

JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR FORTY-SIX



\$9⁹⁵

IN THE US

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Jack Kirby

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(right) The youngsters from Supertown do what they do best—run away!—in these Vinnie Colletta cover inks (sans photo-collage) from *Forever People* #3 (June 1971). Characters TM & ©2006 DC Comics.



THE NEW JACK KIRBY~ COLLECTOR

ISSUE #46, SUMMER 2006



THEY BELIEVE!
THEY JUDGE!
THEY KILL!

BEWARE
OF THE

JUSTIFIERS!

THEIR NEXT VICTIM
MAY BE YOU!--OR



JULY
NO. 3

15¢

THE FOREVER PEOPLE



IT'S THE BRAINCHILD OF
GLORIOUS
GODFREY

IF YOU FEAR LIFE

GODFREY
WILL SAVE
YOU WITH--

ANTI-
LIFE!

OPENING SHOT

by John Morrow,
editor of TJKC

(below) Something old, and something new. The “new” is Marvel Comics’ six-issue *Jack Kirby’s Galactic Bounty Hunters* series. Shown here is the cover art to the first two issues, with inks by Karl Kesel.

(bottom) The “old” is *FF Masterworks 10*, reprinting *Fantastic Four* #94-104, plus a feature on the original version of *FF* #102, by that odd looking fellow pictured at bottom right.

Galactic Bounty Hunters TM & ©2006
Jack Kirby Estate. *Fantastic Four* TM &
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With Summer already here, and the one-hour documentary *Jack Kirby: Storyteller* (originally scheduled to be on the December DVD release of last summer’s big-budget *Fantastic 4* movie, then rescheduled for a “special edition” of the DVD in Spring 2006) nowhere in sight, it’s looking like we won’t be seeing it anytime soon. Perhaps we can hold out hope that Fox will add it to the DVD release of the film’s sequel, scheduled for June 2007 (by all accounts, the sequel looks to be bigger and better than the original). Folks, this documentary really exists; I’ve seen the rough cut (as have most of the other people who appeared in it), and it’s really quite good. So don’t count it out yet!

I’d hoped to announce another exciting Kirby project this issue, to be released at this summer’s Comicon International: San Diego, but a last-minute copyright snag would’ve gutted the project considerably, so I chose to hold out and hope we can get the difficulties resolved. Hopefully we can still produce this big surprise; stay tuned!

In the course of trying to iron out those copyright concerns, I had to sit down and figure out what percentage of years Kirby did work for three groups: Marvel Comics (including Timely and Atlas), DC Comics, and for all the other companies he worked for combined. Like me, I bet you think you know which group he worked the most years for; Marvel wins hands-down, right?

Think again! Jack began working in comics in 1938, and was active in comics for 47 years (based on the timeline in Ray Wyman’s book *The Art of Jack Kirby*—this doesn’t include 1979-1980 when he was out of comics in the animation field, or the few things he did after 1986). When I divided up the 47 years, here’s how his career breaks out by company:

KIRBY’S CAREER BY YEARS:

- 1938-40 (misc.)
- 1941 (Timely/Marvel comics)
- 1942-46 (DC on Sandman, Boy Commandos, Newsboy Legion, Manhunter, and others)
- 1947-56 (misc.)
- 1957-59 (DC on mystery books, Green Arrow, Challengers of the Unknown, etc.)
- 1960-70 (Marvel)
- 1971-75 (DC on New Gods, Jimmy Olsen, Kamandi, Mr. Miracle, Demon, Sandman, Losers, etc.)
- 1976-78 (Marvel)
- 1981-83 (misc.)
- 1984-86 (DC on New Gods finale, Super Powers, and others)

KIRBY IS WHERE?!

34% DC COMICS
(16 YEARS)
32% MARVEL COMICS
(15 YEARS)
34% ALL OTHERS
(16 YEARS)

So Marvel, the company where he was arguably the most influential, comes in dead last! Sure, there’s a couple of years where he changed companies midstream, so I went with whoever he was with the longest. And during the War Years, he wasn’t actually creating new material, but inventory material was being published by DC, so I counted those. But however *you* decide to add it up, at worst, it’s still works out to be a pretty even three-way split, with DC conceivably coming out on top.

I guess this shouldn’t have surprised me, considering how much I love Jack’s 1970s DC

work in particular. He poured his heart and soul into his *New Gods* saga, and produced a wealth of other interesting—if not as epic—characters and concepts during the 1940s, ’50s, and ’70s at DC, and even got to revisit many of them in the 1980s before retiring from comics. This issue focuses on my personal favorite Kirby work, the Fourth World, including lots of art from the *Forever People*, and Jack’s return to his characters in the final decade of his career.

And while you’re (I hope!) enjoying this issue, don’t think for a minute that a couple of stalled projects means there’s no other Kirby out there to be had. There’s plenty to look out for, coming from Marvel Comics, interestingly enough. Perhaps most exciting is Marvel’s six-issue *Galactic Bounty Hunters* series, debuting in July under their ICON imprint. It features original concepts and artwork created by Jack before his death, and fully realized by his daughter Lisa, Rick French, Mike Thibodeaux, and Steve Robertson of Genesis West. *Galactic Bounty Hunters* was originally pitched as an animated series (we did a feature on it a few issues ago), but when the project evolved into a comics mini-series, the team shopped it around and it found a home at the House That Jack Built. There is some original Kirby artwork throughout the series; some drawn specifically for the project, and some other previously unpublished Kirby illos that are being incorporated with Mike

Thibodeaux’s own work. Captain Victory makes a guest appearance in the series, and Marvel will be putting their own touch to it, involving top talents like inker Karl Kesel to give it a Marvel feel, so be sure to support this project.

In the meantime, Marvel’s new *Fantastic Four Masterworks 10* volume reprints Kirby’s final issues on the series, plus new essays by Roy Thomas, Dick Ayers, and Joe Sinnott. There’s also a feature on *FF* #108’s heavily altered story (which was originally supposed to be #102). Editor Tom Brevoort commissioned yours truly to do an updated version of the article we ran back in *TJKC* #9, reassembling the original story back into the version Kirby submitted, and it includes all the unpublished Kirby pencils that ended up on the Bullpen floor when it was finally published in #108. (I’m pleased to say the Kirby Estate will be receiving a small payment for Jack’s unused pencil art in the new article, even though Marvel’s not paying any royalties on the reprinted *FF* stories.) And their upcoming *Captain America Masterworks*, reprinting *Cap* #101-113 (with numerous stories by Jack), will feature an introduction penned by me as well.

The 1970s DC ads and covers proclaimed, “Kirby Is Here!” While he may not be physically with us any longer, the man and his work live on over a decade after his passing—and with your support, it’ll continue indefinitely. ★



UNDER THE COVERS

Our front cover this issue is an inked version of one of the coolest Darkseid drawings Jack ever did! We first ran the pencils below back in *TJKC* #22, and ever since, I've been waiting for the perfect chance (and inker) to present it as a full-blown cover. So with this issue's Fourth World theme, the

time was perfect—but it didn't make much sense to have anyone but Mike Royer ink it, since he was *the inker* for Jack's Fourth World books. Mike put on his 1972 chops, and turned in an amazing job, as usual. Then Tom Ziuko went nuts applying those funky, Kirbyesque colors that Jack loved to paint on his personal projects, to create an end result that's at once powerful, ominous, and a little bit creepy—just the way Darkseid would've wanted it.

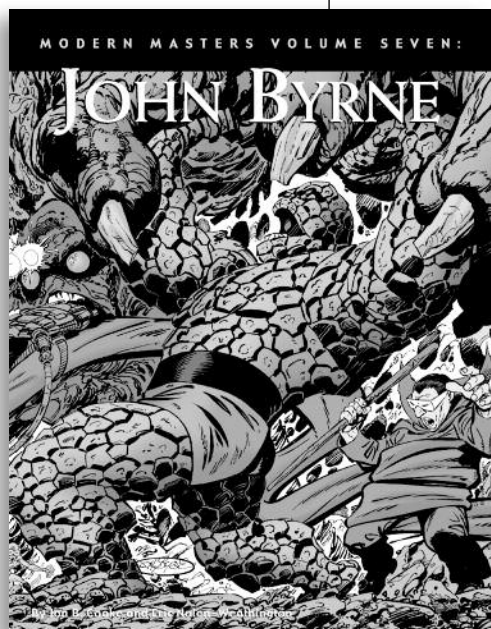
Our back cover started life as the final page pencil drawing from the original 1971 version of the *Kirby Unleashed* portfolio. As a teenager, I'd always loved that drawing, thinking it was probably one of the coolest, most vital renditions ever of those characters. The only thing missing was the *other* coolest (and most underused) aspect of the *Forever People*, Infinity Man! Since the pencil art was in a roughly square format, we decided to make it fit our cover by adding an early 1970s era I-Man pencil panel from *Forever People* #11 to the background (courtesy of the photocopies Jack made of his pencils back then).

To make the package complete, we asked John Byrne to ink it for us, and he happily obliged. Mr. Byrne has just wrapped up his 18-issue run on DC's *Blood of the Demon* series (starring Etrigan, another of Jack's 1970s DC creations), and is the subject of our latest *Modern Masters* volume (cover shown below, and on sale now!). John's also known for his own spin on Jack's Fourth World characters in various comics, and you can read an interview with him about it on page 70 of this issue.

While he put "traced by John Byrne" as his signature on the inks, a quick comparison of these pencils to the finished art shows he certainly did more than just copy in ink what Jack put



down, and added a lot of panache and vitality of his own to the piece. Tom Ziuko took it from there, adding colorful hues to complete the cover, and helping make it one of the most unforgettable ones we've ever published. Thanks to all these fine gents for their contributions! ★



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CONVERSATIONS WITH JACK

(below) PFC Kirby in 1945 at Brighton Beach, NY, just after his return from WWII service.

(bottom) Joe Simon's Sentinels of Liberty house ad from a 1941 issue of *Captain America Comics*.

Captain America TM & ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.



(next page, top) The good times; June 1949, and S&K hit it big with romance comics.

(next page, bottom) Not everything was a hit; unused final "Jungle Lord" page meant for *Stuntman* #3 (1946).

Stuntman TM & ©2006 Simon & Kirby.

by Ray Wyman

(This installment continues from where Part I, published in TJKC #29, leaves off; Roz and Jack are filling me in with their recollections of Jack's career and family life. These interviews took place in August 1989, October 5 1989, and June 1992. Just a reminder, I have edited these interviews together so they read as one long interview. Most of the edits reduced or eliminated my contribution to the conversation where possible, but I have also reordered the dialog for clarity—there were quite a few jumps and doglegs. I hope readers appreciate the few poignant moments when the true nature of Roz and Jack's relationship bubbles up—these were times when I was happy to shut up and let the tape roll.)

RAY WYMAN: So, now Jack. At the end of the war, you came back. When did you start working again?

ROZ KIRBY: He started working right away.

RAY: Where was Joe?

JACK KIRBY: He was busy with other things. I went back to DC—I picked up quite a lot of work there.

ROZ: He did a lot of stuff by himself. Even when we were in the service, down in...

JACK: Yeah, I did a couple of covers in Atlanta.

ROZ: Yeah, you sent them covers. He had me do covers and I would ship them in, and we always made a little extra money that way. But that was before he left for overseas.

When he came back he started work right away.

JACK: In fact, I did a couple at the Service Club.

ROZ: Yeah, that's where he used to do them, at the Service Club.

JACK: That is the only time I had.

But, you would have to fit things in so crazily that I stopped doing that, until they sent me overseas. When I came back, the same thing happened. I slowly recovered and I began to get back into the field.

RAY: Roz, where did you go during this time?

ROZ: Well, we were living with my folks, for a couple of years. Susan was about two years old when we finally moved out. I remember we started looking for houses about the time Joe got married. So we went all over together, looking for houses together. Joe and Harriet [Joe's wife] and we went out to the island one day, and they were putting up these

new homes. Twelve thousand dollar homes on Long Island.

JACK: Yes, they put up a mess of them.

ROZ: So we got the Veterans loan and put down payments on one; Joe and Harriet got a house right across the street. We lived right across the street from each other. Our children were brought up together. We were very close at that time.

JACK: In fact, they had a big snowstorm in '48 and we were caught in Joe's house. We were having a social evening.

ROZ: No, no. I was home and you were doing some work with Joe up in the attic. He had the attic studio.

JACK: Oh yes, yes. I was stuck there and I had to practically dig a tunnel to get home. Just to get across the street! The snow was up to our necks, over our heads!

ROZ: That's where they did a lot of the work, in Joe's studio up in the house.

RAY: How long did you guys live in Long Island?

ROZ: We lived in Minneola, Long Island (where our first house was) for about 2½ years, which was actually about 2 blocks from where our second house was. We saw this large, big brick house going up and Jack fell in love with it. And I said, "We can't afford it." It was \$22,000. I said, "You are out of your mind. It is too expensive for us." But we had Neal by then (1948), so anyway, we sold the other house and we bought this one. And we had to put every cent we had into it. In fact, the first week we were so broke, I borrowed \$50 from my mother for food money until Jack's next paycheck.

JACK: We were very fortunate, because after the war, a lot of GIs came back and they didn't have any work at all. There was a small depression that followed the war. But, I could get work any time. Work was very steady for me.

ROZ: Well, his kind of profession was so different than the average man.

JACK: That's not the point. We were in the situation where Joe and I had to create the work for yourselves. We had to create the work to survive. Joe handled the business side and I handled the creative. We worked very well together as a team.

RAY: So, you got back in '43, you two lived at Roz's folk's house. Then Joe and you started working on something, or was there a break?

JACK: I don't remember.

ROZ: It took a little while to get things going again. I don't remember how long, but I remember that his drawing board was in our bedroom; he was working right out of the bedroom. I forgot what he was doing at that time. That was the period, in my mother's house, when I was helping him ink, in the bedroom.



& ROZ, PART II

JACK: After the war?

ROZ: Yes, when I moved back with my mother. When you came back from the service, we didn't have our apartment anymore.

JACK: Right.

ROZ: That's when I was doing the Green whatever-it-is and the Challengers.

JACK: Green Hornet.

ROZ: It was Green Arrow.

JACK: Yeah, but I worked on both stories.

ROZ: That is when he was doing his own inking at that time. I still had that steady hand, so he would do the outlining and I would fill in the blacks for him, so he would be able to get through with it. By that time Neal was born (1948). Then you and Joe worked on *Black Magic*.

JACK: Mainline was our own company.

ROZ: Mainline was Joe and Jack. They had *Foxhole*, [*Justice Traps the*] *Guilty*, and things like that.

RAY: Before that... Crestwood?

JACK: Right, right. Crestwood.

ROZ: It's all a mishmash. They were doing work for everybody back then.

RAY: Were you always involved with what Jack did?

JACK: She was always involved.

ROZ: I took an interest in it. Even to this day, there are very few wives who will go to conventions; I am one of the very few that you will see there. So I inked, helped where I could. We talked about some of the stories. But I never stuck my nose out wherever I wanted.... Mainly, I kept tabs on the business, especially when it came to home.

JACK: Roz is the only one who knows what's going on around here. She keeps track of the bills, the bank account. Without her I'd be lost.

ROZ: I'm the glue.

RAY: You guys did a lot of contract work. I noticed books for Harvey and other shops. You guys must have been pretty busy.

JACK: That period is nebulous to me. I think *Boys' Ranch*, *Boy Commandos*. No, *Boy Commandos* was before the war; they were the forerunners of the war strips. In fact, we were the first ones to do a romance book, Joe and I. We were walking down the street and we saw romance magazines, and said what the hell? We haven't got those in comics! And they sold out. Everybody was buying them. If a book didn't sell out, we used to cry.

ROZ: That was a good time.

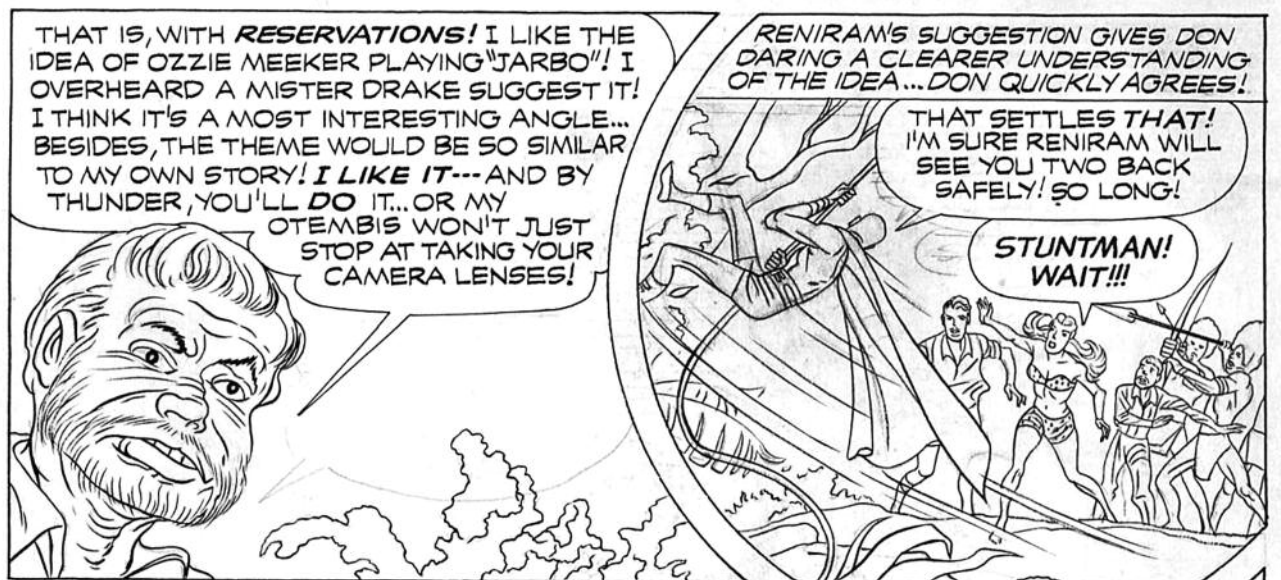
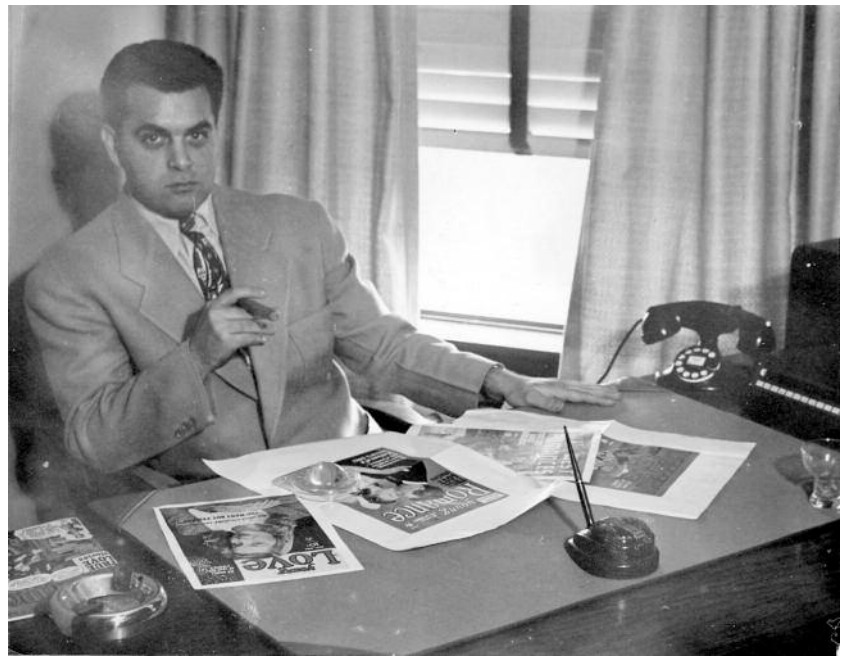
RAY: What was good about it?

JACK: It was good in every way you can imagine. We had control of what we did and we did everything extremely well. There was never an end to the work and everybody had great respect for what we did. I think that we did a very good job of planning and executing titles. And we proved ourselves through our product, which at the time was the very best in the industry. We were innovative.

ROZ: Everybody was trying to outdo each other with the next new idea that would sell more comic books.

JACK: Oh yes.

ROZ: The work was more original back then. People weren't doing the same thing over



THE FOURTH WORLD'S SOURCE

(below) The Source resonates from every aspect of New Genesis. Here are Jack's pencils from DC's *Who's Who* #16 (June 1986).

(next page) Orion's true face shocks his half-brother Kalibak (who's no beauty queen himself) in *New Gods* #8 (April 1972).

(page 14) Page 1 pencils to *Forever People* #7 (Feb. 1972).

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by Kevin Ainsworth

"There came a time when the old gods died."

What a fantastic opening sentence for a new series. The death of the old and birth of the new. Over the years, the Fourth World series has rightly gained a reputation for brilliance as well as being Jack Kirby's most personal work, but where did the ideas come from? What was "The Source"?

Most of the ideas, concepts and characters were originated while Jack still worked at Marvel. Throughout the letters pages of Marvel's *Thor* in the late 1960s, a debate had been running about the origins of the gods and also about who the gods might worship. Odin was allegedly the all-powerful, but how did this fit in with the other pantheons such as the Greek gods? And if Odin and Zeus were counterparts and each claimed to be all-powerful, then surely there must be something above them?

But, whatever it was, it was missing.

Jack Kirby would probably have been aware of this debate

and, even if he did not read the letters pages, if others had spotted this flaw, he would have as well.

Another weakness in the *Thor* series was the lack of balance in good versus evil. The main villain was Loki, Thor's stepbrother. Yet they were not equals and opposites nor were they really related by blood. For them to fight, Odin had to turn a blind eye (a bit tricky for an omnipotent, all-seeing sky god!) and even when he did find out, Loki was usually able to blame Thor, and Odin would fall for it. There were times when it was really stretching things with the punishments Odin inflicted on Thor for minor transgressions.

These were things that needed fixing, but they could not be fixed in *Thor*. A whole new series with brand new characters would have to be created to fix these flaws. (Even now, some thirty years after Jack left the series, have there really been any changes in storyline and character dynamics?) Out of his desire to improve things came *The New Gods* and the Fourth World.

The protagonists would now be equal and opposites





(center) Chic Stone during his Marvel Bullpen years in the 1960s.

(below) Stone inked this amazingly detailed poster art for the short-lived *Captain Nice* TV show, over Kirby pencils.

Captain Nice TM & ©2006 the respective owner.

A column answering Frequently Asked Questions about Kirby by Mark Evanier

If all goes well—and how often does *that* happen in this world?—my next column for this magazine will be about how I've decided, for whatever it's worth, that the first two issues of *Fantastic Four* were inked by George Klein. This has long been a mystery among Kirby fans and a lot of us have had other answers to the question, including a gent named Christopher Rule. I used to say it was probably Rule, perhaps assisted by Klein. Now I think it's just Klein and next issue, I'll tell you why I think that.

For now, let's get on to other mysteries, starting with this one from Jeff Pearson about another Kirby inker...

In a recent issue, you mentioned my favorite Jack Kirby inker, Chic Stone. Could you tell me a little more about him? Why did he stop inking Jack's work?

The more interesting question about Stone is why he *started* inking Jack's work. Chic was a longtime comic artist who was in the field almost from Day One. In later years, he recalled his first job as a strip called "Booby Sox" that was done for the Jacquet shop in 1939. There are even earlier comics that just might be his work, including some from the Eisner-Iger shop.

His first identifiable art for Timely/Marvel seems to have been a 1943 strip called "Eustace Hayseed and Choo Choo" that ran in *Joker Comics*. But doing work for Jacquet and Funnies, Inc. as he did, he was probably in some comic published by Martin Goodman even before that. He worked for Fawcett on Captain Marvel and for Fiction House before settling in as a Marvel staff artist in the late Forties.

For a time in the office, he had the drawing table next to Mike Sekowsky's—a location coveted by those who enjoyed Mike's caustic humor and shunned by those who became the target of his intermittent anger. Stone considered Mike a good friend and

mentor.

And Stone considered himself an artist, not an inker. He did ink (mostly) during this stint at Marvel, in part because they were short on inkers and in part because he felt intimidated by the pencilers working there then, especially Sekowsky and Syd Shores.

In the Fifties, he was like a lot of comic artists, in and out of

comics.

There were periods when there wasn't enough work and he found jobs in the art departments of various non-comic magazines. He also tried publishing one called

Boy Illustrated, which lasted all of two issues. When it flopped, there was an extended period when the only work he could find was for Charlton... which considering their pay rates at the time, paid about as well as being unemployed. In the Sixties, he was working for the American Comics Group and Dell when he heard Stan Lee was hiring and decided to see if there was work available there.

He went up to the office around the middle of 1963. In later interviews, he remembered it as 1964 but he was off by a year. He walked in to find Stan going over the pages Kirby had penciled for the Thor story in *Journey Into Mystery* #102. The story had come back from the letterer and was ready for the inker.

As Stone later recalled, "When I saw Jack's pages, my jaw dropped. I knew Kirby's work was great from the printed comics but I don't believe I'd ever seen his pencils before that day."

Lee let Stone study the pages while he put in a call to the inker—probably George Roussos—to tell him to come pick them up. Apparently, the inker had a conflict because when Stan got off the phone, he said to Stone, "Chic, would you like to ink this job?"

"Well, my knees turned to Jell-o," Stone later explained. "That's how intimidating it was. I never in a million years would have gone in there and said, 'How's about letting me ink Kirby?' But I left there with the pages, very much afraid I would not do justice to this man's magnificent artwork. I hope I did."

Many fans thought so. Though some faulted Stone's bold, forceful brushwork for lacking sensitive detail, most felt he brought forth all the energy of the pencil work... or at least as much as anyone ever managed. Kirby liked it just fine and he personally hired Stone several times during this period when in need of an inker for an outside project—the poster for the *Captain Nice* TV show and a short comic story for *Esquire* Magazine, to name two.

Stone embellished a number of other stories for Stan during this period over Don Heck, Dick Ayers and others, but he never really enjoyed inking someone else's work, eventually even Jack's. "I learned a lot inking Jack," he told me. "But it wasn't what I wanted to do with my life." Alas, he was unable to get Stan to give him penciling work.

Which brings me to one of my own mysteries... namely, why not? As I've mentioned here before, Stan was short a couple of pencilers during the 1964-1965 period. Once he'd gotten as much as possible out of Kirby, Ditko, Heck, and Ayers, there were still comics to be drawn and the others he tried—Bill Everett, Joe Orlando, Bob Powell, and a few others—just didn't work out. They generally either couldn't work from a plot outline and/or couldn't deliver the kind of dynamic art he wanted in order to set his books apart from the DC product.

So how come he didn't give Chic Stone a try?

Years ago, I had a theory that Stan had Paul Reinman inking Kirby on *X-Men* and Stone inking him on other strips as a way of breaking them in to pencil for Marvel. That would have been consistent with Stan's *modus operandi* and it would have been a





Showcase #6 has been reprinted numerous times, most recently in DC's Archives series. But neither *House of Mystery* #76 nor *Journey Into Mystery* #55 has been reprinted.



Journey Into Mystery TM & ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc. Challengers of the Unknown, House of Mystery TM & ©2006 DC Comics.

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

KIRBY

OBSCURA



Do you remember the first piece of Jack Kirby art that really impressed you? Like many a British comics fan growing up in the Beatles era of the 1960s, my first encounters with The King were in the wonderful bumper-sized black-&-white reprints of DC and Marvel material put out by such British companies as Thorpe & Porter. These distributors would import stats from the US (not the plates or original US artwork) and reprint (in monochrome) some priceless Silver Age material sandwiched between full covers in chunky (and now highly collectable) anthologies. The first half of the book would be a reprint of (for instance) DC's *Blackhawk*, *The Flash* or *Mystery in Space*, while the backup material (equally cherished by Brit comic fans hungry for all American material—we were all Americaphiles!) would be from other DC books such as *House of Mystery*. The existence of the latter book, of course, was completely unknown to British readers—there was no British edition, and the covers to all this backup material were invariably dropped when it was shoehorned into the back of the 68-pagers. Only when American comics began to be imported directly to the UK in the early- to-mid-'60s did we realize that there was a far greater

universe of full-color comics out there. We knew, of course, the American readers had the inestimable pleasure of reading these books in color, as the occasional American book found its way to the shores—in Liverpool, where I grew up, many comics arrived as ballast in the ships, as the city's days as one of the greatest ports in the world (the Titanic set out from Liverpool!) were not that distant. Famous Liverpoolian Paul McCartney was a great comics fan—as both his songs and a recent TV interview demonstrate.

Those school friends lucky enough to have brothers or other relatives working in the ships could really establish playground supremacy by brandishing the much-desired original American comics they'd been able to get hold of. So it was that one cold morning in a Liverpool school playground did I first become aware of the terrible, aching tug of envy. A boy I'd never liked swaggered over to me, holding something behind his back. This same boy had taunted me with a British reprint of *Tales from the Crypt* (which I had persuaded him to sell to me—not that difficult a task, as he wasn't really a comics fan). But it was clear from his vindictive grin that I was in for a tough time. "You know all those black-&-white comics you collect, Forshaw?" he taunted. "They're nothing—absolutely nothing—compared to the Yank originals in color! My brother's just brought this comic from the docks which is the greatest thing you'll ever see—and don't even ask whether I want to sell it—you'll never get your hands on this!"

From behind his back, he produced something that (to my immense frustration) proved every word he said was true. The comic was open to a page that showed 20th-century men in purple jumpsuits being forced to work on the pyramids in ancient Egypt. The color, the astonishing dynamism of the figures and the richness of the detail took my breath away (as it does to this day). Then, keeping the comic at arm's length to maximize my sense that this was something that I'd never have, he turned to another splash page in which the jumpsuited heroes were now standing on the threshold of the most amazing futuristic city I'd ever seen rendered in comics. Clearly, this was a Wellsian time travel story, and the adventurers didn't appear to be super-heroes (after all, the outfits were not skin tight). To rub in the envy factor, my playground acquaintance (he certainly wasn't a friend!) flicked through the pages of this amazing book, and finally showed me the cover. The time travel story appeared to be called "The Wizard of Time", and the book itself was called *Challengers of the Unknown* (#4—there had apparently been at least three other issues of this wonder!). With a flourish, he folded the book in two (something I'd never do—I already treated my collection with much more respect than this!) and strode away from me with a smirk. Burning with a passionate desire to own this comic, I little realized that I'd just witnessed the first Jack Kirby/Wally Wood artwork in color that I'd ever encountered, and that I wouldn't own the book until I found it as a 24-year-old in a San Francisco comics shop.

What I also didn't know was that I would, in fact, soon possess the story "Wizard of Time"—albeit in black-&-white. I started this column by talking about the black-&-white bumper British reprints (which usually bore the legend: "Big 68 pages! Don't take less!"). Shortly after this encounter, the distributors Thorpe & Porter added to their list of reprints, a new title: Yes, nothing less than *Challengers of the Unknown*. And in the third issue (the penultimate UK issue), which had a Bob Brown cover and stories from the post-Kirby era, there, as backup, was the breathtaking "Wizard of Time." Kirby's original cover had vanished, of course, but despite the lack of color, it was possible to appreciate that astonishing artwork in the crisp, beautifully printed reproductions (later shilling books by successors to Thorpe & Porter such as Alan Class used paper of much inferior quality which did great disservice to the original works).

Interestingly, as these *Challengers of the Unknown* books bore no credits, we Brits had no idea that the anonymous Jack Kirby was the begetter of this wonderful book. Ironically, many of us were more familiar with the work of Wally Wood through the *Mad* EC reprints that had appeared in import from Ballantine books, and we assumed that *Challengers of the Unknown* was his work. Ironically, this could be construed as a criticism of Wood as a Kirby inker (a topic hotly debated within the pages of



KIRBY'S YOUNG GODS by Shane Foley

"First we bow to the young," said Highfather in *New Gods* #1.

Youth was to continue to be a key element in Kirby's Fourth World war. Here are a few more such times.

(page 22) *Forever People* #6, page 10: Big Bear was young and a pacifist. But (as well shown in the con-current *New Gods* #6, "The Glory Boat") there were times when a pacifist felt he had to act. Here was one such moment for Big Bear.

(page 23) *Forever People* #6, Page 16: As often as not though, the Forever People tried to simply run away.

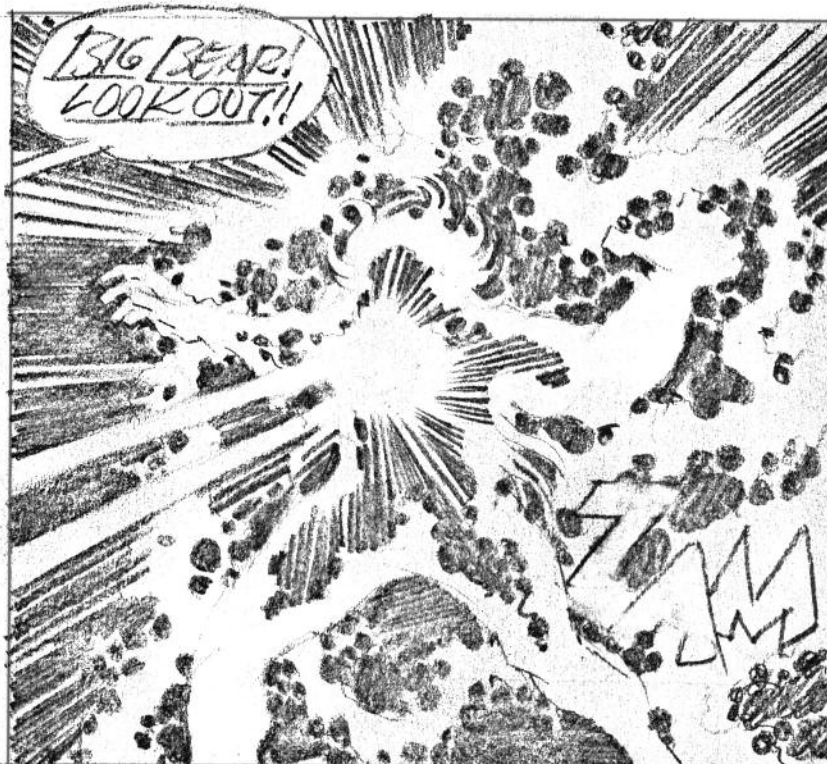
(pages 24-27) *Forever People* #6, "Raid from Apokolips" back-up: Reason and discussion before force, then minimal force when there is no other choice. A great short sequence showing the outcome of underestimating these youngsters.

(page 28) *Forever People* #7, page 4: A superbly scripted page by Kirby—with Biblical overtones of God's hand willingly swayed by innocent but certain faith. The optimism and courage of Esak seem to be hallmarks of youth that Kirby cherished.

(page 29) *New Gods* #8, "Beat the Black Racer" page 3. Esak again—and this time he's in trouble, desperately needing saving by another young god, Fastbak. Despite the many times that Esak appeared in the Fourth World series, it still took many readers by surprise—and delight—to see his pivotal role in Kirby's later quasi-conclusion to the series, *The Hunger Dogs*.

(page 30) *Forever People* #8, page 23: Here the young Gods have quietly averted a total victory by Darkseid—they have stopped him acquiring the 'Anti-Life Equation' possessed by Billion Dollar Bates. Now, as they stand face-to-face with Darkseid, the one who is the antithesis of all they believe in, their courage to debate and resist him are intact—but in doing so they give the respect due to him as one in authority. Layers of thought and understanding went into this brilliant scene by Kirby. ★





(right) One of many paste-up stats from the new story in *New Gods* reprint #6 (Nov. 1984).

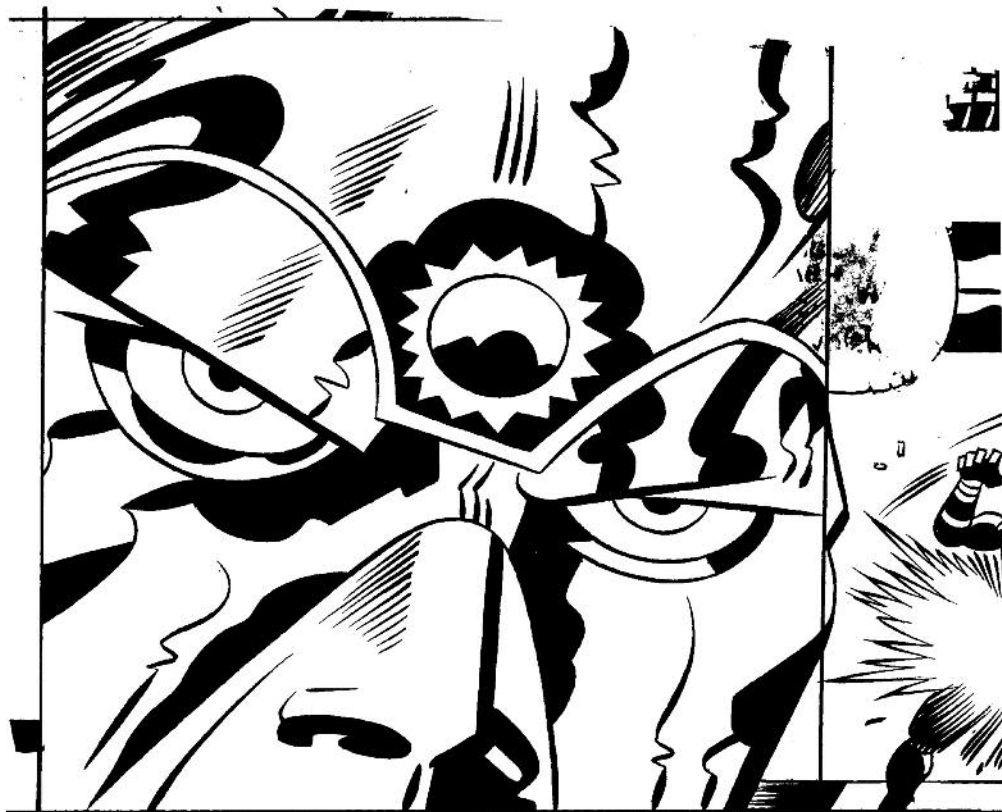
(bottom) Pages 1-3 of Jack's original *New Gods* #12 story. All 25 pages shown from this story are inked by Mike Royer. Although we're only showing inks here, Mike was very faithful to Jack's pencils, while truing-up some of the distortions that cropped up in Jack's work of this period. The dialogue on these inked pages is identical to Jack's pencils, but be sure to get out your copy of *Hunger Dogs* and compare; you'll see a lot of dialogue changes once these pages were published in the Graphic Novel.

All characters TM & ©2006 DC Comics.

A look inside DC Comic's production of the *Hunger Dogs Graphic Novel*, compiled by John Morrow

(Back in TJKC #6, we did a feature on Kirby's 1984 *Hunger Dogs Graphic Novel*. To recap: DC President Paul Levitz worked out a deal for Jack to redesign some of his *New Gods* characters to be used as part of the *Super Powers* toy line, which would in turn allow Jack to receive royalties on his new work on the characters for DC in the 1980s. Part of that work was a new sequel to the *New Gods*, which was billed as the conclusion readers never got to see during the *Fourth World's* original run. DC was reprinting the original eleven issues of *New Gods* in their *Baxter Paper* reprint series—two comics reprinted per issue—and the wrap-up was to appear in the final reprint issue, as *New Gods* #12.

The reprint project began under Dick Giordano's editorial oversight, and each of the first five issues had 48 pages of story content. The final issue would contain the 22-page *New Gods* #11, plus 25 new pages DC contracted Jack to produce to wrap-up the saga; it was a pretty low page count for such an epic conclusion, but Jack gave it his best shot. However, the new story that Kirby turned in didn't actually end the *New Gods* saga; instead, it served more as just another installment in the series, taking place ten years later, and ending with both Orion and Darkseid surviving, never having had their "final battle." With both Orion and Darkseid



appearing in the upcoming *Super Powers* toy line, perhaps Jack was too hamstrung to be able to present a to-the-death clash between father and son, so instead gave us more of a look into how both characters—and young Esak—had changed in the decade since he worked on the strip.

When Jack turned in the new #12 story, it led to an unfortunate disagreement between Giordano and Kirby. As Dick recalls, "I called him and said the story he was doing was not the story we advertised and solicited, and we didn't want to lie to our readers. My innocent remark caused an immediate and unexpected angry reaction from Jack who evidently thought I was calling him a liar, and communications between us came to a halt." Kirby and Giordano were eventually able to iron out the misunderstanding, but at the point of the disagreement, the project moved over to the late Joe Orlando, who was spearheading the editing of DC's new *Graphic Novel* line.

Joe's assistant editor on the line was Nick Cuti, longtime comics writer, and co-creator of *E-Man*. Nick remembers, "We drafted a letter to Jack and, I believe, it was Len [Wein] who suggested that Jack use what he had turned in as the centerpiece of the story, but write another story which would encompass his present story and make it more complete. Jack was not happy, and I know this because he told me so, but being the gentleman he was, he agreed to do it."

And so, the decision was made to take Jack's 25-page *New Gods* #12 story (presented below and throughout this article as Kirby submitted it)



and turn it into the 64-page *Hunger Dogs Graphic Novel*. DC expanded the final *New Gods* reprint issue (#6) to give Jack 48 additional new pages to create a lead-in story to the *Graphic Novel*. D. Bruce Berry was chosen to ink the new pages; Mike Royer had inked the *New Gods* #12 story, but says he was never asked to ink the new material. Greg Theakston, who was concurrently inking Jack's new work on the *Super Powers*

comic book mini-series, re-inked the faces and select parts of the original Royer- and Berry-inked pages, adding a third inking style to the mix. And DC's production department got into the act, pasting in changes, and expanding the inked art to better fit the new, full-bleed format of their reprint and *Graphic Novel* pages—something necessary either because Jack neglected to follow DC's instructions, or DC neglected to inform Jack of the new format.

What follows is a firsthand recounting by Mark "Alex" Alexander of the inner workings of the DC Comics Production Department during the time of Kirby's *Hunger Dogs Graphic Novel*. Mark served in the production room first at DC Comics in the 1980s, and later at Marvel Comics. It should be noted that this is a different "Mark Alexander" than the one who's written several articles for this magazine in past issues.)

Strangely for DC, lines of authority were pretty blurry on the *Hunger Dogs* project. When I worked in DC's production room as a paste-up droid in the '80s, what I liked about it was how clear-cut and straight-up the place was; everybody knew what their job was, and who they were to report to while doing it. This was especially true of DC's production room itself; Bob Rozakis ran it as his own little fiefdom, his own little satrapy. And ran it well, I might add. It was *his* kingdom, we were *his* serfs, and they were *his* pages. That was the way it was, and that was the way it had to be if the system wasn't going to collapse under its own weight in a day.

Even the proofreader could only make very cursory changes and only those related to punctuation and spelling. Very rarely, the proofreader would ask for an art change on continuity grounds, but I can think of only one time that happened the whole time I was there. So generally speaking, being a paste-up droid at DC was a pretty straight-up job. And a good thing, too, since when I started out in 1984, I was really, really wretched at it. But I got better; it is my proudest boast that when I started I was awful, and when I was fired I was mediocre. And this was possible because—in part—lines of authority were pretty clearly drawn, and pretty clearly understood, at DC.

Until... *Hunger Dogs*; which of course was a pretty peculiar project from the start (wherever you consider its start to be). As everyone knows (or you wouldn't be reading this) a decision had been made to reprint the *New Gods* in what was then called the Baxter Format (or sometimes the Mando Paper Format). And the six-issues of the reprint run would be capped off by the *Graphic Novel Hunger Dogs*.

It's been so long since I looked at any of that stuff. I think Marv Wolfman may have summed it up for me when he looked at the pages for the *Super Powers* mini-series (which Jack was doing at roughly the same time *Hunger Dogs* came through), and said, "That's not how I remember Jack." Politely, I like to think of the *Super Powers* books—and a couple of other Jack projects from the '80s—as a retirement plan for



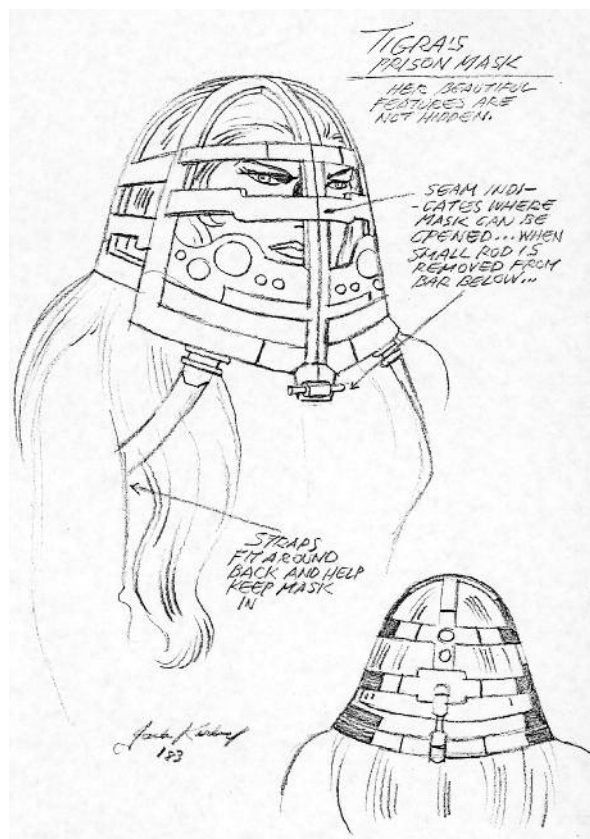
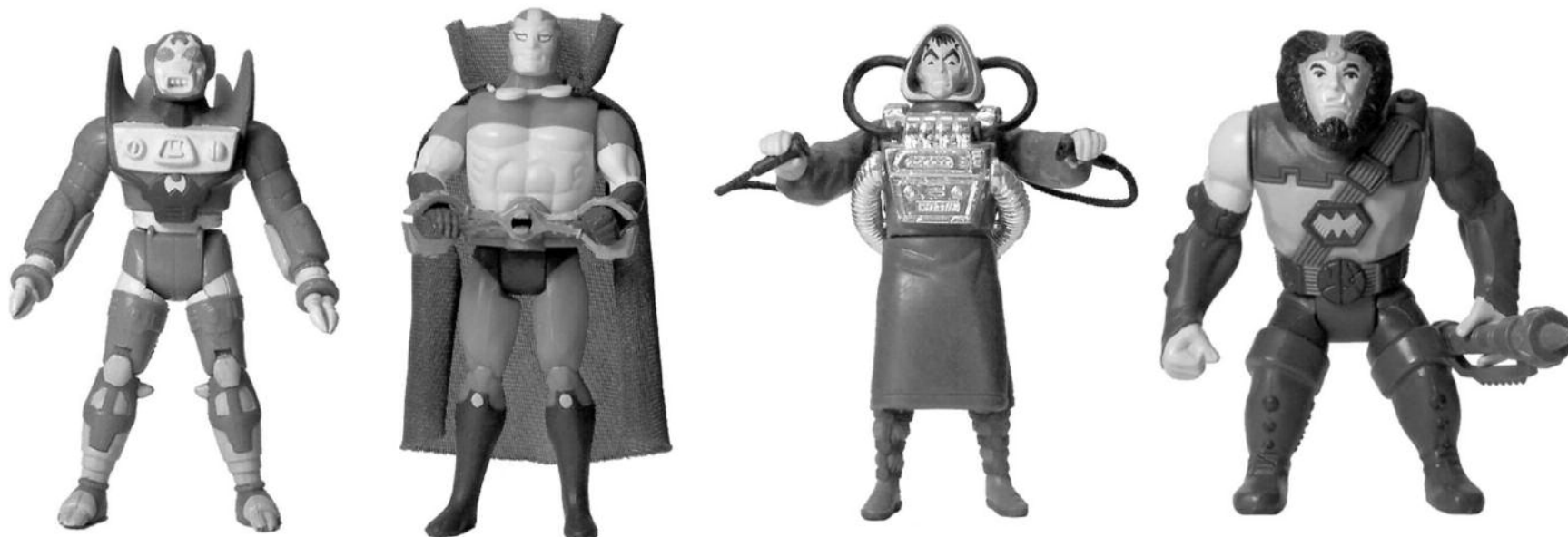
GALLERY 2

OLD GODS, NEW AGAIN

Special thanks to Jason Geyer for the photos of the toys. Find out more about the Super Powers toy line at his website at www.toyotter.com/sp/

In 1984, DC Comics commissioned Jack Kirby to revise some of his Fourth World characters for use as action figures in the new *Super Powers* toy line, which would tie-in to the comics mini-series of the same name. Jack went to town coming up with some elaborate, very cool ideas for ways to re-envision his creations in 3-D. Most of Jack's

suggestions weren't used for the toy line, perhaps being too elaborate for toy manufacturers to replicate economically. But the new look for characters such as Mantis and the Parademons did make it into the *Super Powers* mini-series. And it sure was cool in the 1980s to see Darkseid and Co. on toy store shelves!



OF MOBIUS CHAIRS & BOOM TUBES

Art restoration by Christopher Fama



Metron TM & ©2006 DC Comics.

This issue's Fourth World focus left us with an interesting quandary: What earlier Kirby work could we present that could be seen as a precursor to the *New Gods*? One answer might be "Donegan's Daffy Chair" from Harvey's *Alarming Tales* #1 (Sept. 1957), which certainly seems to fit, with its early version of Metron's Mobius Chair. Our other choice was "The Hole In The Wall" from *Alarming Tales* #2 (Nov. 1957), which features an inter-dimensional doorway (can you say Boom Tube?), and an other-dimensional utopian city, not unlike New Genesis.

Was Jack thinking back to these stories when he conceived the Fourth World series? Well, probably not, considering he grew up with pulp sci-fi stories of inter-dimensional transportation. But it's at least interesting to see that he'd gotten his feet wet with these concepts before turning them into his *magnum opus*.

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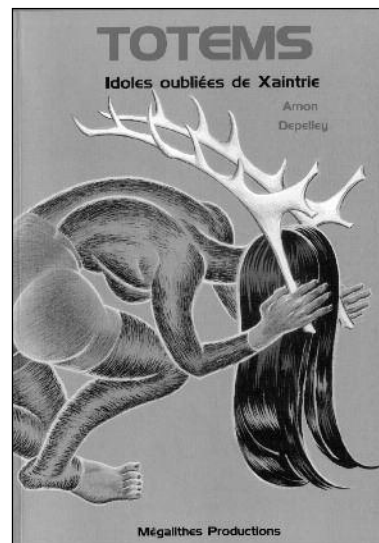
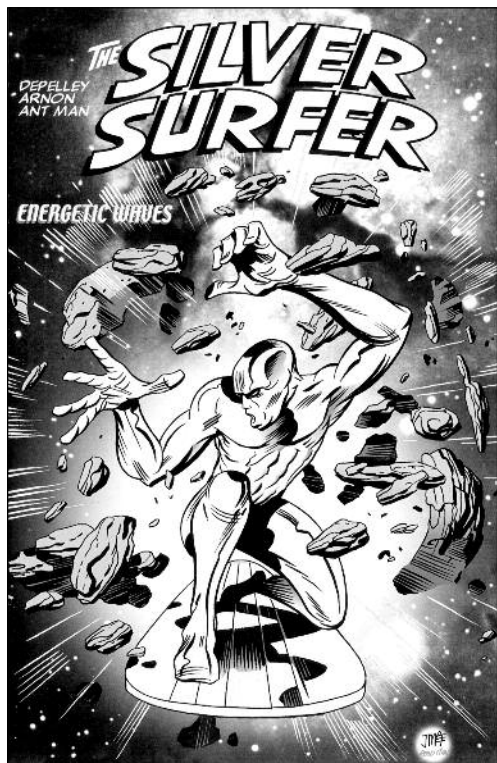
Know of some Kirby-inspired work that should be covered here? Send to:

Adam McGovern
PO Box 257
Mt. Tabor, NJ 07878

As A Genre

A regular feature examining Kirby-inspired work, by Adam McGovern

KIRBY, MON AMOUR



America and France are like the dysfunctional married couple of great nations—trading ridiculous stereotypes while gobbling up each other's culture, and carrying on political feuds in-between saving each other's butts in historic wars. But at least there are some at both ends of the Atlantic who see French creators and our own comics King as a match made in heaven.

Surely there have been few finer moments for Kirby's prized creation the Silver Surfer than the graphic novel that France's international comics icon Moebius did with Stan Lee in the late 1980s (*Parable*), and some of the most eccentric and interesting graphic novels of recent French vintage have been by the Kirby-influenced visionary Jean-Marie Arnon.

Arnon has been brought to this magazine's attention in past articles by his countryman, accomplished creator and critic Jean Depelley. Arnon and Depelley, respectively a woodcarver and a science teacher by trade in addition to their impressive credits in French comics and performing arts, have collaborated (with gifted colorist Reed Man, whose animation

(above) The French Collection: Jean & Jean's series proposals; you saw 'em here first (and hopefully not last). All characters TM and © 2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.

(this page, clockwise from top right, & next page, right) Look at those cave-folk go: Arnon redraws history with dynamic techno-relics. All art © 2006 Jean-Marie Arnon

(next page, top and center) Two sensational splashes from the Arnon archives. Silver Surfer TM and © 2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.

work we'll see next issue) on two Kirby-licious proposals sadly rejected by Marvel, and a fine-art project linking the primal energy and futuristic imagination of the King.

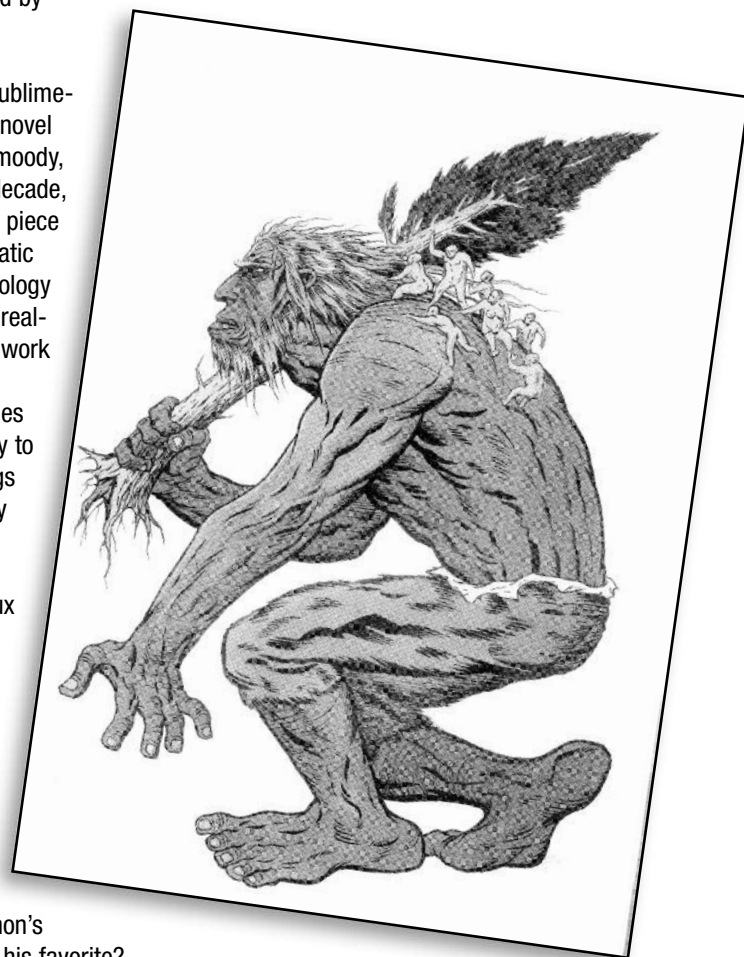
Time-warping between the two outer edges of most Kirby fans' sublime-to-ridiculous spectrum, the pair proposed both a Silver Surfer graphic novel and a Devil Dinosaur series. Marvel got the Surfer very right with the moody, meaningful maxi-series by Dan Chariton and Stacy Weiss earlier this decade, but Depelley and Arnon's conception grandly goes for a pop-art period piece that captures the character's founding era of sleek optimism and operatic risk. Their Devil Dinosaur series ambitiously links the confused archaeology of that concept with the calculated mythos of Kirby's *Eternals* and the real-life disaster drama of the meteor crash that killed the dinosaurs, for a work of wild imagination and unlikely logic.

Arnon is most at home in stone-age settings (as graphic novel titles like *Shaman Blues* and *Neanderthal Bikini* attest), so he came naturally to a cycle of Neolithic wood sculptures, rock paintings and illustrations, matched by fables from Depelley and published as *Totems: Forgotten Idols From Xaintrie* in 2005. The Kirby influence is explicit in some instances, while most of these exciting faux fossils are related to Arnon's hero more by a common attention to the essentials of visceral expression.

TJKC talked with the two Jeans about loving Kirby from afar:

THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR: Is there a particular "cult" around *Devil Dinosaur* among comics fans in France, or is it just Arnon's affinity for things prehistoric that makes this his favorite?

JEAN DEPELLEY: *Devil Dinosaur* was published as cheap pocket-sized digests in France in 1980 that came out rather unnoticed—except by the three of us! This series clearly shows Kirby's incredible idiosyncrasy and may be enjoyed—or hated—for that very reason; there are no realistic characters you feel concerned for to hide Kirby's style. It's Kirby at the peak of his abstraction. It was quasi-automatic writing.



GALLERY 3

"NEW" NEW GODS COVERS

Jack's initial return to his Fourth World characters came in doing new front and back covers for the 1980s *New Gods* reprint series. Presented here are his pencils for the new covers to issues #2-5, featuring re-envisioned scenes from that classic run.





(above) Middle 1970s Kirby sketch of Darkseid, done around the time many other creators were first beginning to work on his Fourth World characters.

(below) Covers from Gerry Conway's run on New Gods.

All characters TM & ©2006 DC Comics.

by Douglas Toole

(Jack Kirby's New Gods series lasted 11 bi-monthly issues, from early 1971 through late 1972. Since then, New Gods characters have appeared—sometimes in a supporting role, sometimes prominently—in mini-series and in storylines of other series such as Lois Lane, Justice League and the Legion of Super-Heroes.

There have been five regular series intended to continue the story of the New Gods. Gerry Conway wrote a First Issue Special [#13] in April, 1976 heralding the Return of the New Gods, and then wrote eight issues of a New Gods series starting a year after that, wrapping up the story in Adventure Comics #459-460. Ten years later, Mark Evanier wrote a New Gods series that lasted for 28 issues. A third New Gods series was launched in 1995, written by Rachel Pollack. John Byrne took over the writing of that series after 11 issues, and continued it for four more issues. Byrne stayed on as writer for all 20 issues of the 1997 follow-up series, Jack Kirby's Fourth World. Most recently, Walter Simonson wrote 25 issues of a series called Orion, which ended in 2002.

Here, the writers of those five series reminisce about their experiences with the New Gods, and offer their perspectives on Kirby's Fourth World.)



Gerry Conway is a former writer and editor of comics who now writes and produces television shows. This interview was conducted by telephone on March 17, 2005, and was copy-edited by Mr. Conway.

TJKC: What was your first exposure to Kirby's Fourth World?

CONWAY: I read the books when they first came out.

TJKC: Which title appealed to you the most?

CONWAY: I preferred the *New Gods*. I thought the others weren't as well-developed.

TJKC: How did you get the assignment for *First Issue Special* and the *New Gods* series?

CONWAY: I think it was more my idea than anything else. I was looking for projects at DC that I could be enthusiastic about, and the *New Gods* was one of them.

TJKC: What were your goals for the series?

CONWAY: I believe that at the time, my thinking was that the storyline had been left up in the air and open, and I liked to tie things up. This was a series already in existence. I would not have to carry a lot of water to make it interesting—it already was. I could draw on the mythology that was already there. But they had been pretty much left fallow after Kirby left those books. Carmine [Infantino, then-publisher of DC] and DC did not have much interest in carrying them forward, so it seemed like a natural fit.

TJKC: Was there a lot of editorial oversight for the book?

CONWAY: It was pretty much totally me. At that period, I had just left Marvel Comics for DC and I was pretty much the fair-haired boy.

Carmine felt it was a coup getting this hot Marvel writer to come over to his company. So I just ran with that, and did pretty much whatever I wanted to do. He didn't really ask me to give him much prior input. He had his thoughts and his ideas, but felt "Gerry is bringing the Marvel style to DC, so let's let him do what he wants to do."



(right) Early 1970s Kirby drawing of Desaad.

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TJKC: Was it different writing the *New Gods* series, as opposed to others you had written?

CONWAY: I had great respect for the original source material. But I could tell just by re-reading it, that, despite whatever Jack might have said about his grand plans for the series, that he really didn't have any. Jack was a great starter of things, but he never really developed anything. He would come up with a bunch of ideas, throw them out there, and then move on to something else. And that's great. That's terrific for someone like me, who's coming along afterwards and looking for some potential storylines to play with. I don't think he had any notion of how to tie up this series. But I did respect what he had set up, and took it to what seemed like its logical conclusion.

TJKC: Do you think the New Gods characters work better incorporated into the DC Universe, or off playing in their own little corner?

CONWAY: Well, they were always incorporated into the DC Universe—they were brought in with *Jimmy Olsen*. But at that

period, there wasn't a coherent DC Universe. If you think about it, at least until the late-1970s or so, you had a series of DC universes. You had the Julie Schwartz DC universe, you had the Mort Weisinger DC universe, you had the Murray Boltinoff DC universe, and each of these little entities kind of existed in their own space-time bubble. And there was the Jack Kirby DC universe. There really

wasn't an attempt to bring it all into one world until the *Crisis On Infinite Earths* series [in 1985] and the editorial policies that followed it. It wasn't like the Marvel Universe where there was a lot of cross-pollination between the different stories and the different books. It was more of a strange amalgam of storylines.

TJKC: How much lead time did you get before the series ended?

CONWAY: Probably none. [laughs] As these things tended to go, when they decided to cancel a book, they just told you there wouldn't be a next issue. I might have known an issue in advance, but I doubt it. There were a lot of titles stopping and starting around that time. I had books literally canceled in mid-storyline, where you told readers "to be continued next month," and there was no next month.

TJKC: What do you think was your best impact on the *New Gods* epic?

CONWAY: Honestly, I think there was really only one *New Gods*—the series that Jack did. Everything that followed was a pale imitation of that—including my own stuff.

Unlike, for example, *Fantastic Four* or *Amazing Spider-Man*, which were series that were strong enough to withstand the loss of an individual creator or artistic vision, the *New Gods* really doesn't stand on its own without Jack.

While it is interesting, and has a certain cache, it was never that successful. What it is, is Jack Kirby's last great creation. So, in that sense, it had a purpose. Without Jack, there is no reason to read *New Gods* or do anything with the New Gods characters. It exists because Jack did it, and we're all huge fans of his, and we all would have loved to see him finish it.

TJKC: Any closing comments?

CONWAY: What I would like to see DC do is to put out a really special edition of Jack's DC work—the *New Gods* stories, the *Jimmy Olsen* stories, the *Kamandi* stories, the *Demon* stories. In my mind, there's no point in doing anything other than that with it. The proper revival of the *New Gods* would be a repackaging of Jack's original material.

Mark Evanier, a friend and assistant to Jack Kirby, is a writer of comic books, TV shows, cartoons and essays. This interview was conducted by telephone on April 27, 2005 and was copy-edited by Mr. Evanier.

TJKC: What was your first exposure to the Fourth World material?

EVANIER: Actually, I saw the evolution of the Fourth World from a bunch of sketches Jack had the second time I visited him—around November, 1969. He showed me the drawings of a lot of new characters, some of whom wound up in the *New Gods* series. And when he made his deal with DC, that was one of the enticements, when they saw all those drawings for new characters.

TJKC: How did you get the assignment for the *New Gods* series in 1989? It came out on the heels of the heels of the *Cosmic Odyssey* mini-series [by Jim Starlin and Mike Mignola]. Was it planned?

EVANIER: I think I walked under a ladder and had some bad luck. [laughs] At some point—I don't remember when—Jack had read a Fourth World story that had been written by someone else, and he was bothered by it. It wasn't so much that he was offended by it as that he didn't recognize the characters that were being passed off as his. So he and I talked about it, and he knew that I had turned down a previous opportunity to write a *New Gods* series, and he said, "Listen, if they ask you to do it again, I'd be much more comfortable with you doing it as someone else." And I probably should have said, "Thanks, but I don't want to do it," but if Jack had asked me to tap-dance across Ventura Freeway, I probably would have done it. So, DC published the *Cosmic Odyssey* mini-series, and the idea was to spin a new *New Gods* book off of it. Starlin and DC parted ways and [DC editor] Mike Carlin phoned me and asked if I would like to do the book. I read what Starlin had done, and while I respect him tremendously, nothing he was doing corresponded to any vision I had of those

(below) Issues #1 and #28 of Mark Evanier's stint as writer on *New Gods*.

(next page) Covers from the fourth *New Gods* series. Rachel Pollock started the writing, to be taken over by John Byrne with issue #12.

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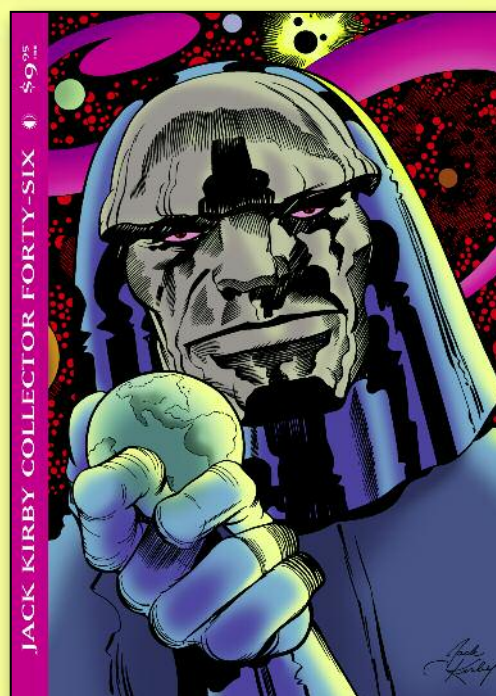


PARTING SHOT

This unused page from *New Gods* #7 (Feb. 1972) shows a young Izaya confronting Darkseid, staff in hand, much as Moses confronts Pharaoh in *The Ten Commandments*. As is, this page doesn't seem to fit "The Pact", so we can assume it was the beginning of an idea for a sequence Jack abandoned.



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