwork I'm lucky enough to have. I've spent far too much money, and I always lied to my wife about exactly how much. *[laughter]* I'll be glad to bring it over some time; some of them are quite rare pieces, and I always let the guys from the *Kirby Collector* scan it all.

There's one thing I might just say, I made a documentary called *In Search of Steve Ditko*, I don't know if anyone saw that one. *[applause]* Prior to that, many, many years ago, before I had the kind of clout in TV that I had in that period to get that off the ground, one of the determining factors that allowed me to make that is the fact that they knew that Steve Ditko was alive, of course. And I had suggested a Kirby thing, but because they knew there was no chance of us speaking to Jack, for a mainstream TV channel, that seemed to be an issue. But, many, many years ago, when I first started in TV, I tried for about three years to get those people interested in making a Jack Kirby documentary. I went to meet Melvyn Bragg, who you might know as Lord Melvyn Bragg in the UK. He was in charge of a very popular arts magazine show for years, called *The South Bank Show.* You've probably seen some of them over here on PBS, *South Bank Shows*. And I kind of got quite close to him committing to doing the Kirby, and in the end they pulled it because, of course, they said, at the time, "No one's going to watch a


Jonathan Ross

show about comics on TV." They couldn't see the bigger picture, they couldn't see what Jack had created, what he meant to so many people, and just what an influence he has been on not just American popular culture, but globally on popular culture. I've had a very interesting, wonky, roller coaster career, as some of you may know, but that's probably my only actual regret, that I never got to persuade anyone to finance that Jack Kirby documentary.

EVANIER: Wow. What was the reaction like to the Ditko documentary? What kind of response did you get?

ROSS: It was pretty positive. I mean, it was on BBC 4, which is one of the minority BBC channels, which I think they're thinking of shutting down—which is a shame, because they do so much great stuff. Some devout Stan Lee fans came to me, and they were angry at the way I grilled Stan about not sharing—in my opinion, never sharing—the love, never sharing the credits properly with Steve and Jack for that period, there. And we had a fairly fine conversation on camera, I know you've seen it, in which I—and I respect Stan a lot, I think Stan, he's a great talent, there's no two ways about it. But I do think that he achieved his status on the shoulders of great talents, to be quite frank. In particular, Jack, specifically, but also Steve, and maybe some of the other guys from that period, there. And I still think it's a shame that, for whatever reasons, he can't see that how many of us see that. But I wouldn't take away from his contribution, because it's massive and magnificent, and those books are great because they were Jack and Stan together, and Steve and Stan together, and that's the way I always think of them. They were "Jack and Stan," "Steve and Stan," and not the other way around—which, by the way, is how he chose to word it on the pages. So that would probably be the only kind of, not so much negative, but kind of critical feedback we got from that. Some people thought we shouldn't have gone and knocked on Steve's door because he'd made it clear to us that he didn't want to speak to us, but I just couldn't resist, I'm afraid. And he was very charming and sweet with us, and he told me some interesting things about Spider-Man that I think I've shared maybe with you, and some people, but this probably isn't the place. I don't want to take up time talking about Steve when we're here to talk about Jack.

Rand Hoppe at the online Jack Kirby Museum has done a tremendous job tracking down all of Jack's original costume designs for a 1969 Julius Caesar play. Find all the details at: *http://kirbymuseum.org/caesar*

(below) 1983 Thing drawing.

EVANIER: You can talk a little about Steve. *[laughter]* Anybody in this room who's interested and a fan of Steve Ditko? *[applause]*

ROSS: I think he was one of the best inkers, in that early period of Marvel, that Jack ever had.

EVANIER: We were at Bob Kane's funeral. There were four people there who were in the comic business. There was myself, Stan Lee, Mike Barr, and Paul Smith. And Kane's family treated us like, "Oh, the comic book industry has sent its emissaries." That we were delegates the industry had voted. We just all came on our own. And with Stan there was this very long period of lowering Mr. Kane into the ground. The elevators weren't working right on the thing, and I'm standing there waiting on it. And Stan Lee, so help me, he turns to me and says, "You know, Steve Ditko was the best inker Jack ever had." *[laughter]* And I was like, did I miss something? *[laughter]* And we started talking about that. And I think Stan recognized Jack was the greater contributor, because Jack did more books and was involved with more characters, but I think he personally enjoyed his collaborations with Ditko more because he felt more like there was a give-and-take between them, whereas Jack would just say, "Okay, fine," and go home and do it. And he loved Ditko's artwork, he loved Ditko's inking, and he said, "I wish that I'd had two Steve Ditkos—one just to ink Jack all the time, but I couldn't spare Ditko for that."

ROSS: Did Jack ink his own work much?

EVANIER: Not very much. He didn't like inking stuff.

AUDIENCE: Roz inked his stuff.

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(above) Jan Capodiferro attended the 1975 New York Comic Art Convention, and had Jack draw this sketch of Thor, Jan's favorite hero, for the princely sum (at that time) of $25. He also purchased one by Neal Adams (above right). Jan asked Kirby why he drew Thor smiling, to which Jack replied, "He is happy to see you."

(below) A mid-1970s Kirby sketch of the Hulk.

EVANIER: Roz inked a few things, assisting him. I think it's overexaggerating to give Roz the inking credit on that. What he would do with that is, when he had to ink something, Roz had had—when Jack met Roz, she was working in fashion layout design and doing artwork. She was very handy with a pen at doing little patterns and such, and he would give her the pages after they were penciled and lettered, and give her a static pen, a pen with a very static line, and she would outline everything, then he would take a brush and go in and heavy-up the lines. And I think he obliterated about 85% of what she did going over it, but it helped him to—I think what it did is it stopped him from redrawing everything when he inked it. Every line that isn't a static line on that page is Jack, and a brush, and "heavy-ing" things up, and putting in black areas and shadows.

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ROSS: It's a shame he didn't go back and do that over Vince Colletta's stuff. *[laughter, applause]*

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EVANIER: Let the record show that, for the fourth time at a panel at this convention, somebody else has trashed Vince Colletta without me prompting them. *[laughter]*

ROSS: His covers weren't too bad. He was obviously getting paid more on the covers. The covers he put a little of the work in, but the interiors... I mean, I've got so many pages of Jack's stuff inked by Vince, where you almost cry when you see how much has just been erased—just been rubbed out.


Erik Larsen

ERIK LARSEN: Well, a lot of the earlier inkers would do that. A lot of the early Joe Simon stuff would just, it would have this static line around it to begin with, and, looking at the original art, it's interesting to see that that's the process a lot of inkers would go through. They would start with this static line around it. Because, these days, generally, if you're outlining something, you start with a brush, and then you're coming in and putting the details in with a pen, and that was the exact opposite of how things were being done there, where they would outline everything with a pen and get that dead line going, and then come in with a brush afterward and add all the meat to it.

ROSS: But it's interesting, of all the artists, the one artist whose work survived no matter who inked it would be Jack, because there was something about the energy, and the composition, and the kind of directness of that work, as well as the complexity of some of the concepts on the page, that he didn't cover up. Even the most, I mean, you look at the very early books. Who inked *FF* #3?

EVANIER: Sol Brodsky.

ROSS: Sol Brodsky. And some of it was not too bad, and some of it was just awful, just awful inking. It looks like it's by someone who's never read a comic book, never mind ever inked one before. The eyes on the Miracle Man—and still the book is a beautiful thing, and a powerful experience to read, because the art was just so great.

EVANIER: It always surprised me when I first met Jack that he didn't care that much about who inked him, and I think, to a certain extent, he felt it was like an insult to tell him that his work needed a certain inker. He thought that the story, if the story was all there, he said, "No professional inker ever ruined a comic." And I think later on he moved away from that because he had so many fans who visited him and told him, "Oh, I really like it better when it's Joe Sinnott. I really like it better when it's Frank Giacoia." At some point that became Mike Royer. Jonathan, do you know everyone on the panel?

was a couple of covers for *Forever People* and *New Gods* and *Mister Miracle*, and he did the first issue of *Forever People* and *New Gods* and *Mister Miracle*, and then he went over and started drawing *Jimmy Olsen* issues. These are months and months before these books went to press. They came in; DC quietly, without showing them to their other editors in the office—they didn't want this material to leak—gave them to John Costanza to letter, and John brought them back. They were hidden from the other editors, and then they went off to Vince Colletta to ink. When Steve Sherman and I went up to the DC offices in July of 1970 for the first time—and remember, the first *Forever People* didn't go on sale until December, so we were way ahead of the press date—Julius Schwartz sat us down. Do you remember this, Steve? Julius Schwartz sat us down and said, "What is this 'Forever People, New Gods' thing? What's going on? Tell me about it." Now, his office was about eight yards from Carmine's, and the word was passing by. They wouldn't even show it to Julie Schwartz in the office, who was their senior editor.

So, by the way, if anybody ever tells you that everything that Vince Colletta ever did was rushed and at the last minute, he had six months to do those books. They did them, the first issue of *Forever People* had Superman in it. Some people there at DC looked at it and said, "This is not quite right. Vinnie, can you try to fix it when you do the inking?" And some people in the office, the production staff, had gone over some of the pencils and they had modified the work. They had tried to do the Superman emblem over in the pencil stage and make some corrections, and Vinnie did more. Mr. Colletta—I happen to think he gets a bum rap an awful lot, but I think he was frequently asked to do stuff that was above his pay grade. And he came back with this Superman, and more people in the office worked it over, and it was a committee-created Superman. And finally the books were all done. They looked at it and said, "You know, we ruined it." Someplace out there, and I have seen it, there's a set of stats of the book before Al Plastino got to it, and it's not Jack, either. It was inked by Vinnie, and it was reworked, there were a couple of Curt Swan heads in it that I think someone in the office swiped, or tried to change. And they looked at it and they said, "This is not really working for us. We can't send it out this way." I think there was a feeling they couldn't, at that time, go back to Jack and ask him to re-pencil those things, because—this was 1970 DC. The office didn't make mistakes. Only the freelancers did. And so they brought Al Plastino in. Now, the real irony of this, here's 1970. We want Jack Kirby to help us show how to bring Superman into a new era. Oops! Let's get the guy who's been drawing Superman from 1946 to redraw it, an artist who we fired off the comics because we think his work looks old-fashioned. You didn't see Al Plastino drawing Superman at that time, but he was cheap. And he was a guy who was around, and they wanted to give him some work, and he redrew it. He re-pasted over on those, on *Forever People* #1 and on the first two *Jimmy Olsen*s, at that point they had them done all at the same time, he did them all the same day, brought them back, and that's what was printed there. Subsequently, they would tell Vinnie, "Leave the Superman heads, leave the Jimmy Olsen heads, and we'll have them inked in the office." And Murphy Anderson was the guy in the office. He was not on staff, he just did his freelance work in the office, and they would go to him and say, "Here, Murphy, we need this cover retouched." And if a retouch came in that was above the pay grade of the office staff, they'd give it to Murphy. And Murphy's inking retouches turned up in *Lois Lane* at that time, and a few other books, as well. So that's how it came about. It was this committee process, and they redid it.

ROYER: I'd like to add, Mark, that when I finally got to ink some of the *Jimmy Olsens*, I don't know who I spoke to—Jack, or you, or Steve, or somebody—but I said, "Look, I can fix those S's. I can tweak the Superman and the Jimmy Olsen faces, and at least it'll all be inked from the same hand." So the Olsens that I worked from, I made those corrections, if "correction" is the right word. Jack was an impressionist, and he gave his impression of the S, and it was his Superman. But I felt, if I made the changes,

Here's the inked original art for the cover of *Forever People* #1 (Feb. 1971). The Forever People's figures are on a separate piece of paper that has been glued onto a larger piece with an added Superman and penciled lettering. Inks by Frank Giacoia.

Art from the Jack Kirby Museum's Original Art Digital Archive (www.kirbymuseum.org), courtesy of Joe & Nadia Mannarino.

attitude. "If you're not already working for us, you must not be very good." I had a very memorable art exchange one time with a man named Sol Harrison, the production head, where he actually said to me—he was talking about how crappy the art in Marvel comics was, and I said, "Well, do you think John Buscema and Gene Colan are bad?" "Well, we wouldn't take that work at DC." *[scattered laughter]* And then I said, "Well, Gil Kane's working for both companies. Are you telling me that the Gil Kane art for DC is excellent art, and the Gil Kane art for Marvel is crappy art?" And he said, "That's exactly what I'm telling you." *[laughter]* The quote was, "Gil knows he can't get away with handing that sh*t in to us." So that was the mentality. So Mike's work was belittled. It was like Carmine would call other people into the office and say, "Tell us why we don't like this. Tell us why this isn't good." And then, after he left the office feeling really dejected, all those people kept coming up to Mike and telling him, *[whispering]* "We really like what you did a lot."

ROYER: Well, it was funny. Before Jack left Marvel, we met about me inking stuff for him for Marvelmania. *[scattered applause]* I mean, this memorable phone call, "Mike Royer, this is Jack Kirby. Alex Toth says you're a pretty good inker." I went to his house the next day, I thought I would take the work home, and he says, "Just sit here at the board and do it." Oh, God! *[laughter]* And every few minutes he'd come in and look over my shoulder. Talk about intimidation! *[laughter]* But all of a sudden I was family, having sandwiches made by Roz. Anyway, of course, he came back from New York and he said, "Well, I always wanted you along, but it didn't work out that way." So when I went back with Mark and Steve to New York, I walk into Carmine's office, and I go, "I can do a better job than Vince Colletta's doing." And at lunch Dick Giordano says, "Better be careful, Mike. You're getting a reputation for being cocky." *[laughter]*

EVANIER: Dick was one of the people who came up to your afterwards, after that meeting where they were tearing you apart, and said, "I really, really like what you did." They were very wonderful samples.

Now, we're talked here about inkers ruining Jack's work, changing it, whatever. One of the few things late in his career that Jack did that came out exactly the way he intended it, because it wasn't inked, was a story called "Street Code." *[applause]* It was in *Argosy* magazine. We've got on the dais, the publisher of that magazine, Richard Kyle. *[applause]* And before we get into that, Richard, is it true—someone told me last night, you were walking down through the convention wearing dark glasses the other day, and somebody came up to you and said, "Stan Lee. Can I have your autograph?" *[laughter]*

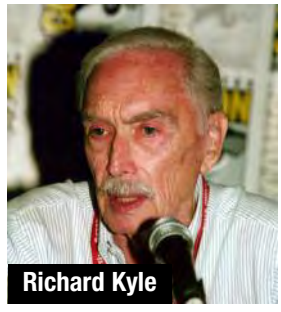
RICHARD KYLE: Yes, it's true, and I'm wearing the same glasses, but I don't know whether it'll work here, but let's just give it a try. Now, this is me before I become Stan Lee. *[puts on glasses, laughter, applause]*

EVANIER: Richard, can you tell us how "Street Code" came to be? And could you get a little closer to the microphone?

KYLE: I will with your help, because I am a person that has never remembered a date in my life, so I don't know what the year was. I think it was '82, maybe...

EVANIER: A little before that, but not much before that. I think it was about 1980.

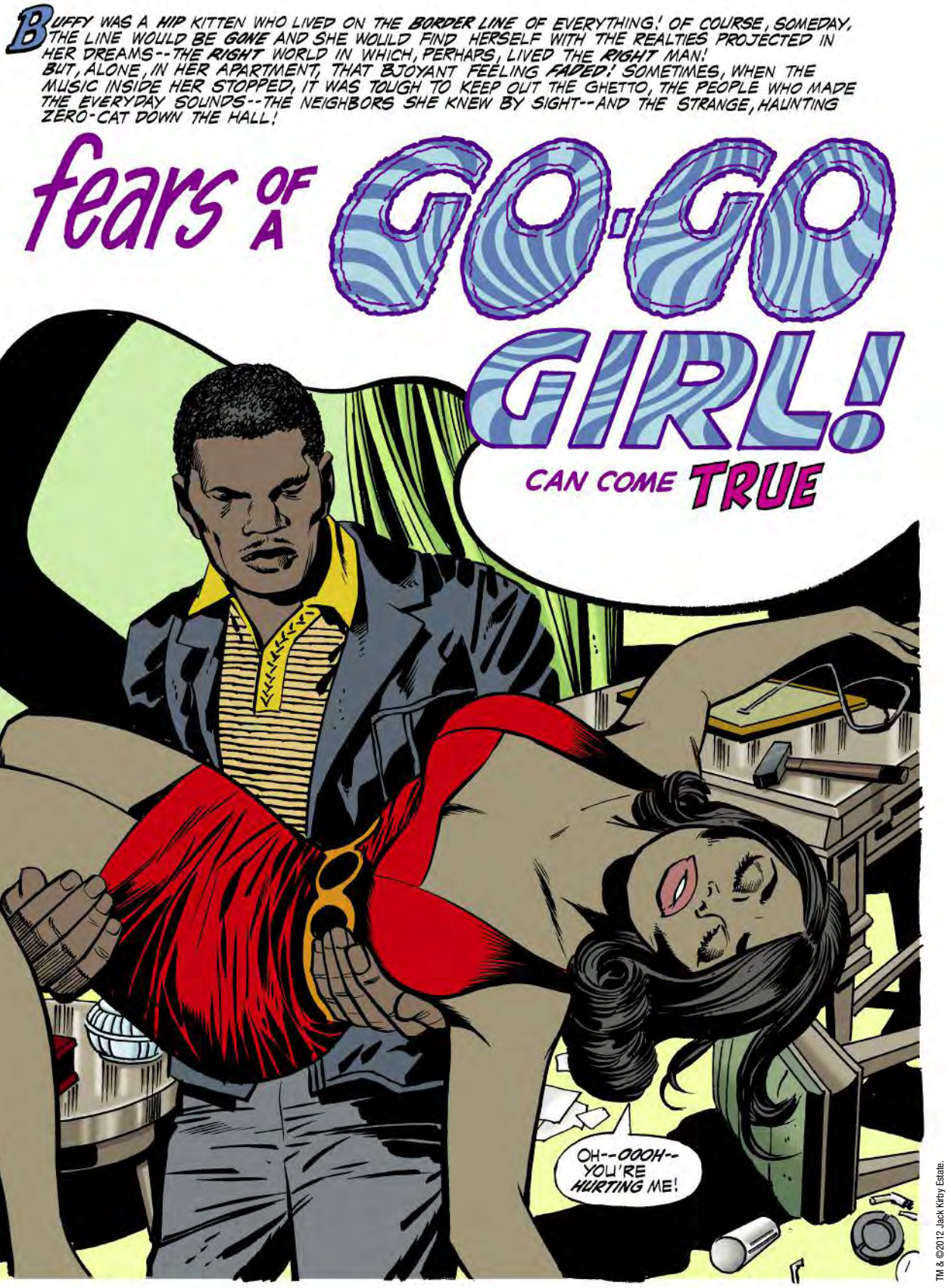
KYLE: Oh, okay. In 1980, at the comic convention, I got an Inkpot Award that


Richard Kyle

GALLERY 3

KIRBY A GO-GO

A never-published Kirby 1971 story planned for Soul Love • *Inks by Vince Colletta, color by Tom Ziuko*



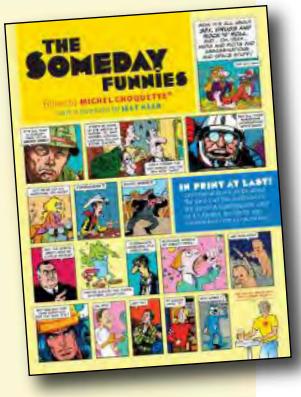

WHEN HER SHIFT WAS OVER, BUFFY KNEW THAT BUSY RICHARD AND HIS GROUP WAS DUE TO GO ON. RICHARD WAS THERE, BUT DIDN'T SEEM IN ANY HURRY TO WORK...
IT'S BUSINESS AS USUAL WITH RICHARD! I'M GLAD I DIDN'T CALL HIM LAST NIGHT!
YOU'RE NEW HERE, CHICK-- YOU JUST GET HIRED?
I SURE DID! I'M ON YOUR SHIFT, RICHARD!
I'LL BE WATCHING YOU, CHICK!
BUFFY! PULL UP SHORT, BABY! I WANT TO SEE YOU!
HOW ABOUT THAT!
LET ME GO, RICHARD! OR, I'LL PULL YOU AND YOUR EGO ALONG WITH ME!
I'VE GOT TO CHANGE!
WOW! DIG THAT TEMPER! YOU CARE! YOU LOVE ME! HOW CAN YOU HELP IT!
6

UNEARTHED

SOMEDAY, THE STARS WILL ALIGN

by Randolph Hoppe, Trustee of the Jack Kirby Museum and Research Center (www.kirbymuseum.org)

The Someday Funnies, featuring Kirby's 2-page story, is on sale now.



A while ago, I was digging through a number of 11" x 17" photocopies that Greg Theakston had gifted to the Kirby Museum for its archives. One photocopy of a pencil art panel page was just plain odd. It had no word balloons or sound effects, only rhyming captions along the top of each panel. The lunar imagery evoked both cartoony fantasy and the Apollo moon landings.

I had no idea what this page was. Perhaps Kirby was adapting something, so I did some internet searching on some of the key words, with no success. I asked some Kirby friends and scholars. Nothing.

Around the same time, James Romberger pointed out an anecdote by Alan Kupperberg on his website about some Kirby space pages he saw Wallace Wood inking in the DC offices in the early 1970s. There, Alan mentioned the pages were for Michel Choquette's 1960s project.

So I searched the web and found an e-mail address for Michel, who didn't respond to my query. No worries; who knows whether the address I found was active? I don't recall the exact timing, but I did eventually find the first page of the story in a loose-leaf binder of 8½" x 11" photocopies the Museum also received from Greg Theakston. Later I learned, through James again, I believe, that the *Comics Journal* was promoting an article by Bob Levin about Michel Choquette's *Someday Funnies* project. I reached out to Bob, who put me in touch with Michel. A preview of the Kirby piece illustrated the *Comics Journal* #299 article.

Nevertheless, this was a moment when the stars aligned, as the saying goes—an "alignment" John Morrow has said happened to him many times producing the *Jack Kirby Collector.* Two unknown pieces: 1) What is

The script on the pencil version:

("THE BALLAD OF BEARDSLEY" CROPPED OFF OF PHOTOCOPY)
BULLFEATHER OR
TUNE IN! -- COP-OUT! AND
DROP-UP!

BEARDSLEY: "FAR OUT!"

IN NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE,
THE WORLD WAS LUCKY TO BE ALIVE...
MID SHOT AND SHELL AND PROTEST YELL,
BEARDSLEY BULLFEATHER LEFT THAT HELL!

BEARDSLEY: "PISH AND TUSH TO ALL THAT SLUSH!"

PAST SPUTNIK, AND LUNIK, AND ECHO, AND TELESTAR,
PAST ALL EARTHLY DRAMAS THAT GOT OUT OF HAND...
LONE BEARDSLEY HAD MADE IT BEYOND ALL EXPECTATIONS...
AND, GAVE VENT TO EMOTIONS INSPIRED BY AYN RAND!

BEARDSLEY: "GET YOURS!"

(ILLEGIBLE) BY SUPERIOR, PRACTICAL FISCAL ABILITY...
ABOVE THE DISTURBANCE THAT TROUBLES THE SOUL...
GO TO THE SATELLITE ASLEEP IN IT'S VACUUM...
BASK IN THE SILENCE OF EACH GAPING HOLE...

THEN "MOONWALK" AND SKIM CROSS THE GRITTY HORIZONS...
DANCE IN THE EARTHLIGHT THAT SHINES SO SERENE...

SEE IT GLISTEN ON NOVELS AND COOLING MARTINIS AS, TIME, DIMS THE VISION OF BLOOD ON THE GREEN..

BY VIRTUE OF "APOLLO," THAT PROJECT MOST VAUNTED, THE TRIP THAT CAME LATER, FOUND NOTHING UPON, THAT GRAY, LIFELESS SURFACE, TO BETRAY A LOST PRESENCE.
BULLFEATHER, HIS SOUL, AND THE SIXTIES, HAD GONE.

WHO STEPS ACROSS HISTORY? WHO'S MARK STAMPS THE YEARS?
WHOSE IMAGE LEAPS FORWARD AND THEN DISAPPEARS?
WHO LIVES AND WHO DIES IN THE TURBULENT SCHEME?
THE QUESTIONS GROW MOOT AS FACT FADES INTO DREAM...