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THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR

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Our cover painting by Alex Ross is based on this Kirby pencil drawing, originally published in The Steranko History of Comics, Vol. 1. Dave Stevens also did an inked and colored version for our centerfold.

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GIL KANE ON KIRBY

(Excerpts from Gil Kane's article entitled "Bypassing the Real for the Ideal," published in the Harvard Journal of Pictorial Fiction, Spring 1974)

The 'Incredible Vitality' of Jack Kirby

One of the things that makes Kirby virtually the supreme comics artist is that he is hardly ever compromised by some commonplace notion of draftsmanship. The people who make a fetish of literal form have the smallest grip on the whole idea of drama. They live and die by the external, the cosmetic effect. Thus someone in the Spanish School is elevated to a kind of deity level, while their work is anti-life. It is still-born, while Kirby is absolutely raging with life.

What Kirby does is to generate incredible vitality on each page. There are four or five high points in the last decade—the first year of the *New Gods* especially—where he had so much to give that he needed someone to channel it for him. It came out faster than it could be digested. There were four different storylines at once, all those fascinating characters he was not able to

follow up on.

Jack does his drawing on the basis of very strong impressions he is continually registering; and what he draws communicates the impression better than a literal interpretation. His drawings don't depend on academic draftsmanship; they have a life of their own. He's the one who started this whole business of distortion, the big hands and fists — and with him, they all work, they all have a dramatic quality that makes them believable, creating enormous power in his material — and his distortion is never questioned. I do more representational figures, but the same editor will accept Jack's figures and constantly question mine. Correct is not right; what Jack does is project his qualities, and his expressionism is better than the literal drawing of almost anyone in the business.

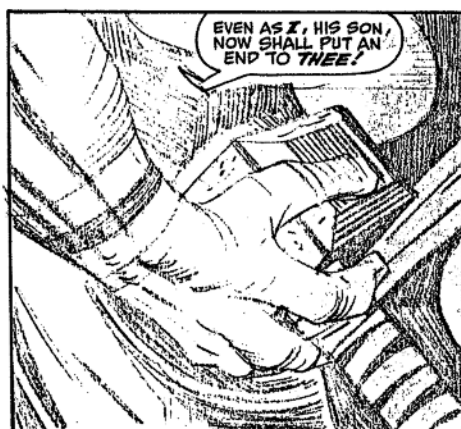
Explosiveness & Repression

The one thing you can see in Jack's work is an angry repressed personality. First there is the extreme explosiveness of his work—not merely explosive, but I mean there is a real nuclear situation on every page. Then there is his costuming: On every one of Kirby's costumes there are belts and straps and restraints; leather buckles everywhere. There are times when he takes Odin and puts (him in a) composition of symmetry and restrained power. His women are sort of sexually neutral. I don't think Jack is very interested in drawing women, but give him a fist or a rock or a machine... if his women have any quality at all, it is a slightly maternal one.

Kirby is one of the few artists whose characters do not always have to be in a heroic posture—they can assume naturalistic attitudes. Reed Crandall and those artists 'descended' from him find it almost impossible to draw a figure that is not heroically postured. Foster, like Kirby, had naturalistic feel; Hogarth never did.

Kirby represents the artist with the most flair for the material. He is by nature a dramatist; all of his skill supports drama, not drawing. Besides everything else, Jack has an enormous facility; he can create effects that drive a person mad. He can set up a free-standing sculpture or machine with staggering weight and impact. What kind of life can he have led to have this alien sense of phenomenology? Bottled up inside of Jack Kirby is enough natural force to light New York City. And it's such a pity to see all that great stuff working without someone saying, "Easy, easy." It has just never happened—they either suppressed him entirely or forced on him ideas that were never his own. I just wish Jack were as excited now as when he first came to National. The pictures in *Kamandi* are far less vibrant than the *New Gods* material; I remember a fish-creature he did—I've never seen such force in my life!

Jack's characters are so larger-than-life that ultimately they couldn't fight the crime syndicate or even super-villains; they had to fight these cosmic figures in order to accommodate the dynamism. He is the only one that can handle that kind of story and make



THIR GRABS FOR

POW-- MANGOG--

JOE KUBERT INTERVIEWED

BY
JON
B.
COOKE

"Mister Invincible" eventually became "Mindmaster," the abortive movie concept we reported on in TJKC #11.

MISTER
INVINCIBLE

(Joe Kubert is one of the great masters of sequential art. Aside from co-creating 3-D comics and developing the fondly-remembered Tor comic book, Joe is best remembered for his DC Comics work, including his humanistic Sgt. Rock, Enemy Ace, and the quintessential Hawkman. His adaptation of Tarzan ranks beside Hal Foster's and Burne Hogarth's. While he created in 1976 and continues to run the first comic book art school in the world — the Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art — he has never stopped contributing his increasingly personal work to his public. His most recent work is Fax from Sarajevo, the true-life account of innocents caught in the hell that was once Yugoslavia. This lesson from comic-dom's great teacher was conducted on the phone on December 19, 1997. Special thanks to the unwitting Richard Kyle for a question idea here and there.)

TJKC: When did you first meet Jack Kirby?

JOE: The first time I met Jack was very fleetingly when I was probably about 15 years old. I was still going to high school. I had started working in the business when I was 11 or 12, but when I was 14 or 15 the books were selling really well and there were not a lot of people to work on them. It was just a different time as far as the business itself was concerned. I was afforded the opportunity of inking his "Newsboy Legion"; I met Jack at that time. Being a kid, I wasn't awed or intimidated by the beautiful work that was under my hands, and it was a tremendous experience inking his stuff. Many years later I had of course gotten to know Jack real well; when he was working for DC, we knew each other pretty good. When he first started doing books for DC in the early '70s, I had a trailer and a whole bunch of kids — five children — and we took the ride out to California. Jack had invited me, saying, "Anytime you're here, Joe, drop over." He told that to everybody! And so I did with a 32-foot trailer, five children and my wife!

TJKC: How long did you stay?

JOE: Oh, just a couple of hours. Both he and Roz were just so warm, so nice that it was just terrific. We just barged in at that time. Afterwards we would talk about it quite often.

TJKC: When you were a kid inking "Newsboy Legion," were you aware yourself of Jack's impact on the business — was there an impact?

JOE: Every artist was very much interchangeable, but there were some guys in a higher echelon. Jack Kirby, Joe Simon, and a bunch of guys like Charlie Biro were recognized by the publishers as the guys who knew enough about the business to put together stuff that really sold. However, the publishers didn't hesitate to say, "Well, we're going to put out five Superman books and we'll hire five different artists to do it. We'll put out 'Newsboy Legion' and we'll get a whole bunch of guys to ink Jack Kirby's stuff, or if need be, we'll get a guy who pencils closely to Jack's style." We were kind of interchangeable. It was great for guys like me, just starting out because I was able to get experience in a whole bunch of stuff, in a whole variety of things that pertain to comic books — but having people at that point who were recognized as being movers and doers really didn't happen much.

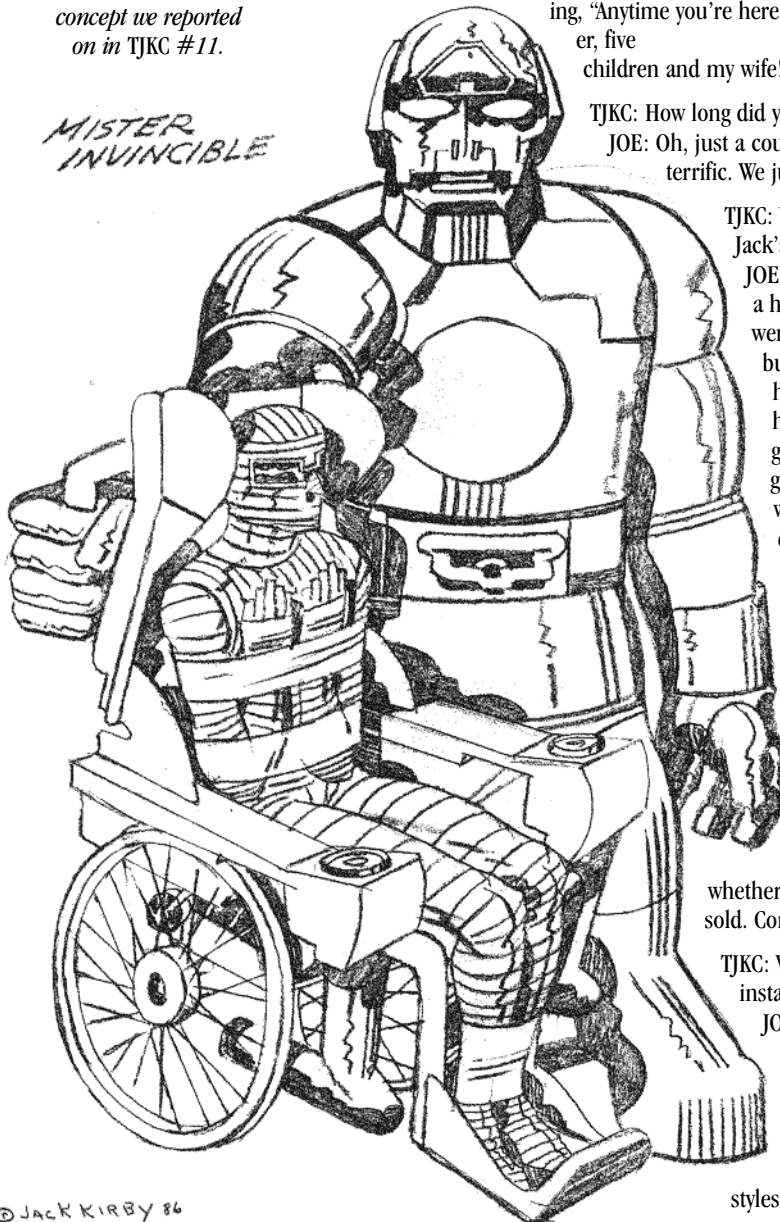
There were guys, for instance, like Lou Fine who was the "Artist's Artist." I remember vividly when I was 13 working for Harry Chesler and there were a whole bunch of artists up there *[in the Quality studio]*. After high school, at 2 or 3 o'clock, I'd stop off (Harry would allow me to come up and work a couple of hours) and be there when Lou Fine's stuff would come out. All of the artists would go down to the local candy store where the comic books were sold, and we looked forward to seeing Lou's stuff. Everyone admired him — not from the standpoint of being a superstar, but just because we admired his work tremendously. We really didn't know whether his stuff sold or not. It was really hard to tell. At that time, a lot of stuff sold. Comic books were selling like crazy.

TJKC: Were you more attracted to the illustrative style of Alex Raymond, for instance, over the more suggestive style of Milton Caniff?

JOE: When I started out, even as a kid, there were three icons that all of us looked up to (and I believe you'll get this from Gil Kane, Carmine Infantino, everybody who started at that time): Alex Raymond (who did *Flash Gordon*), Milt Caniff (who did *Terry & the Pirates*), and Hal Foster (who did *Prince Valiant*). Those were the three people, a terrific mix, that we didn't have any reservations about admiring, despite the fact that their styles were quite different.

**"Experimenters
take
risks — even
with humor,
Mokkari!"**

Simyan, Jimmy Olsen
#146 (1972), p. 4



TJKC: Did you start recognizing the storytelling abilities of Caniff or Sickles over Raymond's illustrative style, which was more like magazine work?

JOE: I think probably intuitively. Y'know, I was working strictly from my gut, strictly from intuition. When Caniff did a really dramatic sequence, it would really hit me. To dedicate that to his ability to tell a story... I thought it was just the story that was doing it, not the way that he dramatized it. That only became clear to me when I started the school about 20 years ago and started analyzing all these things. Up until that time I was just drawing the way I felt! I never really analyzed what I was doing or why I was doing it, I was just doing it! It was only when I was trying to start communicating with students to explain how they should do it that I suddenly came to the realization of what I was doing! (laughter)

TJKC: Did that bring a revelation about other people's work?

JOE: Oh, yeah. I knew that I loved Will Eisner's stuff (I worked up in his office as a kid for a long time just erasing material, sweeping the floors, and maybe doing a half-page of artwork if Will felt that I could fill a hole there) and *The Spirit* and Will's ability to design a page and tell a story that was entertaining all the way through. We knew that he was doing something terrific but personally I didn't know why! (laughter) That is the way it went for us.

TJKC: When were you over at Eisner's?

JOE: Early '40s; a couple of years before Will went into the army. Maybe 1939.

TJKC: Did you want to be a comic book artist?

JOE: I always wanted to be a cartoonist. Not specifically comic books because when I started out, to become a syndicate artist was really nirvana. That was really heaven, the final destination for anybody who was a cartoonist. Comic books were just a means of getting there. As a matter of fact, a lot of the guys in the comic book business would never even say that they were doing comic books. They were absolutely ashamed of that title. The artists would say, "I'm a commercial artist" (laughter) — never a "comic book artist."

TJKC: Why was there this shame?

JOE: Because, at that time, it was a junk medium. The reproduction was the crudest you could imagine. Not like the books you see today, but on the cheapest kind of newsprint. The color registration was often off anywhere from a sixteenth to a quarter of an inch. The colors were absolutely flat. The Sunday newspapers got some good reproduction. Clear color; Hal Foster's stuff was done absolutely beautifully. But the comic books were looked at as junk, just for kids; one step above coloring books. I was just a kid so to me it was a thrill just doing this stuff. I always admired the work of the guys who were in the business but the guys themselves thought differently. The first opportunity they had either to get into syndication (and not many of them were able to make that jump) and advertising — anything

that, first of all, paid a couple of bucks more and second of all, put them in a higher echelon, they jumped at it.

TJKC: How did you get to ink Simon & Kirby's "Newsboy Legion"?

JOE: I just happened to be there, (laughter) which happened more times than not in my business. A lot of times — and I tell the students here at the school the same thing — there are three things that have to be in extant in order to get work: You have to be at the right place, at the right time, with the right stuff. If any one of those things are out of place, you ain't got the job. When I was up at DC, I might have been bringing in a job and somebody might have said, "Here, this has to be done. You

want to ink this job?" "Sure, fine." I took it and did it.

TJKC: Did you go home and do it, or did you do it in the office?

JOE: No, I went home. There were some people who found it more comfortable to work in the office. There were maybe a half dozen, ten guys up at DC who did their work up there. But most of the guys worked on freelance as I certainly did.

TJKC: How did you become involved with St. John Publishing?

JOE: I always felt from the start that nobody was going to take care of me but me. I always felt that in order to build some security for myself — and I felt this way even as a kid — it would



Jack drew this back-up story for Jimmy Olsen #144 at DC in the early 1970s.

KEVIN EASTMAN INTERVIEWED

(Kevin Eastman, half of the Eastman and Laird team that created the hugely popular Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, is a longtime Kirby fan. With earnings from the Turtles, Kevin founded the Words & Pictures Museum of Sequential Art in Northampton, MA, which houses one of the largest collections of Kirby original art in the world. This interview was conducted in February 1998.)

**"To laugh is
to feel the beat
of life!"**

Lightray, *New Gods* #1
(1971), p. 6

THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR: In many ways you and Peter Laird are an anomaly in the realm of comic books, because you maintained control of your ideas. Did you learn lessons from comics history, such as Siegel & Shuster's and Kirby's experiences?

KEVIN EASTMAN: Around the time Pete and I were working on the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles — 1983-84 — people like Gary Groth, Frank Miller, and Dave Sim were leading a big crusade for creator's rights. This was a time when Jack Kirby could not get his artwork back from Marvel, although 90% of everything that was hugely successful out of Marvel came from Jack Kirby. That's what really made us aware of protection of rights, ownership, and getting our original artwork back. Corporations made mil-

lions off Jack Kirby, much like they made millions off Siegel & Shuster. Pete and I were very much aware of what was going on with Kirby, and we share a huge debt of gratitude and inspiration and respect for the man. Our self-publishing the Turtles is due to Jack Kirby.



(this page and next) The still unpublished Dingbats #2, pages 7 and 8.

Jack Kirby was my inspiration to draw comic books. In a weird sort of way he brought Peter Laird and me together. When Pete and I first got together, I walked into his tiny apartment, stacked to the brim with comic books, and the first thing I saw was an unpublished "Loser's" page, penciled by Kirby. (See TJKC #17) I'd never seen a Jack Kirby original in my life, and I just about wet my pants. (laughter) Pete gave me that page two years later for my birthday. He's my dear, dear friend. Whenever we spent nine hours together, eight of them were spent talking about Jack Kirby.

TJKC: What do you think it was that caused you to have such success so quickly?

KEVIN: I relate it to winning the lottery. In 1983, I drew the first Turtle. I threw it on to Pete's desk to make him laugh. He laughed, he drew a version that made me laugh. I drew a version of four Turtles to top his drawing, with a title block that said "Ninja Turtles." He added "Teenage Mutant" to it. Around that time, we didn't have any distracting paying work going on, (laughter) so the next day we decided to tell the story of how these characters came to be, for no one other than me and Pete. We wrote and drew it, and I had \$500 from an income tax refund; Pete had \$200 he took from his bank account. We borrowed \$1000 from my uncle, and we were able to print 3000 copies of the first issue. It was a two-color cover because it was cheap. The odd size came from walking around Dover, NH where we lived at the time. There was a free TV magazine that was a very odd size, like 9 1/4" x 10 1/4" or something like that. The front cover of the TV magazine listed the printer, so we went to the them and said, "How many copies can we get at that size with a two-color cover for this amount of money?" (laughter) There were no plastic bags to fit it, and we got letters from a lot of pissed-off people about it! (laughter) We just did it that way because it was local and affordable.

The first issue sold out, and we still had orders coming in, so we printed another 6000 which also sold out. It evolved into 60,000 copies by issue four. The peak was 135,000 copies of *Turtles* #8, but even at that point we felt unworthy because there were so many people like Jack Kirby and Frank Miller and countless others who were doing stuff that we wanted to aspire to. We didn't feel like we deserved this, but at the same time we were so grateful that our boy-hood dream of drawing comics for a living had come true.

HOUR TWENTY-FIVE

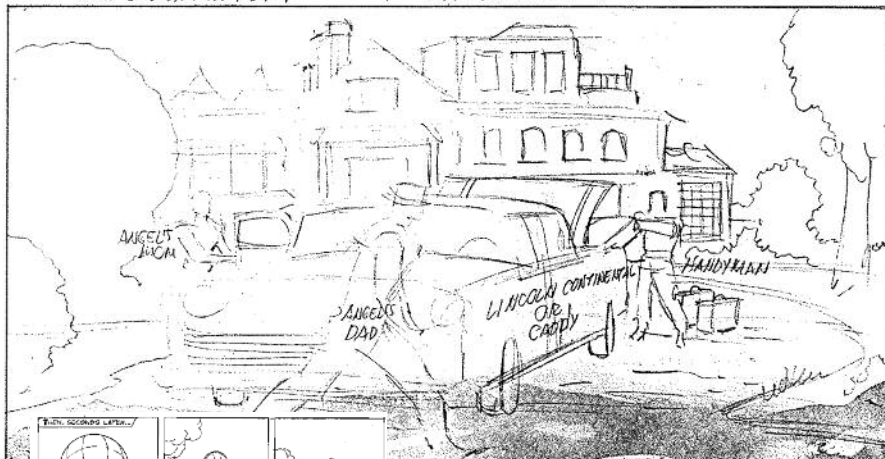
Excerpts from the 1986 KPFK 90.7 FM Los Angeles science fiction talk radio show, where Jack Kirby, Frank Miller, Mark Evanier, Arthur Byron Cover, and Steve Gerber discussed Jack's battle with Marvel Comics over the return of his original art • Transcribed by John Morrow

"You can hide a platoon of assassins in a complex deal!"

Don Rickles, Jimmy Olsen
#141 (1971), p. 16

The top panel of page 19 of X-Men #17 (bottom) was pasted over. Shown here are Jack's unused pencil layouts and margin notes that remain under the paste-up.

MEANWHILE ANGEL'S DAD AND MOM ARE PREPARING TO LEAVE TO SEE ANGEL-- THEY ARE HIGH-INCOME PEOPLE-- THEY HAVE LARGE HOUSE-- SPACIOUS WELL KEPT GARDENS AND A HANDY MAN'S PUTTING THEIR LUGGAGE IN REAR OF CAR-- MOTHER SAYS-- ADEWNT WE EVER GOING TO GET STARTED? DAD SAYS-- WILL YOU STOP WITH THE HYSTERIA? ANGEL SAID HE WAS OKAY! I'M SURE WE'LL UPSET HIM ANGE



HOUR 25: If you're a writer, you get to keep your manuscripts. If you're an artist, this does not necessarily obtain. Jack, what happened?

JACK KIRBY: What happened was that Marvel decided to return the pages to the artists, and they sent the releases out to the various artists that did work for them over the years. My release was quite different than the others. It was a release I couldn't sign, and that created a controversy. It mystified me; I don't know why I got this kind of a release. It was a four-page release; it was almost like a contract, whereas the average release was something I could sign. I would've signed it, and there would have been an ordinary exchange of release and pages. They created a situation in which I was stuck; it became a legal thing, and I'm sorry about the circumstance itself — but it was they who sent the release out, and it was I who can't sign it. So they kept my pages.

HOUR 25: You have done thousands and thousands of pages over the years. And I must say it's only Marvel we're talking about; with DC, there's no problem.

KIRBY: According to statistics, I've done one quarter of Marvel's entire output. There's a lot of hard work

here. Jack's work is the basic stuff that Marvel Comics has, across twenty years or so, turned into the most powerful comic book publisher in the country. The ideas that sprang from him into pictures — into a visual style they use full-time, all the time now — have not been credited to him by Marvel. Everyone in the industry, everyone anywhere near it, knows what his contribution was. Marvel is refusing to acknowledge this, and now they're withholding from him his own physical artwork which they are withholding from no one else. I read these documents they want him to sign; it's the most offensive legal creation I've ever read. It's very insulting.

STEVE GERBER: I think it's important to point out also that they never paid for the physical artwork. They don't own the physical artwork; it's there only because, apparently, possession is nine-tenths of the law at the moment.

COVER: In the latest issue of *The Comics Journal*, they had cataloged and accounted for three-quarters of the pages. For some reason since then, they've decided that there's only 88 pages, and if the situation's changed, they're not saying how or why.

HOUR 25: Did they give you a straightforward reason for this, Jack?

KIRBY: I can only guess, and I'm not going to discuss any guessing on my part. It's very hard to communicate with Marvel; they rarely answer. I leave it entirely to my lawyers. I'm trying to do it in a conventional and sensible legal manner; I try not to offend Marvel in any way, I try to be as polite as possible. I regard management as important people to work for; I always have. My job has always been to sell books. When you sell books, you benefit the publisher as well as yourself. What I do is not out of any innate disregard for management. I see it as a business; I've been a publisher myself.

HOUR 25: *The Comics Journal* reported there was a panel at Comic-Con in San Diego last July, and Jim Shooter paneled with you and Frank Miller and some others discussing this. Shooter was in the audience, and he stood up and said at one point that he thought you should have the art back. He also said that as Editor In Chief at Marvel, no decisions were made without his concurrence. That would seem to be a reasonable way to work things out, but it seems the reasonableness ended right there.

KIRBY: They'll return my art, *if* I'll sign that release — and I can't sign it.

MILLER: Beyond the amount of work Jack did and how well it sold, the fact is it's still making money. The most popular comic book in the country is the *X-Men*, which is one of Jack's. If you go down the list, probably five out of the next six down will be his. What he did for comics was enormous. The whole shape of comics in these times is based on Jack's work.

behind it, and a lot of hard thinking behind it. It's something that's highly individual, highly creative, and above all, it sold very well.

ARTHUR BYRON COVER: As I understand it, when they sent you the four-page more complex form, they'd only admit to having 88 pages of artwork out of all the thousands of pages you did.

KIRBY: There's eight books involved. There's 88 pages involved. There's thousands of books I did, and all they offered was eight.

FRANK MILLER: It's very important to keep in mind that we're talking about an extraordinary situation

MARK EVANIER: It's not that uncommon for a new artist to apply for work at Marvel and be handed old Jack Kirby books, and told, "This is what we want."

MILLER: It was done with me.

EVANIER: There are artists to this day in the business who make their living tracing old Jack Kirby panels, rearranging them slightly, using it for their own purposes, and calling it their work.

OUR 25: Fans come up to you with original pages of your own art; where do they get them?

KIRBY: I never ask because it embarrasses them. I tell them that the art is stolen; I have my own ideas on how it's passed around, and I've investigated it. It's not a complete picture, but I have a hazy picture of what really happens. If they're young people... I had a very young boy come up to me with a page of my artwork. I don't have the heart not to sign it. I'm not going to embarrass that child, or a female, or a very sincere fan, so I sign it. I have a high respect for the people in comics. I know the average comic fan is a heckuva guy.

EVANIER: It should be pointed out, a lot of people have made a lot of money selling Jack Kirby originals, and Jack is not one of them.

MILLER: What we're talking about here is a wealth of work, but the only thing that's in dispute here is the original physical artwork to it. This is one more way a lot of people besides Jack have made money off his genius.

OUR 25: Jack, what are you going to do?

KIRBY: What I have to do; what any American has to do. Call it corny if you like. I'm up against a corporate giant. They've got a heckuva lot more weapons than I have. If I have one lawyer, they have ten. It's a hard battle; I do it slowly, I do it piecemeal. It's a thing that lasts a long, long time.

MILLER: Another thing that's being done is *The Comics Journal* circulated a petition among professionals, and there's been since then a protest on the part of comics professionals on Jack's behalf; writers and artists speaking out on his behalf, hoping to at least shame Marvel into behaving like humans about this.

OUR 25: In the current issue of *The Comics Journal*, Frank Miller wrote a piece, and you begin it by saying you were at a cocktail party full of professionals, and you mentioned Kirby's name, and the silence was real thick.

MILLER: It happened many times when the subject came up. I hope that it's a temporary effect; I hope it's just a simple stroke of fear running through things. I hope that at the very least, the rest of the professionals will join in signing that petition. This is one of the very few huge issues to strike the industry. It's really up to each artist's conscience as to whether he participates in supporting Jack. Simple gratitude is what any-



Journey Into Mystery #117, page 16.

body working in comics owes Jack. We owe him very simply our livelihood. I would not have the career I have if not for him.

EVANIER: This is not just the plight of people who worked for Marvel on Jack's characters. There would probably be no industry today if not for Jack. The fascinating thing about Jack's career is that in the 1940s, he innovated a whole kind of super-hero in Captain America, the Boy Commandos, the Newsboy Legion. If he had stopped there and never created anything else, we'd still be talking about a giant here. Then in the 1950s, he innovated romance comics, *Black Magic*, *Fighting American*, *Sky Masters*, *Challengers of the Unknown*. In the '60s he did

it all over again, and in the '70s with the *New Gods*. It just goes on and on.

MILLER: It does show how the conditions of the industry have been very bad off and on. The 1960s turnabout that really comes from Jack's work followed a period of pretty dismal downward sales. I believe he has repeatedly built the industry up almost single-handedly. The industry has generally not invited people to do their best work, because of some legal things they insist on. Jack had always done his best, and his best has always been better than anyone else's.

OUR 25: So what you're going to do now is keep your attorneys writing letters, and apply



Page 2 of the back-up story in Jimmy Olsen #144. Jack got most of his '70s DC art back.

pressure as you can in the industry, and wait?

KIRBY: Yes. I'm rather stubborn that way. I feel I've earned it, and there's no other way it can be done. I can only work according to my own resources, and that's what I'm doing. I'll do it legally, conventionally, in as friendly an atmosphere as possible.

MILLER: If I may, my personal feeling about it is it's not Jack's job. The comic book professionals, and particularly the readers, should exercise whatever voice they have in support of him. He's already given Marvel billions of dollars worth of material, he's given us years of joy, he's given us our livelihoods. I think we can come to his side on this; I don't think we should be asking him

how he's going to pursue it.

HOUR 25: Steve Gerber, you had a dust-up with Marvel. I know you can't talk about the settlement.

EVANIER: But I can! (laughter)

GERBER: The disagreement was over the ownership of the Howard the Duck character. It took three years of my life and \$140,000 to pursue. Some of that, thank heavens, was offset by the two dozen or so people in the industry I can still look straight in the eye, Jack among them. Jack did the artwork for the first issue of *Destroyer Duck*, which was done as a benefit comic book for the lawsuit, absolutely *gratis*. We did return his artwork, however. (laughter)

Some of it was offset later by a project that was initialed by Deni Sim [Loubert], called the *FOOG Portfolio: The Friends Of Old Gerber Portfolio*, (laughter) done with my blessing, but totally without my knowledge. But the proceeds from both of those projects covered 20%, possibly a little more of the lawsuit. So when you talk about suing a company like Marvel, Jack is absolutely correct. You're sitting there with one, perhaps two lawyers, facing a battery of lawyers which include, in this case, an outside firm, retained locally in California to deal with the suit; Marvel's own in-house lawyers; Cadence Industries' in-house lawyers; and a firm back in New York which is under retainer to Cadence. That's what you're up against when you go into something like this. We fought it all the way to within two weeks of actually going to court. We were prepared to go into court, and at the last moment we were able to reach a settlement which I thought was fair and equitable, and in many ways less chancy than going to court with something like this. A decision against me, which was possible, would've done a great deal of harm not only to me, but to other people who might have to sue another comics publisher or the same publisher on the same basis. I didn't want to take that risk. The trial alone would've cost another \$25,000, and I could've gotten stuck with some of Marvel's legal fees after that. So looking at the whole thing on balance, I had to decide that a truly equitable settlement, which I felt this was, was the way to end the dispute.

Marvel owns Howard the Duck, and Marvel has creative control over him. I'm allowed to say that because it was part of a joint press release Marvel and my attorneys and I issued at the time of the settlement.

EVANIER: One of the reasons Steve settled when he did — he's too modest to mention this — is that the comics industry at the close of the suit was not the same as at the beginning of the suit. One of the things that prompted Steve's suit in the first place was that at one point he wanted to try and work out a settlement with Marvel on parts of his contract that had been left dangling. I sent him to an agent of mine, and the agent phoned the appropriate people at Marvel, and they said, "We're not going to deal with you." They didn't recognize the rights of people to speak on behalf of artists and writers.

MILLER: We're talking about an industry that until maybe ten years ago, a contract could not be negotiated in the office of the publisher of a major comic book company, because the writer showed up with his attorney. The publisher just got up and walked out. This is a true story; I know the writer, I know the attorney, and I know the publisher. We're talking about the Dark Ages here.

EVANIER: It was 1978, I believe. (laughter) Largely because of Steve's lawsuit, and because of other people who said, "We're not going to take it anymore," the comic book companies grew up a little. They have yet to make proper

Gary Groth Interviewed

by Jon B. Cooke

(Gary Groth, long the enfant terrible of comics critics and bane of the comics industry, has edited the notorious and combative Comics Journal since 1976, and has since founded Fantagraphics Books. In issue #105, the Journal brought Jack's battle with Marvel Comics over ownership of his original art to the attention of the entire industry. The interview was conducted via phone in February 1998 and was copy-edited by Groth.)

"Fate has its own answer to the greatest of power!"

Etrigan, *The Demon* #5 (1973), p. 20

TJKC: Do you recall when you first heard about Jack's problems getting his art back from Marvel?

GARY GROTH: I remember Jack and Roz initially asked us to either not report it, or to soft-pedal it, because they were negotiating with Marvel, and they didn't want those negotiations compromised. I remember honoring those requests, basically sitting on it.

TJKC: What did the fight represent in the greater scheme of things? Was it simply one man against a corporate entity?

GARY: Sure it was. I think it represented, in as starkly black-&-white terms as you could possibly want, the issue of a large corporation arrayed against a single artist. This sort of thing had been going on since the beginning of comics, but they were sort of routine injustices. This represented something of a departure from that, because it wasn't just a work-for-hire issue, which had become an institutional part of comics. They had singled one man out for this treatment; he was being treated differently than other artists, and there was a reason for that: His creative

contribution. The more he contributed creatively, the more severely he was singled out, and given a radically different kind of agreement to sign.

TJKC: What effect did you see in the industry of publicizing this situation?

GARY: It really mobilized the professional community. We drafted a petition, and a large number of professionals signed it. Some creators were willing to go out on a limb, which is unusual for comics. Some weren't, but certainly more creators were willing to stick their necks out at this particular time than any other time I can remember.

TJKC: It took some time, but the issue was resolved to some degree. How'd you hear about that?

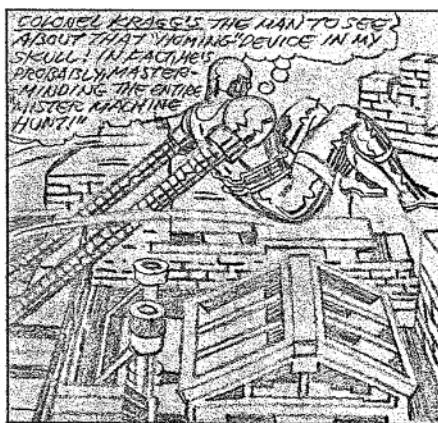
GARY: Roz called me and told me. It was resolved to probably nobody's satisfaction. I think they gave him a shorter form than the original, but still a longer form than anyone else got. They deleted the more demeaning language, and gave him a percentage of whatever art was left that hadn't been ripped off or sold or given away through the years. Certainly Jack and Roz were just happy to get it behind them.

I remember Roz and Jack and I went out to dinner shortly after the thing was more or less over. I don't know if you'd call it a post mortem or a celebration; I think it was a cross between the two. It's odd; Jack was a reluctant fighter, which is not what you might expect. My impression is he really didn't want to get into this, but he felt he had no choice. I think Jack was torn too, because Marvel had been his employer. Jack had that peculiar post-war perception of American business; sort of gung-ho toward American business. My impression is it took him quite some time to get his blinders removed.

I think he shrank from conflict. In a substantial way, we — me, Frank Miller, and various other people, including many retailers and other publishers — were acting on his behalf; in a way as surrogates for him, taking the fight to the market. Temperamentally, he was unsuited to do it himself.

TJKC: When you interviewed him in *Comics Journal* #134, he sounded quite combative. He was angry; there seemed to be an obvious bitterness about the situation with Marvel. Were you surprised?

GARY: I think I was surprised at his vehemence, because he refrained from it publicly. I think he might've seen the interview as a place to be as truthful and open about that as he could've been. I don't know if I saw him combative as much as I saw a lot of pain and a lot of hurt. My most



Pencils from Machine Man #6, page 5.

THE STOLEN ART

First, imagine a locked and secured storage room. It could be someone's basement, a bank vault — it might even be a warehouse somewhere. In the room is a stack of art about 4' high. Perhaps it's moldering, perhaps it's fresh as the day it was drawn, but it hasn't seen the light of day for almost 35 years, and it has a potential street value of millions of dollars. The only question is: Does this room exist at all?

To get into that room, we need to start more broadly, on the ugly topic of art theft. The following is based on interviews with a dozen collectors and industry people. It should be read as an accumulation of opinions, not necessarily hard facts.

There are few topics in the Kirby legend about which there are more bruised feelings than the ownership and distribution of his artwork. There are, as they say, heated differences of opinion. Though they

might not have all the details at hand, most art collectors know that a good percentage of Jack's art was "stolen." I put quotations around that word not to be coy, but because even a small amount of research shows that the word's meaning rapidly becomes slippery.

In the Golden Age, comics were considered worthless. It's generally suspected that most of Jack's art circa World War II was thrown away or re-used for paper drives. But not all of it. For instance, two pages from *Captain America* popped up within the last year, and a cover is rumored to exist. Were these given away? Or did someone walk out of the offices with them on the sly? I've heard both versions of the story, and after fifty years, it's probably hard to prove one way or the other. If the art was given away, was it the right of the artist or the publisher to hand it over? Hard to say.

For years, DC relied on a legal decision that, for copyright protection, they needed to destroy all original art — the argument being that if an artist claimed ownership of the art, he might have a crack at owning the character. DC's policy meant that most of Jack's "Green Arrow" and *Challengers of the Unknown* artwork is lying in pieces in a landfill. However, some of the art that was supposed to be destroyed managed to survive, because staffers who were also art fans saved it. If they sold this art, was it stolen? Sure — but from whom? DC, who would have destroyed it? Or their artists, who legally had no clear rights to it at the time?

The story gets wilder when we turn to Atlas/Marvel work from the time of Jack's 1958-59 return until the end of the Silver Age. Most art before 1960 was thrown away to make room for the newer stuff, which sat in a warehouse or in the offices, until 1974 when Marvel started returning it to the pencilers and inkers. Jack, of course, went through an epic legal battle before his Silver Age art was returned in July, 1987. However, of the almost 10,000 pages he penciled through 1970, he was returned roughly 2100. So what happened to the rest of it?

The gut reaction most people have is "it was stolen!" To a large extent, this is correct. However, to better understand what happened, we need to think with the 1962 corporate mentality. They were selling products that cost 10¢, later 12¢. There was no back issue market, no organized fandom to answer to. The art, if it had any value at all, held only sentimental value. Marvel — and in the early days, Marvel was just a couple of guys in an office, not a conglomerate — gave out art for promotional pieces, or as thanks to messengers, or when kids wrote in asking for mementos.

The art that was given away was rarely Kirby. Some early collectors say that Don Heck *Iron Man* pages were the most likely things to be freebies — Kirby was different, even then. Mark Evanier says that Jack asked for his pages back in the 1960s, but couldn't get a clear response.

BY GLEN GOLD

(left) Pencils from Thor #152, page 7.



STAND ASIDE, LADY --

BECAUSE YOU

THE KIRBY SQUIGGLE & THE EVOLUTION OF HIS STYLE

by Link Yaco

How did the slam-bang illustrator of *Captain America* get to the point where his figures lacked any recognizable human muscle structure and seemed to be built almost entirely of geometric shapes (especially in the case of the Thing)?

To trace the evolution of Kirby's style, it is helpful to make some arbitrary divisions. Although Kirby's development was continuous and there were no quantum leaps in style (although his final stylistic change is abrupt), let us consider his work in designated stylistic periods.

EARLY KIRBY (1935-39)

Kirby worked in a number of different styles but by the time he gets to *Wilton of The West*, some of the distinctive features of later Kirby are already in evidence: Curved legs, leaping figures, and recognizable Kirby faces, especially the noses. Feathered shading is far more in evidence and at times a Raymond-like influence seems apparent.

EARLY SIMON & KIRBY (1940-45)

The Early style is codified here and the distilled result is singularly Kirby, owing no debt to any influence, although a significant amount of feathering remains. It is interesting to note some of the imaginary creatures Kirby invented at the end of this period and the beginning of the next (especially for his early Harvey period, in 1945): fully-visualized killer apes, giant insects, dinosaurs, and wholly-invented monsters.

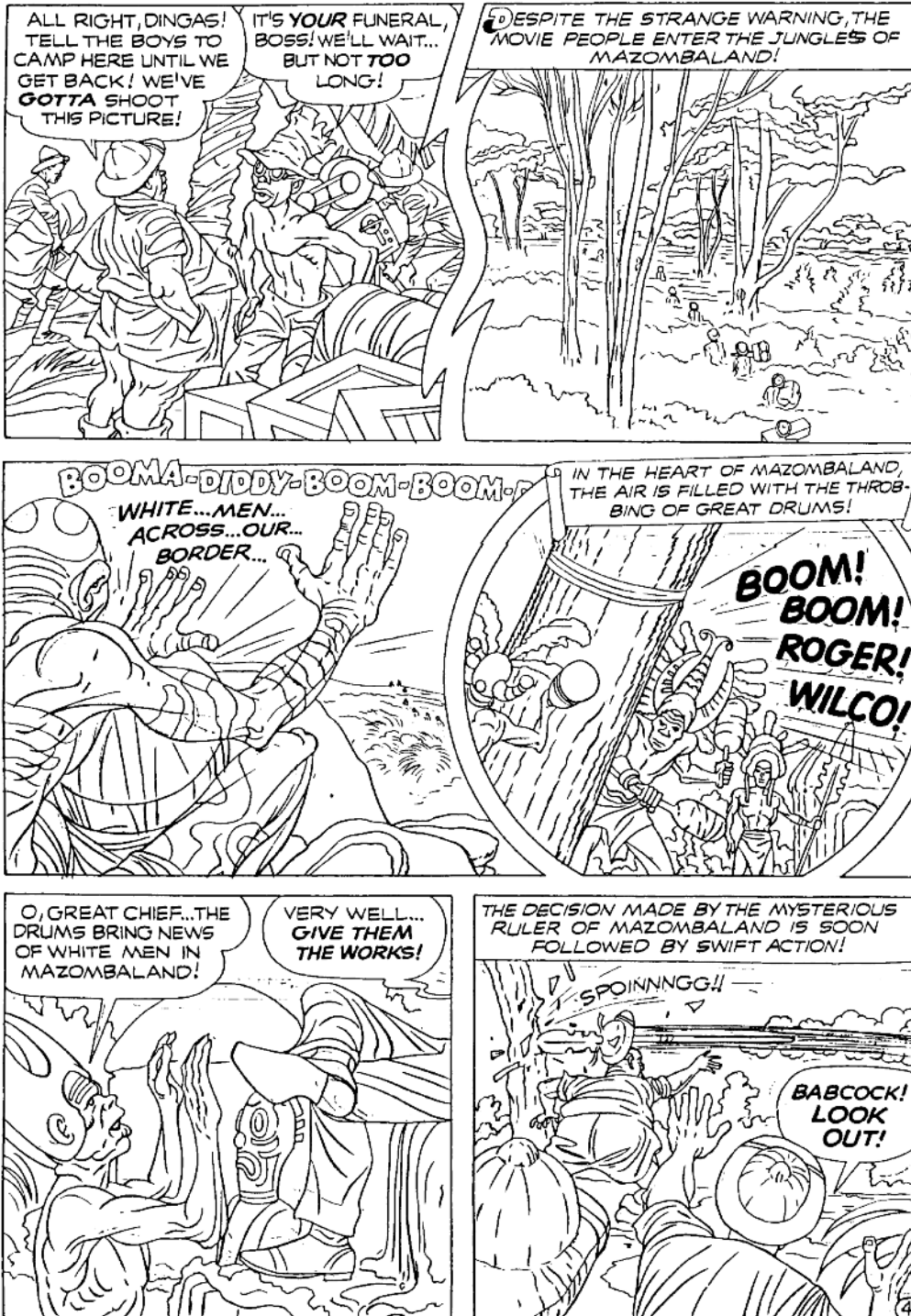
LATE SIMON & KIRBY (1946-55)

Feathering disappears almost altogether. Kirby adopts a thick wiggly line, the precursor of the more attenuated '60s squiggle. Textures on rocks and clothing become heavier and more abstract. Rocks, in particular, become abstract designs, almost pure exercises in form.

Figures start to thicken. The skinny adolescent figure of his *Captain America* work is replaced by the more adult heftiness of his *Fighting American*. This might have been a reflection of his own physical maturity.

POST-CODE (1955-1963)

After the Comics Code struck, the great homogenization of comics began. The bland, undistinctive, unthreatening, and unexciting DC house style, as epitomized by Curt Swan (no reflection on the ability of that talented artist, who actually rose above the limitations of the house style, even as he established it), set the standard of the day. When artists such as Frazetta tried to work for comics, they were told their style was "old-fashioned." John Severin was told that he didn't know how to draw war comics. It might be that Kirby lost some confidence in that period. His work for DC looks more mainstream, less dynamic, and much toned-down. Even his monster work for Marvel looks safe as milk. The monsters look like globs of modeling clay—pikers compared to the creatures he used to produce with Joe



Unpublished Stuntman page, circa 1946, before "spotting" blacks and finished inking.

KIRBY FORGERIES

by Glen Gold

At the 1997 San Diego Comic Convention, an excited fan rushed to show John Morrow the excellent deal he'd just gotten: An inked Black Panther piece by Jack Kirby, about 5X7 inches, for \$100. And this was an excellent price, except for one problem: It was a fake. The money was returned, the fan became wiser, and the Kirby piece? It might still be out there. If it isn't, I can tell you one thing: There are other forgeries, many of them convincing. When your pulse is racing at the thought of getting some Kirby art, take a moment, take a deep breath, and ask yourself, "Is this real?"

Here's a quick forgery primer for the art collector, with some suggestions of how not to get taken. First of all, over 99% of the Kirby artwork I've seen offered for sale is genuine, and only a very small amount is what I'd call "dubious." Even then, the motivations behind them range from the innocent to the cynical. To begin, let's consider the primary tool in producing dubious Kirby pieces: The lightbox.

To state the obvious: Kirby penciled but very rarely inked his own work. The inker's job was to go over Jack's pencils with a brush (or pen), generally by using the same sheet of paper. However, there were occasions when inkers put the penciled page on a table with a bright light as its surface, then inked on a separate page, on top of the

pencils. This is called lightboxing. Greg Theakston, for instance, lightboxed the pages of the Kirby *Super Powers* books, returning Jack's pencils and retaining his own, inked versions. The only problem: When he sold the inked pages to a dealer, the dealer sold them as if they were Kirby originals.

Here's the slippery part of it — the dealer (to my understanding) neither claimed nor denied that they were Kirby originals. Instead, he set them on the table as "Kirby/Theakston" pieces, technically correct, and counted on customers not asking questions. This is probably the most common form of forged Kirby artwork. For instance, the Black Panther work mentioned at the beginning of this article was lightboxed from a sketch printed in the Kirby *Masterworks* book. Soon after, I saw another inked version of another sketch from that book, in which Jack boxes with a monster.

So, how can you protect yourself from buying a lightboxed piece? First, examine the piece closely — are there pencil marks visible beneath the inks? Some inkers (Royer, for instance) erase very vigorously, but still leave behind trace pencil marks. Other inkers (Ayers comes to mind) leave many penciled lines visible. Second, ask the dealer if the piece has Kirby pencils underneath. In my experience, even the ethically-challenged dealers don't lie — they just hope you don't ask the question, or they answer vaguely ("Pencils? I don't know, I just know it looks like Kirby to me"). Third, remember most sketches were never inked, and if they were, they were commissioned pieces that should be signed or otherwise authenticated. Just because something is signed doesn't necessarily mean it's real — Jack signed

Marie Severin's version of the *Thor* #175 cover and at least one Neal Adams cover. Also, more than one person interviewed for this piece said that the only part of Kirby artwork that's easy to forge with practice is Jack's signature.

One weapon against getting taken is more of a pain than most people care for: Try to be familiar with all published examples of Kirby sketches. The *Masterworks* book, perhaps because it contains so many pencil pieces, seems to have produced the greatest number of frauds. Because it's printed on lightweight stock, it's easy to slap it on a light table and trace over the images. Back issues of the *Kirby Collector* should also provide you with many of the known sketches. I was told that someone found and almost bought a gorgeous inked Kirby street scene until they realized that it was actually the double-splash from Jack's "Street Code" story in *Argosy*, which was in fact only penciled, never inked. If you are neither obsessed nor blessed with a photographic memory, the next best way to protect yourself is to ask other people — dealers, trusted friends — what they think about the piece.

What about a lightboxed, or re-inked, version of an original page, such as an interior page? This occurs rarely, to my knowledge. Interior pages are the hardest to pass off, for several reasons: First, it takes more work to do six panels of Jack's work than one quick sketch; second, interior pages are generally worth less than covers and splashes, and thus forging them is less cost-efficient. Also, the format of the page is fairly difficult to forge properly. Take a look at the average page of original art. Not only does it have pen and ink, but it also has a number of features that require great patience to forge: Statted page numbers, a mark at the top (either rubber stamped or hand-written)

Why would Jack do two versions of the cover to Captain America #200? An inked version is known to exist, and the background figures here look a bit shaky, which makes us suspect this pencil version is a forgery. But the Kirby signature looks legitimate, so you be the judge.



DON'T ASK, JUST CITE IT: TOWARDS A TOTAL TAXONOMY

by Jim Ottaviani

Critical discussion of Jack Kirby's art and the elements he employed to create his seminal visual style is inexplicably absent from the literature of academe¹. Though work has proceeded on other fronts in comics scholarship, unfortunately the pioneering semantic efforts of Mort Walker² have yet to be expanded upon in an in-depth fashion. With the appearance of august journals like *The Jack Kirby Collector*, the need has become pressing. Scholars of sequential art³ (or as moderns would say, "juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence"⁴) have too long suffered from a paucity of impenetrable jargon. To date they have no way to describe pages of Kirby's work without having to rely on tedious everyday language or expensive and bulky photoduplication methods.

In an attempt to begin addressing this short-coming the following terms, along with examples, are offered to *TJKC* readers:

KIRBY KRACKLE

Clumps of bulbous energy dots found surrounding intergalactic heralds, characters with newly-acquired cosmic power, and just about any outer space scene drawn in modern comics.

KIRBYTECH

Organic, apparently functional, and everywhere⁵.

JACKNEES

Thick, square, and large, these are the sort of patellae you'd need if you wanted to hold yourself up while lifting 374 tons of scrap iron over your head.

KINGFINGERS

Thick, square and large (and often all of roughly the same length), these are the kinds of fingers you'd need if you wanted to hold onto 374 tons of scrap iron. You rarely see a Jack Kirby character play a guitar. Kingfingers are why.

KING'S EYE VIEW

A daring inversion of the classic Eisnerhead angle⁶, this tight focus perspective begins at the chin and proceeds dramatically upward.

THE GROUP YELL

Often accompanying a cominatcha (see below), this is the preferred mode of expression in any and all Overpowering, Dramatic, and Action-Packed scenes, as well as most sensitive, quiet, and touching ones.



some very sinnotty kirby krackle



royerist jacknees



kingfingers



king's eye view



group yell (royerist variety)

¹ A thorough search through *Dissertation Abstracts International* (© 1997, University Microfilms International) reveals a shocking result: Exactly zero (0) doctoral dissertations even mention Jack Kirby in their title or abstract. Given that the database covers over one million theses from universities worldwide, this startling lack of coverage makes the following question high unto rhetorical: Is it any wonder that our ivy-covered halls of higher learning are commonly seen as failing us in terms of addressing relevant modern problems?

² Mort Walker, "Lets get down to growlixes," reprinted in *Backstage at the Strips*, NY: Mason/Charter, 1975.

³ Will Eisner, *Comics and Sequential Art*, Tamarac, FL: Poorhouse Press, 1985.

⁴ Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, Northampton, MA: Tundra Publishing, 1993.

⁵ See also Frank Miller's *Ronin* (New York: DC Comics, 1986-87) for a modern updating.

⁶ See virtually any installment of *The Spirit* — many classic examples appear in *The Spirit Casebook* (Princeton, WI: Kitchen Sink Press, 1990).

Steve Sherman writes:

Here is a photo taken of Roz at her 75th birthday party on September 27th. Little did I know that it would be the last one. Roz was laid to rest next to Jack on Friday, December 26th at 12 p.m. It was a small crowd, mostly family and close friends, including Stan Lee, Sergio Aragonés, Mike Royer, and Mike Thibodeux. At Roz's service, Mike Thibodeux, Steve and Robert Katz (Roz's nephews), Tracy Kirby, Mark Evanier, Mark Miller, and Neal Kirby spoke about Roz and what she meant to all of us. It truly is the end of an era, not only in terms of the history of comics, but for the extended Kirby family. Roz was a remarkable lady; not only a gracious hostess to the multitude of fans who trekked to the Kirby home over the decades, but a very funny woman whose sense of humor never faded, even in the face of Jack's passing and her own illnesses.



For close to 30 years, Jack and Rosalind Kirby were the "unofficial" Uncle and Aunt,

IN MEMORIUM: ROSALIND

Mom and Dad, to Southern California comics fans. Their home was always open, their hospitality legendary. No one left without

feeling that they had experienced something special. It was with profound sadness that those of us who gathered at the Kirby home realized that this would be the last time. After countless Fourth of July parties, weddings, birthdays, and celebrations, the time has come to close the book. The artwork will be removed from the walls of the studio where Jack created a multitude of heroes, the kitchen where we gathered to laugh and tell stories; all will be packed up and moved. And we will be left with memories of two people who touched a generation of fans around the world. Hopefully, Jack and Roz are together again, somewhere, somehow, because that's the way it should be.

Mark Evanier's Eulogy For Roz Kirby:

One Tuesday in July of 1969, I drove down to Irvine, California to meet my favorite comic book artist. I thought I'd meet him and maybe get an autograph and an interview for my fanzine but it didn't work out that way. When I left, I had no autograph and no interview, but I did have two new people in my life... two people who would come to be important to me in ways I cannot fully articulate, even now, even to myself.

I was not alone in this experience. Millions of us loved the comic books that came out of the Kirby house. Most of us who were privileged to visit there instantly came to love the man who made them happen, and the woman who made them possible.

We loved Jack because of his brilliant imagination and his outstanding decency and sense of humanity. And we loved Roz because... well, first of all, because she loved Jack. She dressed him and fed him and drove him and cared for him. And often, just this side of dawn, she'd go into his studio and tell him to, for God's sake, put down the pencil and come to bed.

You rarely see two people who so totally and truly belonged together, each putting themselves second so the other could be first.

Every time we went to a restaurant, Jack would look at the menu and announce what he was going to order. And then Roz would tell him what he should eat and he would change his order... because he knew (a) that she was always right and (b) that she had only his best interests at heart.

You couldn't help but appreciate the synchronicity: Jack sitting there 'til all hours, cobbling up tales of great champions, protecting the world from total annihilation... and Roz sitting there in the next room, protecting Jack. Compared to her, the super-heroes had it easy — because Jack, God love him, needed a lot of protecting.

We never saw her go off-duty, never saw her flinch. One time at a convention in the '80s, a stooge for one of the comics companies started yelling at Jack, denouncing him for a stand which struck all of us as a simple matter of independence and integrity. Before any of us could rush to Jack's defense... before Jack himself could even raise his voice, there was Roz, telling off the corporate goon better than any of us could. The guy is still probably trembling... because nothing scared her when her life partner was threatened, and Jack was the same way about her.

When I think of her today, I think of her courage and I think of

her compassion. I think of how proud she was of her family: Susan, Barbara, Lisa, and Neal, and all the grandchildren and in-laws and nieces and nephews and everyone.

And then there was that extended family: All of us writers and artists and comics fans who thought of Jack and Roz as surrogate Aunt and Uncle. There's no way to estimate the number of talented folks who received valuable encouragement and inspiration from them both. Since word spread that we had lost her, they've been calling to commiserate. One author was practically kicking himself that he hadn't yet sent her his new book. It may well be a huge hit but something will always be missing for him: He didn't get to show it to Roz and get her approval.

It was never dull around them. I remember Jack telling the story of sitting there in his studio one day when Roz was coming home from the store. Her foot slipped on the brake and she plowed through the back of the garage, right into Jack's workspace. No one was hurt and Jack, in a strange way, enjoyed the shock of it all. He said to me, "I'm sitting there drawing and I hear a noise... and suddenly, here's Roz comin' right through the wall." Then he paused and added, "You know, we've been married half a century and she's still finding ways to surprise me."

In an equally strange way, I think Jack would have liked the fact that she survived him a few years. Not that anyone wished that loss on her, but she did deserve that brief time in the spotlight. The day before Jack's funeral, she told me she was worried that all the people who called and came to the house would drift away... because really, they only cared about Jack.

That never happened. They called and they came, to the point where she sometimes announced, tongue-in-cheek, she was sick of all the attention. At the San Diego Comic Convention, they stood and cheered her, because they knew that Jack Kirby was a two-person operation.

Today, we're all sad to lose her. But we're glad he's got her back.

Dr. Mark Miller's Eulogy for Rosalind Kirby:

My name is Mark Miller, and I believe that I am one of hundreds, if not thousands of non-kin Kirby family members. Like so many others in this huge extended family, I treasured my moments with Rosalind and Jack. Like so many others I considered it a thrill and an honor to drive up Sapra Street to the home of the King and his Queen. My first trip to the Kirby household occurred about 15 years ago. As many of you have experienced, Rosalind welcomed me as if I were another family

member she had yet to meet. I had not planned to stay long, only wanting to explain just how great an impact Jack's work had on my life. Instead, in that magical household, minutes became hours and hours became dinnertime. How many meals must Rosalind have served to those of us she had welcomed into her home?

Because of my training, I was able to discuss medical issues with Rosalind and at times I helped to "translate" into simple English what the doctors had told her about herself or Jack. I recall Rosalind being characteristically flippant when I informed her that the lung disease she had was usually associated with a mold found on farms. "Farms," she said. "What do I know from farms? I live in the city."

Over the years, I — like so many of you — experienced Roz being ill or even being hospitalized, only to bounce back again. "Don't worry," she'd tell me. "What's everyone worried about?" Although some three years may have passed since the event, I vividly recall Lisa phoning to inform me that Rosalind had just had a pacemaker placed after medics had resuscitated her. As soon as I was allowed to speak with Roz, she began reassuring me and again told me "not to worry." That event — seeing Roz so fragile yet so optimistic — moved me to write Terry Stewart, then-President of Marvel Comics. With Roz's permission, I

just want to thank you for sharing your folks with us. They labored in a brutal business and there were many heartaches to be endured. I am proud that the San Diego Comic-Con I created did nothing but give them pleasure and happiness and surrounded them with love all those years.

An open letter from the Kirby Family:

The Kirby Family would like to thank all of the fans who have sent their kind words of support and sympathy. Over the years many people have shown great kindness to Roz and Jack. The Kirby Family would like to thank Mike Thibodeaux for all his help, especially to Roz after Jack's death. We would like to express our appreciation to Mark Miller, for orchestrating the campaign to get Roz a pension from Marvel. We would also like to thank Terry Stewart for giving Roz the pension, and Joe Calamari for giving Jack credit (finally) where credit is due. We are grateful to Mark Evanier for many things. Finally, we would like to thank John Morrow for keeping the genius of Jack Kirby alive for all of us.

With great love to all — thank you.

A very special Thing drawing, which adorned the walls at the Kirbys' house for years.

KIRBY, 1922-1997

wrote down my concerns about her fragile condition and emphasized the fact that she was the link to that Jack Universe now known as Marvel Comics. I also shared with him that Rosalind lived humbly and in fact at times had to sell one of Jack's pieces of artwork simply to make ends meet. To my surprise Terry called me shortly after he had received my letter. We spoke at length and he said he would review Rosalind's situation with his team of lawyers and then get back to me. He and I spoke again on a few occasions until the day that he called me to say that I could have the privilege of informing Rosalind that Marvel Comics had deemed it appropriate and fair to begin a monthly pension in honor of Jack and Roz's contributions to the company.

Calling Roz with the news was one of the proudest moments of my life. I must say that she did not really believe me for the first several minutes of our conversation. Perhaps this was because she had endured so many years of silence on Marvel's part. But if the industry has failed to give Jack his due, there was always the extended family of Kirby fans, the countless letters, phone calls and visits through which Jack and Roz had daily testimony to just how many lives they had touched.

I was not lucky enough to have been born a son or a nephew or even a distant cousin of Rosalind's, yet she treated me with a motherly kindness that I will always treasure. I thank you Roz, for allowing me into your home and into your life. Wherever I go, I will take you with me.

To the family of Rosalind Kirby, from Shel Dorf:

Please excuse the lateness of this, but I just learned of the death of your Mother. Needless to say my heart goes out to you for the loss.

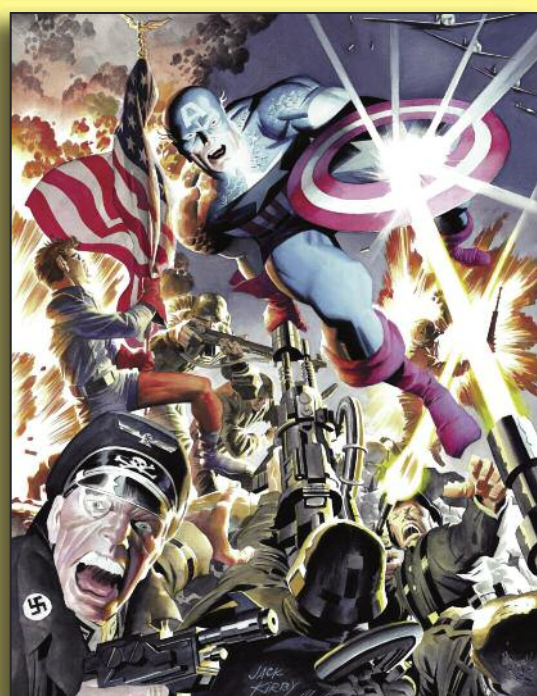
We all made history together and I'm proud of being of service to the Kirby career all those years. We built a tower and his light was always at the top of it shining for the world to see. So now Jack is together with his favorite inker once again.

On my next visit to Temple I will say a special prayer for her. I leave it to the wordsmiths of our field to write about Roz. As for me I





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