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COMICS FANZINE

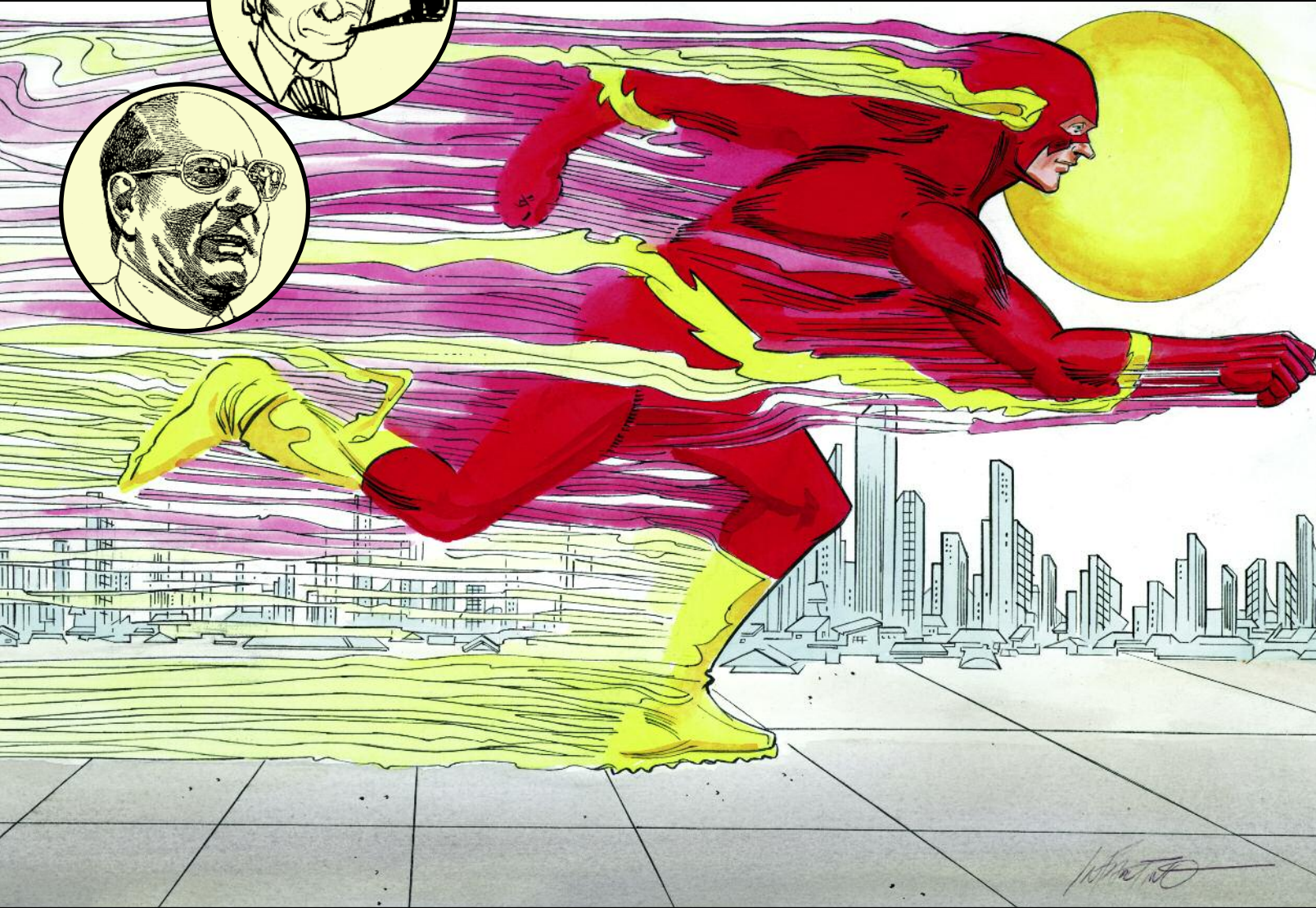
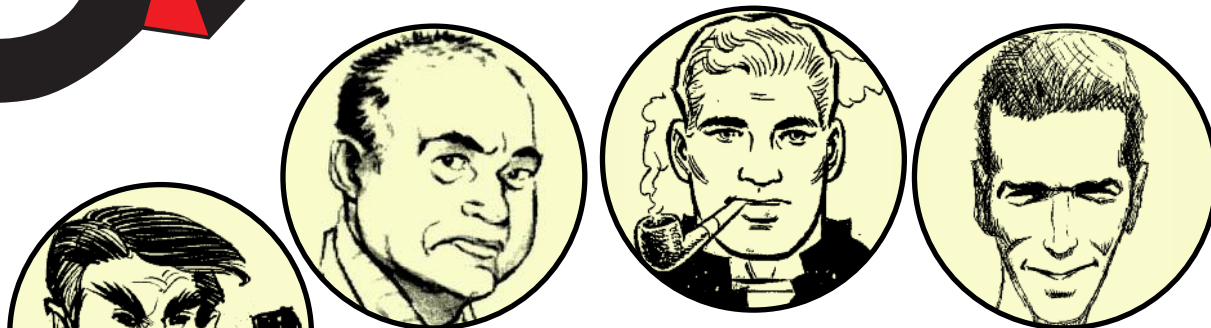
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SHOWCASE #4!



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No. 60
July
2006



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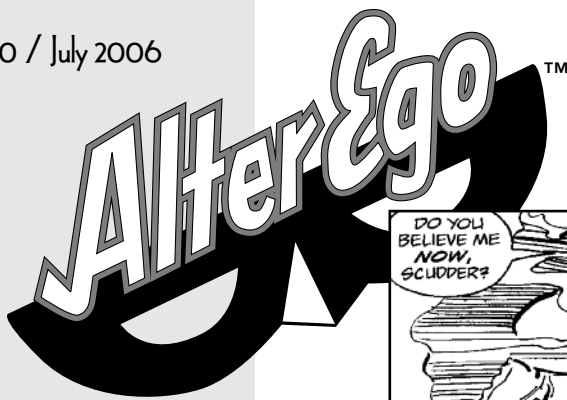
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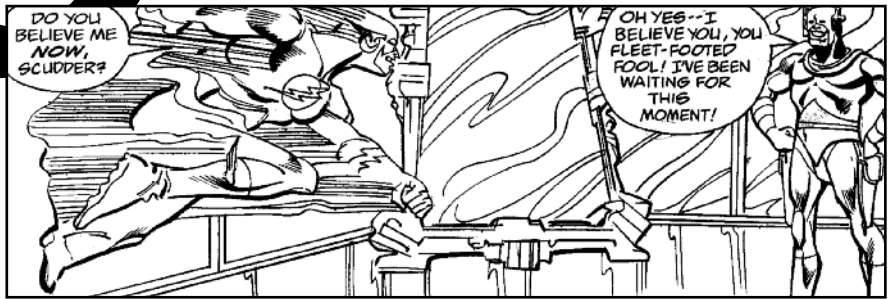
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Special Issue
CELEBRATING SHOWCASE #4



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About Our Cover: *Quite frankly, we're unsure precisely how this issue's cover illo came to us, though we've had it sitting around for a while now. That it's a probably-unpublished, full-color Flash drawing at least penciled (and signed) by Golden/Silver Age great Carmine Infantino, the man who drew Showcase #4 and the first decade of The Flash, we have no doubt... but as to who inked it, or colored it, we're less certain. Carmine opines as how he might have inked it, though it doesn't strongly resemble his other work... and he probably didn't color it... but that's the way it came, so that's the way we printed it. The pluperfect cover to a book celebrating the 50th anniversary of Showcase #4! And thanks to those listed below for caricatures of the 5 creators. [Flash TM & ©2006 DC Comics; caricatures [l. to r.] ©2006 Estate of Gil Kane; Ernie Colón; the respective copyright holders; Estate of Norman Maurer; Shane Foley.]*

Above: *Just for kicks, here's a wide-angle panel from Carmine's triumphal return to The Flash: issue #306 (Feb. 1982), to be exact. Inking by Bob Smith, script by Dan Miskin & Gary Cohn. Repro'd from a photocopy of the original art, with thanks to Michael Zeno. [©2006 DC Comics.]*

This issue is dedicated to the memory of
Alex Toth & Dick Rockwell



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FIRST PRINTING.

50 Years Have Gone By In A Flash!

It was July 4th, 1956.

Or maybe—just *maybe*, mind you—it was the day *before* July 4th, 1956.

What is certain is that I was on my 15-year-old way to buy fireworks at Fulenweider's Drug Store, on Main Street, Smalltown, USA. Well, actually, it was Main Street in Jackson, Missouri (1950 census population, 3694). Same thing.

I don't recall precisely *what* fireworks I intended to buy. But it couldn't have been anything more dangerous than a few strings of firecrackers. *Maybe* a couple of cherry bombs, now that I was a bit older, but at most *only* a couple, because my parents knew those things were dangerous, bless 'em.

But it doesn't matter what fireworks I was going to buy, because the only pyrotechnics that counted that day were the ones that erupted from the comic book rack.

Because that was the day I first laid eyes on *Showcase* #4.

That was the day that gave new life to an old favorite—The Flash. He of Mercury's hat and sandals and the tucked-in red shirt and no mask. Now he had a streamlined costume that really *looked* like it was built for speed. Lots of hot crimson—with golden lightning bolts emblazoning it here and there. And what's faster than a lightning bolt? It reminded me, the instant I saw it, of Captain Marvel's outfit, only with hood instead of cape—but I'd *loved* Captain Marvel, and anyway he'd been gone from the comics shelves for three years now, and it didn't look like he was ever coming back. So I didn't mind this new guy borrowing one of his old suits and customizing it a bit.

I'm sure I flipped through the comic right then and there and was thrilled to see Barry Allen reading an old issue of *Flash Comics*—same as I had done eight or nine years earlier!—and there was the *old* Flash, as well. The guys who put this comic book out knew what they were doing. They knew what I wanted—even before I did. I remember being amazed to see falling objects floating in mid-air before Barry's eyes in that diner... the way a man with super-speed would see them. The *first* Flash had certainly seen them that way, too, but we'd never have known it from reading his adventures. And there was even a Turtle Man—a new version of The Turtle whom I recalled fighting the original Flash.

This comic was *new*—and it was *old*—all at the same time!

And it was wonderful. Purely, completely, utterly wonderful.

I probably bought the fireworks I'd come in for—but all that was really on my mind as I raced the half dozen or so blocks home was reading this exciting new comic book. Before it could fall by the wayside, like the revived Human Torch, Captain America, and Sub-Mariner had at Atlas... or Blue Beetle at Charlton... or Stuntman at Harvey... or The Flame, Phantom Lady, & company at Ajax... or last year's Fighting American, or The Avenger, or even *Captain Flash*...

I was young. I lived for the moment. The Flash had returned! He'd been a member of my beloved Justice Society of America, so if *he* was back, even in new garb, maybe one day *they* would be, too! Maybe...

Naw! It was too much to hope for. That was the future, and the future's a million years away when you're 15 and a color comic book *still* gets your pulse racing every bit as much as a good action movie or an exciting program on that grainy new thing called TV or... or that cute blonde you'd ask out if you were old enough to drive and thought there was a chance in hell she wouldn't laugh at you. Probably better to stick to movies and TV and comics...for now, anyway.

That July 4th? I'm sure it was a good one.

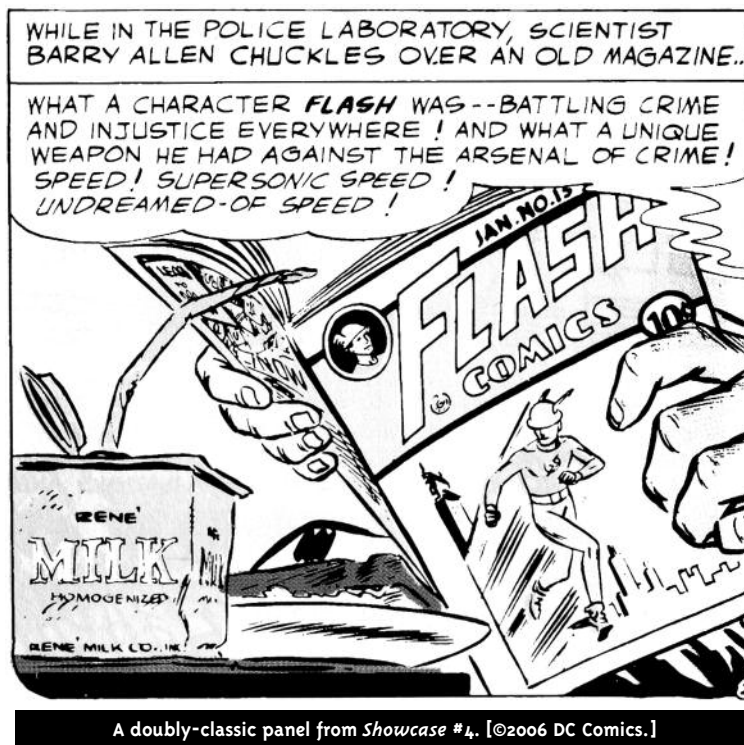
But I'd already *had* my fireworks.

And those colored lights

have been exploding ever since.

Years later, given my dual interest in comic books and history, I'd wonder how *Showcase* #4 came about. After three lackluster issues of firemen, animals, and detectives, DC had finally gotten it right. Fully aware of how so many great super-heroes had bitten the dust over the past decade, I dared hope there were lots of other people like me who'd just been waiting for the heroes to come back.

If I had heard, at that time, that the folks who put out comic books believed that their audience "turned over" every five years, so that virtually nobody reading comics in 1956 had been reading them in 1951, when *All-Star Comics* (the first Flash's last venue) had been canceled, I'd have been incredulous. I'd been reading comics ever since 1945, at the age of four going on five, and I wasn't tired of them. Too old for comics? No more than I was too old to enjoy the few recycled



movie serials... or *The Adventures of Superman* on TV, on those rare occasions I saw it at a neighbor's house (our local channel was a CBS station, and to see *Superman* on ABC you had to have a good antenna—which cost money).

I'm sure I was disappointed, two months later, when *Showcase #5* featured not The Flash but The Challengers of the Unknown. Even if the art and story looked and read like that Simon & Kirby team I liked so much, I'd have preferred to see the Scarlet Speedster whizzing off another cover straight at me. I kept looking, and hoping, for the eight months until *Showcase #8* came out, and The Flash had returned—for one more audition.

He was coming back awfully slow for a guy with super-speed... but at least I had hope.

If I had been able to gaze into a crystal ball and see what lay in store for me—the whole glorious Silver Age, first at DC, then at the company that would eventually call itself Marvel again—let alone my own breathless part in same—I'd have thought I'd died and gone to heaven.

I guess I could've used this space—since it isn't covered in depth in the pages that follow—to hash over yet again the creative process which led to The Flash's return in 1956. I could've recounted the tale that has become a legend, in which editors Julius Schwartz and Robert Kanigher and others are at a DC meeting and someone suggests bringing back The Flash—RK suddenly seemed to remember, late in life, that it was *he*, but I'm not sure about that, and anyway it's enough that he *wrote* that first story and did it very well.

But that tale's been told, endless times—by the late great Julie Schwartz alone! Robin Snyder pieced events together nicely in his article "Who Created the Silver Age Flash?" that appeared in *A/E V3#10*, along with an interview with artist Carmine Infantino. It's still available from TwoMorrows, so we don't need to go over it again.

This issue is a celebration. For it was fifty years ago this month—*this month*—that The Flash came back.

And, *whoever* wears his costume these days, he's never really been away since.

And as long as The Flash is around—somewhere, it's still the Silver Age of Comics.

Bestest,



P.S.: Our apologies to Mike W. Barr, and to Patricia Floss (who had given us her blessing to run an article by the late Rich Morrissey). Both their pieces about John Broome will see print in a near-future issue.

P.P.S.: And while we're at it, we want to acknowledge the generosity of Carmine Infantino, who donated his fee for this issue's Flash cover to ACTOR, the organization—often noted in *A/E*—created to give a financial helping hand to longtime comics pros who could use one. For more information, try www.ACTORComicFund.org

COMING IN AUGUST



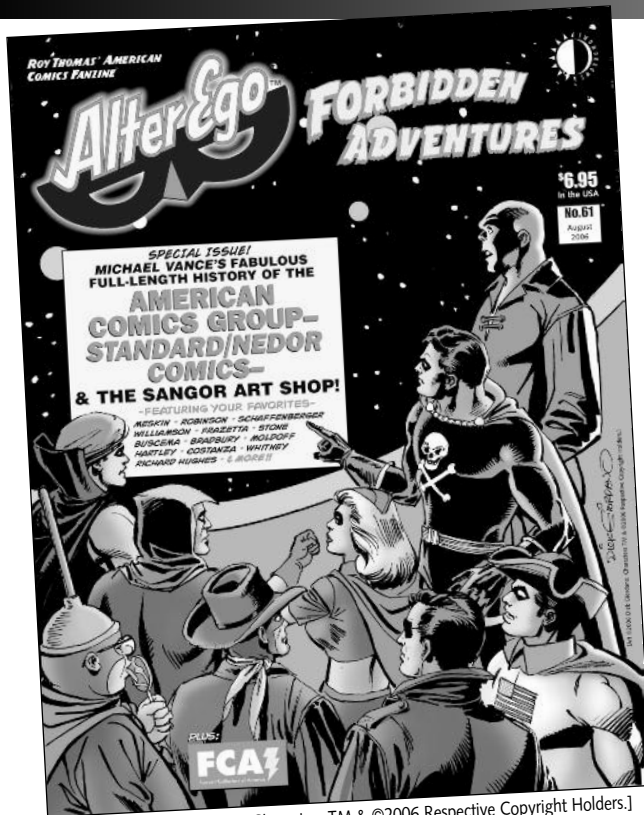
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Edited by **ROY THOMAS**

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Life From A Flash Of Lightning

The Significance of *Showcase #4*

by Christopher Irving

When the revived Flash made his first appearance in *Showcase #4* in July of 1956, he was a bolt of lightning that energized the struggling comics medium into a Silver Age.

Fifty years after, one can still wonder what formula made the Barry Allen Flash the harbinger of new life where other heroes had failed. Sure, there'd been speedsters in the Golden Age: the original DC Comics Flash and Johnny Quick, Quality's Quicksilver, Comic House's Silver Streak, Timely's Whizzer (with his unfortunate costume, as if he were a *Yellow Streak*) and Hurricane... there was nothing new about running fast, not really.

So what was it that made this second Flash work? It may not have been the power alone, but the approach given the new Flash: one more sophisticated and non-political than many of the other super-heroes making comebacks and debuts in the 1950s....

Comic books had been dominated by funny animals, teenagers, cowboys, soldiers, ghouls, and spacemen for the early part of the 1950s, amid what eventually became a disastrous slump for the struggling industry. After 1953, when Fawcett threw in Captain Marvel's towel and Quality's *Doll Man* was discontinued, the only super-heroes still in print were the (dying) latter company's Plastic Man and DC's Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Green Arrow, and, ironically, through 1954, Johnny Quick. When *The Adventures of Superman* television show starring George Reeves became a commercial success in the early '50s, a few companies had either dusted off their old heroes, or invented new ones, trying to cash in its success. In some instances, the "Commies" were the new formulaic villains,

The Dawn Of The Silver Age
You've probably seen 'em before, but we couldn't do a celebration of *Showcase #4*, (cover-dated Oct. 1956 but on sale in early July) without showing the cover and both splashes from that legendary landmark issue. It's fitting that the first splash had the hero rocketing out of an old issue of *Flash Comics*, 'cause in a sense that's just what he was doing. Art by Carmine Infantino (pencils) & Joe Kubert (inks), and scripts by Robert Kanigher and John Broome, respectively, under the strong editorial aegis of Julius Schwartz. [©2006 DC Comics.]



succeeding the Nazi and "Jap" antagonists of the '40s, while atomic power proved itself (in comic books, film, and television) either the cause of mass destruction, a mutating horror, or the source of great power.

Atlas (earlier known as Timely, and destined one day to become Marvel) was the first to try to revive the super-hero, bringing back Captain America, The Human Torch, and The Sub-Mariner in December 1953's *Young Men #24*. The Carl Burgos-drawn cover heralded a very short-lived return for the characters, in their new roles as "Commie-smashers" (a term plastered across each issue of a soon-





Sunrise of Steel

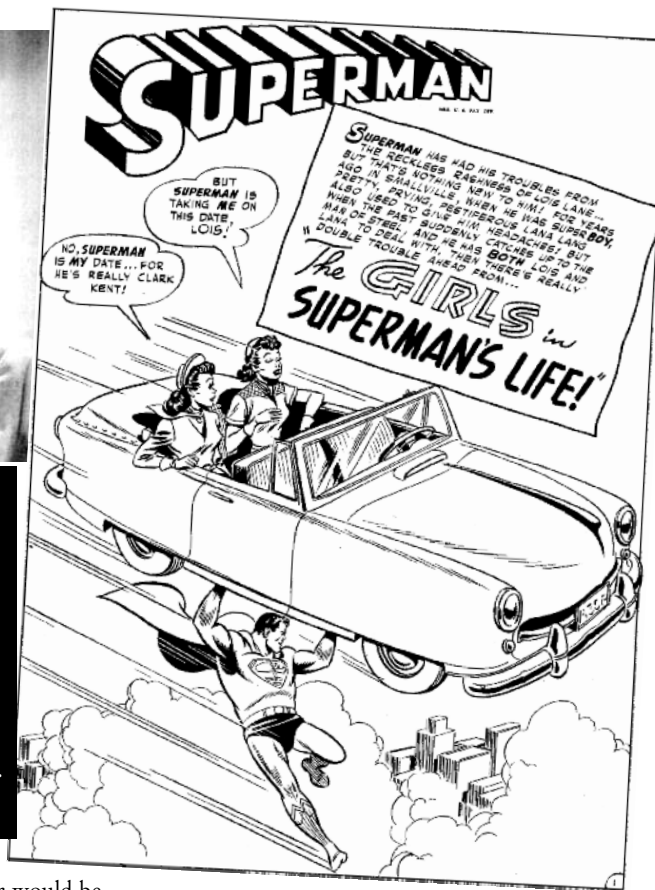
It was doubtless the success of *The Adventures of Superman* on TV in the early 1950s, which meant increased sales on the Man of Steel's various comics titles, that led to attempts by Timely/Marvel, Simon & Kirby, and others to "revive" the super-hero... but oddly, DC itself made no attempt to bring back its own Golden Age stars during this time, contenting itself with stories like this one from *Superman* #78 (Sept.-Oct. 1952), as scripted by Edmond Hamilton and penciled and inked by Al Plastino. Thanks to Ray Bortorff, Jr., & the GCD. [Superman, et al., TM & ©2006 DC Comics.]

following *Captain America* comic). The run of appearances of all three in *Young Men* would be over with by #28, eight months later; the trio had also shared billing during this period in two issues of *Men's Adventures*.

In the lead story, The Human Torch comes back from the dead and avenges himself by using his now atomically-powered flame to free his sidekick Toro from Communist brainwashing. An interesting detail thought up by the writer established that in 1945 the Torch had killed Hitler (who would return as The Hate-Monger a decade later in the pages of *Fantastic Four*). Russ Heath drew that first adventure, with subsequent "Torch" stories done by Burgoyne, Dick Ayers, and one still-undiscovered artist. The Torch lasted through only three issues of his own revived book, 1954's #36 to #38, which had picked up the numbering from where it had ended in 1949.

Steve Rogers was now (as he had been in the late '40s) a teacher at Lee School, teaching Bucky and his classmates about Captain America, his flag-wearing alter ego from World War II. As luck happens, Cap and Bucky are forced to suit up and go into action once again as The Red Skull strikes at the United Nations. It seems the Skull's allegiance to the Nazi party is a thing of the past—he's now a (surprise!) stinkin' Red! Cap continued through three issues of his own series: #76 was cover-dated May 1954, the last issue, #78, September '54. Much of the art was provided by John Romita, who in the 1960s would draw *The Amazing Spider-Man*.

Last but certainly not least, Prince Namor returned in the capable hands of creator Bill Everett, who produced slick and beautiful "Sub-Mariner"



tales of Communists and aliens. *Sub-Mariner* lasted for ten issues of his own book, primarily because of eventually failed negotiations with a producer for a live-action television version of Namor. *Sub-Mariner* #33 was dated April 1954, while #42 wrapped up his return in October of the next year.

It's very likely that Joe Simon and Jack Kirby, the team that had created *Captain America* in 1941, came up with *Fighting American* in 1954 in response to Cap's revival: the red-white-blue-and-gold-clad enemy of Communism was an increasingly satirical look at their earlier creation. When patriotic newscaster Johnny Flagg is brutally beaten by Commie agents, his physically frail brother Nelson's mind is transferred into Johnny's well-built, revitalized body.

Continuing Johnny Flagg's life, Nelson dons the Fighting American costume and, with

sidekick Speedboy (who bears an amazing resemblance to Bucky and Sandy, the Golden Boy, both of which Simon & Kirby had developed in the '40s), fights the Red Menace. Jack Cole's lingering Plastic Man of



Back From The Dead—But Not For Long

As detailed in *Alter Ego* #35, Martin Goodman, Stan Lee, and Timely/Atlas brought back The Human Torch, Captain America, and Sub-Mariner with *Young Men* #24 (Dec. 1953), but the revival didn't last long. Neither did Simon & Kirby's *Fighting American*, though happily the entire seven issues plus were beautifully reprinted in the 1990s by Marvel in a deluxe hardcover edition that belongs on any comics fan's bookshelf. Charlton also briefly revived the 1940s Fox hero, The Blue Beetle. [Young Men cover ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.; Fighting American ©2006 Joe Simon & Estate of Jack Kirby.]

JULIUS SCHWARTZ & CARMINE INFANTINO

Ten Years After *Showcase #4*, Two Of The Creators Of The Silver Age Flash Just Happened To Be In The Same Room...

Interview Conducted by Shel Dorf

Transcribed by Brian K. Morris

This previously-unpublished interview took place on April 26, 1966, in the office of National Periodical Publications (now DC Comics) editor Julius Schwartz, then the overseer of The Flash, Green Lantern, Justice League of America, Batman, Detective Comics, and several other comic magazines. Also present from the outset, in addition to Schwartz and interviewer Shel Dorf, was DC production man Ed Eisenberg. While the interview was in progress, they were joined by "Flash" artist—and, as it happened, near-future editorial director and publisher—Carmine Infantino. —Roy.

SHEL DORF: And when did you first become a member of the Communist Party?

JULIUS SCHWARTZ: Next question.

SD: How did you get into comics?

SCHWARTZ: I've told the story a hundred times. I don't see why I have to repeat it.

SD: On tape...?

SCHWARTZ: [sighs] Very briefly, I was a literary agent. One of my clients was a guy named Alfred Bester, a well-known science-fiction writer. He was writing "Green Lantern" at the time, and he was working for Shelly Moldoff, who was the editor of the All-American Comics group.

SD: Sheldon Mayer.

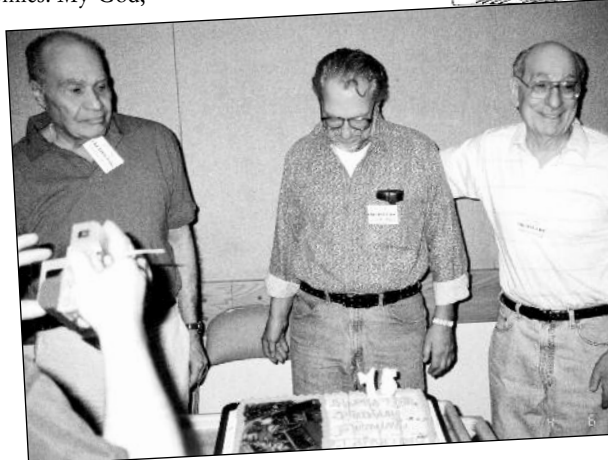
SCHWARTZ: Oh, did I say Shelly Moldoff? I've got Shelly Moldoff on my mind. I mean Sheldon Mayer. His [story] editor left, and he desperately needed an editor, and Bester recommended me, and I went down. I was interviewed by Mayer in 1944, and two days later I was an editor up at All-American Comics. My God, I'm actually an editor more than 22 years. Next question.

ED EISENBERG: What is your favorite type of magazine?

SCHWARTZ: *Playboy*.

EISENBERG: We're talking, now, about comics magazines.

SCHWARTZ: *Playboy* comics. [laughs]



Got A House That's A Showcase...

At the All Time Classic New York Comic Book Convention held in June 2000 in White Plains, NY, both artists and the editor of *Showcase #4* were on hand: (left to right:) Carmine Infantino, Joe Kubert, and Julius Schwartz.

There were panels on the 60th anniversaries of the original Flash and Green Lantern, but this particular occasion was a panel just about that immortal issue of *Showcase*—ending with a surprise 75th birthday cake for Carmine. Photos courtesy of the con's host: "Where have you gone, Joe Petrilak?"

Above, John Broome, writer of the 2nd "Flash" story in that issue, gets the first of his many chances to really show what he can do with the concept of super-speed.

Art by Infantino & Kubert. [©2006 DC Comics.]

SD: "Little Annie Fanny," right?

EISENBERG: Which kind of magazine would you prefer to put out, if you had a choice? The detective type, or science-fiction?

SCHWARTZ: I like all types. Whatever I'm doing at the moment is my favorite. Science-fiction, mystery, super-characters. Even Westerns, which I abhor, I enjoyed doing while I was editor of a Western magazine.

SD: Why have you taken the mystery out of "Batman"?

SCHWARTZ: Well, the mystery was only temporarily taken out. It's now back in full force, if you'll be patient and read the magazines as they come out. They're full of mystery.

SD: And why are these beautiful covers full of garbage?

SCHWARTZ: What do you mean by "garbage"?

SD: It's a fantastic cover, but we open it up and we're disappointed in the contents. Now, "Batman," in the early days—it had a sense of mystery and intrigue. He scared the **** out of me when he put on that outfit. I don't have that feeling any more.

SCHWARTZ: Well, you've grown up now, and things that intrigued you and sounded mysterious before no longer intrigue you, and don't sound as mysterious. But if you'll be patient, and read the forthcoming issues of *Batman*, you'll see they're full of the "Batman" stories in the



**"Ed Eisenberg—
The Quiet One"**

Yeah, yeah, we know we printed the full version of this panel from *Strange Adventures* #140 (May 1962), "The Strange Adventure That Really Happened!," only three issues ago. But this art is the only source we have at present for an image of production sub-chief Ed Eisenberg. Dig us up an actual photo of Eisenberg, and you darn well know we'll print it!
[©2006 DC Comics.]

grand old tradition. As for the interior artwork, you'd be surprised how many readers think the interior artwork is great. They say, "Bob Kane is the greatest," and "Nothing compares to him," and why did we have anyone else do a "Batman" when only Bob Kane can draw "Batman"? And he's the greatest *writer* of "Batman." Didn't you know Bob Kane writes *Batman*, too? It says so on page one: "Bob Kane." You don't want to disillusion the little kids. You must believe everything you see in print that says "Bob Kane" on page one. I believe it.

EISENBERG: That doesn't imply that he *writes* it.

SCHWARTZ: No, but the readers say, "Why don't you have Bob Kane write the stories the way he used to, in the old days?" I'm saying he's writing as much now as he did then, and that's the answer. But it is amazing. I receive so many letters from kids that think Bob Kane is the greatest of artists.

SD: He never reached his potential.

SCHWARTZ: Well, that's another story. You'll have to ask Bob Kane.

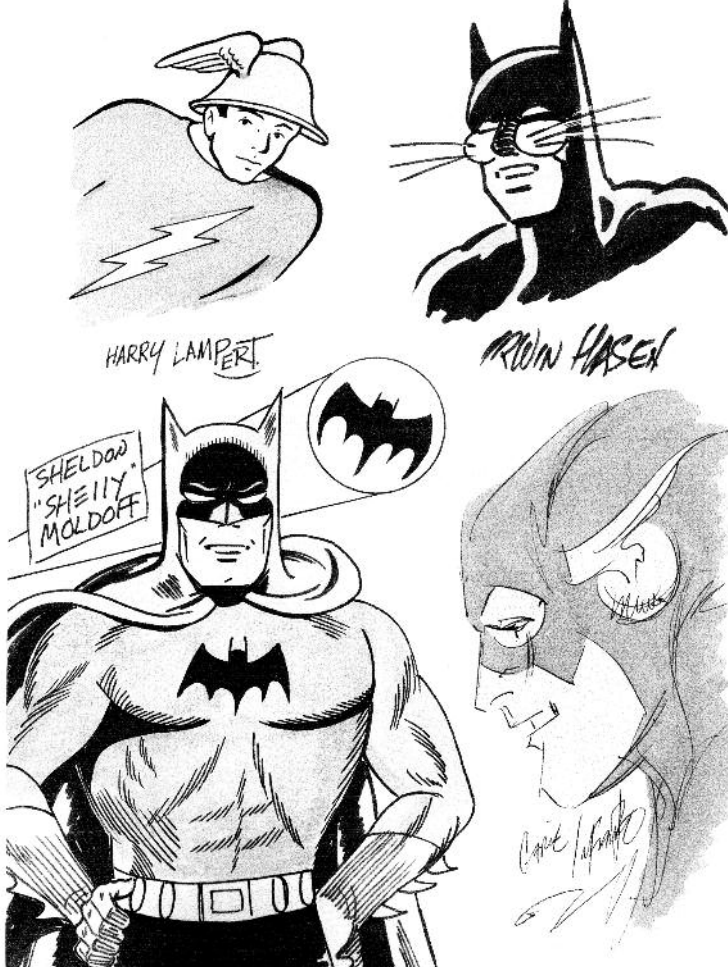
SD: Of course, you have to understand the person as a whole, and know what he's gone through in life.

This is an area that we're trying to correct. Jerry Bails lost his father and his mother, and in the last six months, he withdrew [from most fandom activities]. And the kids are writing in fanzines a lot of nasty things about Bails, because he was interested in comic fandom, and then he's withdrawn, that he's aloof, and all these things. "He didn't answer my phone calls, so he's—"

SCHWARTZ: Well, let me tell you something. These kids who are now writing in and are disillusioned that he quit on comics will be the very kids that will no longer be with comics four or five years from now. These are the kids who write in, "I'll be a comic book reader forever and ever." But two or three years later, you're never going to hear—you don't get another letter from them, these Paul Gambaccinis, and so on, that were so enthusiastic, wrote letter after letter, [that] you'd think they were going to make a career out of comics. They disappeared.

SD: Well, it's a stage.

SCHWARTZ: Those who are writing in now, I won't hear from four or five years from now. So these people who are bawling out there without knowing the story, I should be—



Four On The Floor

In this interview, knowledgeable readers will notice that Julie Schwartz is being coy and ironic when he says that in 1966 Bob Kane was "writing as much now as he did [in the old days]"—i.e., he wasn't writing at all, since Batman's artistic creator never wrote a single "Batman" story. At this time, Sheldon Moldoff had been ghosting Kane's art since 1953, though he now had to produce art more in the vein of what Carmine Infantino was doing for the "New Look" *Batman* Julie had inaugurated.

But why, on p. 9, would Julie say he had "Shelly Moldoff on my mind"—unless he was aware that Shelly was ghosting Bob Kane's "Batman" stories—supposedly a deep, dark secret?

Anyway, it seems serendipitous that collector Arnie Grieves recently sent us this (color) page of four sketches by Golden Age artists done for him on the floor of a comics convention: "Shelly" doing his early-60s "Bob Kane look" *Batman* next to a profile of the Silver Age *Flash* by Carmine! And, for good measure, above it are illos of the original *Flash* by his artistic co-creator, the late Harry Lampert... and of the *Batman*-influenced *Wildcat*, drawn by his original artist and co-creator, Irwin Hasen! Your cup runneth over, Arnie—and thanks for letting us share in the bounty, at least a little.

[Flashes, *Batman*, & *Wildcat* TM & ©2006 DC Comics.]

The Golden Age Of Comic Fandom—In The Flesh

Great of Julie to defend Jerry G. Bails in this 1966 tape, at a time when modern comics fandom's virtual founder was being criticized in some unenlightened circles for abandoning fanzines he had launched, such as *Comicolector*, *The Comic Reader*—and *Alter Ego*—and largely withdrawing from fan-related activity. But JGB let it roll like water off Aquaman's back, and has never forgotten his roots... as witness the monumental *Who's Who of American Comic Books 1928-1999* (see p. 61 for website address). Here, seen at the Fandom Reunion Luncheon hosted in Chicago by Bill Schelly and others in 1997, Jerry (on right) converses with fellow oldtime fans Mike Touhey (who'd helped him with the cover of *A/E* VI#3 back in '61) and Joe Sarno (the latter with his back to us). It was a combination of memories of the Golden Age, and the then-current Silver Age—what Jerry preferred to call "The Second Heroic Age"—that had begun with *Showcase* #4 that had led him to do all the things he did. Photo courtesy of Russ Maheras.



SD: *And they want to see their name in print.*

SCHWARTZ: Well, that's all right.

EISENBERG: May I interrupt for one moment? We would like those kids who are so concerned about fanzines to know that we don't publish our magazines for the limited amount of exuberant fans out there.

SCHWARTZ: Well, I've said that time after time again. I've even given the maximum number of fans that you can imagine, say, 5000. And when you consider that a magazine can have a circulation of 500,000—I don't know, it comes out to one out of a hundred or something.

EISENBERG: You have to consider all the readers, not just those who write in letters. And we can't be involved in their petty squabbles, even though we have an opinion of who is right.

SD: *Yeab, but they're putting it in print, which hurts even more. It's a low blow. But Jerry doesn't retaliate.*

SCHWARTZ: Well, he *shouldn't* retaliate. He should ignore them, because we won't even know those names three, four years from now.

SD: *I went over to the kid that publishes a couple of these fanzines and I told him, "Cut this stuff out."*

SCHWARTZ: I don't think Bails has to make any excuses. I think he should be complimented, because I think, without Bails, this comic fandom would never have arisen in the first place.

SD: *But these kids forget.*

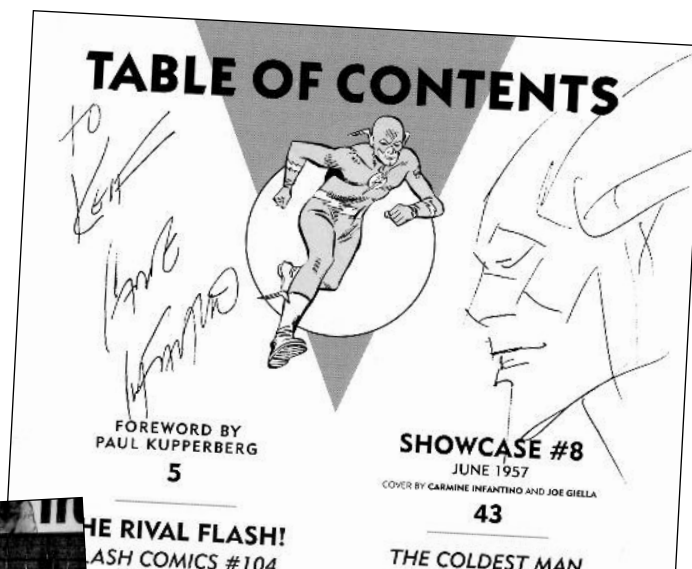
SCHWARTZ: I think the whole comic fandom started when he came up here—how many years ago was it? I don't know, maybe eight, nine years ago, ten years, whatever it was. [NOTE: *Actually, it had only been five. —Roy.*] And he became so enthusiastic that he started *Alter-Ego*, and he practically organized fandom single-handed. So he more than did his share, and even if he left the organization two years later, his name should be immortalized in comic fandom. These kids don't understand it, that's all.

SD: *Wally Wood was infuriated by some of the things that the fans wrote about him, because they are not professionals; they don't realize the working schedules, and the pressures on the cartoonists. And some kid wrote a nasty letter saying that he knows Wood's style, and that on the cover on this particular comic Wood only did the faces, and yet it's signed "Wally Wood," and that this is wrong, and so on. And Wood got very angry.*

SCHWARTZ: Well, the kid must be just as mad whenever President Johnson makes a speech. He doesn't believe that President Johnson writes them, does he? Does he believe that Senator [Robert] Kennedy writes all his speeches?

SD: *Well, I know what's wrong with fanzines. There's too much infighting. There's too much misinformation. They sit at home and they can pick up a comic and analyze it, and rip it apart, and write a nasty letter.*

SCHWARTZ: Not only that, but when they analyze it, they automatically analyze it in the manner in which they read an article in another magazine. And they quote verbatim things about a magazine or a story or an artist or a writer, something they happen to read in another magazine. They're very unoriginal; they have no



"I Don't Do Sketches"

Keif Simon (center), who's teamed up with Jim Murtaugh to take numerous photos for once and future issues of *A/E*, is sandwiched here between Carmine Infantino (seated) and *Dondi/GL/JSA* artist Irwin Hasen at a New York comicon in 2006. Keif writes: "I met Carmine for the first time at the first Wizard World East [con] in Philly. I was getting my *Archives* signed, and was chatting with him about his work, when a gentleman came up and asked him for a sketch. He looks up at the man and says, 'I don't do sketches.' As he is saying this, I notice him doing a head sketch of The Flash in my *Archives* [above]. I was astonished. He hands me the book and says to me, 'If you show anybody this at the show, I'll kill ya.' We both laughed. Carmine has done a few drawings for me since then, but that first one holds a special place, for not only did I meet one of my idols but made a new friend." Great story, Jim—and thanks for sending us a copy of that page, and of a later one! Thanks, too, to Carmine, for giving you his blessing to relate that anecdote.

[Flash TM & ©2006 DC Comics.]

WRITTEN OFF
9-30-49

Art From A Never-Published, Infantino-Drawn "Flash" Story From The Golden Age

Part VII

Notes by Roy Thomas

We won't go on yet again in detail about how, in the late 1960s, DC "intern" Marv Wolfman saved hundreds of pages' worth of Golden and Silver Age art from being destroyed by DC Comics years after it had been "written off" for tax purposes in 1949—that story is told most completely in the new trade paperback *The Alter Ego Collection, Vol. 1* (see TwoMorrows ad block on pp. 90-96). Among the work thus preserved for posterity was a considerable portion of two circa-1948 "Flash" stories penciled by Carmine Infantino; the inker is uncertain. One of these is a riff on Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

The other tale, featuring the recurring foe The Thinker, was once scheduled to be in *Flash Comics* #112, but was left unpublished when that mag was discontinued with #104 at the turn of 1949. Other art from this tale has appeared in *A/E V3#5*, et. al. Here's a bit more, all courtesy of Heritage Comics' archives, as retrieved for us by the hardworking Dominic Bongo. The following three pages illustrate how Infantino was drawing the Golden Age Flash, less than a decade before he helped revitalize the speedy super-hero in *Showcase* #4....



In this grouping of four panels—two "tiers"—which may or may not have remained together when Marv was forced to slice pages into pieces so he wouldn't be taking home complete pages, The Flash has somehow been outwitted by The Thinker. Well, that's why they called him "The Thinker," right?

“I’m Responsible For The Silver Age”

ROBERT KANIGHER On Many Subjects—including (Very Briefly) *Showcase #4*

Interview Conducted & Transcribed by Christopher Irving

Robert Kanigher, the writer of *The Flash’s* origin story in *Showcase #4*, passed away in 2002. Chris Irving interviewed him in 1999, ostensibly on the subject of the Fox hero *The Blue Beetle*, for his upcoming book on that super-hero for *TwoMorrows*... not that that proved to be exactly RK’s favorite topic...! —Roy.



Canary (Canary sings the birds out of the trees). Anyways, they changed the names of an entire frontline company!

CI: That’s something else. That has got to be pretty flattering.

KANIGHER: It’s unbelievable. I just found out that, all of a sudden, I seem to be getting Internet messages: I seem to be in the Internet!

CHRISTOPHER IRVING: I wanted to see if you had any insights that you could offer me.

ROBERT KANIGHER: I wrote 100 pages a week. The Bouncer was the first character I created. After that, I created the rest for DC, probably 100 characters, from Sgt. Rock to Metal Men, Black Canary, Rose and Thorn. The Fiddler was a villain. Lee Elias complained; he played the fiddle and said, “I can’t use the fiddle like a bow and arrow.” Every time he did the strip, he kept complaining about it. I also created Poison Ivy, who became a movie star.

CI: Yeah, *Uma Thurman*.

KANIGHER: Yes, that single character made her a movie star. She went from there to other pictures. Schwarzenegger bought the movie rights to “Sgt. Rock and Easy Company.”

CI: Do you know if he’s doing anything with it?

KANIGHER: I destroyed it. I did about 420 stories about Rock and Easy. They were so realistic that I received mail from servicemen who claimed to have served with Rock. I received a letter from Vietnam; the sergeant said he was calling himself Sgt. Rock, they had renamed themselves Easy Company, and the other men were taking the names of the characters that I created: Little Sureshot, Loudman, Bulldozer,



“FLASH TAB RTLEM”

R. Kanigher and daughter Jan, in a photo taken some years ago in a restaurant in Paris—juxtaposed with two “Flash” images.

(Left:) The final four panels of his justly-famed origin story for *Showcase #4*. Always wondered about that newspaper headline in the last panel: “FLASH TAB”—with a word ending “RTLEM” which reads like someone starting to write “Turtle Man” and running out of room. Art by Carmine Infantino & Joe Kubert.

(Right:) The splash of the Kanigher-scripted story “To the Nth Degree” from *The Flash* #197 (May 1970). Pencils by Gil Kane; inks by Vince Colletta. Thanks to Bob Cherry for the scan. [Photo ©2006 Estate of Robert Kanigher; pages ©2006 DC Comics.]

I don't know who did it. I don't bother to seek those sources... I like it, because it ranges from somebody from Montana to [Robin] Snyder: "I understand that you received a letter of recommendation for Kanigher's story...do you like it?" "Like it? I'm rabid about it! I have a friend who is even more so!" Another one came that said: "Kanigher should be stood up against a wall and shot for writing *Blitzkrieg* and 'Enemy Ace' and 'Panzer.'" I wrote those from the German point of view. "Enemy Ace" is considered (I'm quoting and not making it up) "a world-wide achievement. There is nothing like it in Europe or anywhere in the world." I made a sympathetic character who kills French, British, Americans. Neal Adams told me that, in Europe, they consider him the most psychological, complex character in all of American comics.

CI: You said that you wrote some "Blue Beetle" stories...

KANIGHER: [This magazine] is called *The Comic World*, Vol. 1, #18; bimonthly by Robert Jennings, RFD 2, Whiting Rd., Dudley MA. 01570. This is [the issue for] September 1978.

Victor Fox was the publisher [of *Blue Beetle*].

CI: I've heard he was a former accountant at DC.

KANIGHER: Fox had nothing to do with DC. An accountant!? Jack Liebowitz was an accountant for Harry Donenfeld, who was a certified alcoholic. There are so many things that they get wrong that it's unbelievable.

CI: Did you write the first "Blue Beetle" story?

KANIGHER: [quoting] "Kanigher may never have written for comics before"—it's true; I never wrote comics, I never read comics, I never looked at comics—"but he was a natural-born storyteller with an ability to build fast-moving plots and intricate subplots into the framework of a short comics story. Once he ironed out his weak points, he began to turn out stories by the hundreds. He sold work to the MLJ titles, and then some to DC. He sold so many to DC, and they were of such consistently high quality, that he eventually landed a job as editor there in 1945." I didn't land a job—they called me up and invited me as a writer/editor. [Co-publisher Jack] Liebowitz and [DC/AA editor] Shelly Mayer invited me as an editor. I said, "I can make more money without even getting out of my pajamas at home."

They said, "We want you to be a writer *and* an editor; to be a staff editor and to be a freelance writer." Anyway, Jennings writes: "Mixed in with the bad or foolish were occasional episodes that really stand out. Episodes that were so good, it seems incredible that any Fox character, even *The Blue Beetle*, should be entitled to that. One such adventure involved a scientist with a substance called 'homodesiline,' which has the ability to clone double cells of animals and humans. In other words, rapid cloning process."

I was the first for many things. There are some things that Jenette



All's Not Quiet On The DC Front
 RK reveals that he received hate mail, as well as plaudits, for both "Enemy Ace" and his *Blitzkrieg* series, which were "written from the German POV." The series itself has a "by Kubert & Kanigher" byline—and indeed Kubert was the editor at this time—while the art on this double-page splash from *Blitzkrieg* #3 (May-June 1976) is by Ric Estrada. [©2006 DC Comics.]

Kahn killed. I could have been with the first female astronauts. [NOTE: Too bad RK didn't elaborate on this point. —Roy.] This is why I left. I was the sole editor and writer of *Wonder Woman* for 22 years. Remember, I never read or saw a comic book. Even after I began writing them, I never looked at them. Once I proofed a book of mine, I never looked at it. Or anything that anybody else was doing while I was there as an editor/writer... or at Marvel.

I was visiting Marvel. Joe [Kubert] told me to come over. When [Marvel editor-in-chief Jim] Shooter heard my page rate was \$50 a page—[DC managing editor Dick] Giordano didn't want to give me more; Carmine [Infantino] said that they wired up the sales; war books were very high sellers consistently—anyway, Jim says "\$50 a page for you? You're getting \$65—my rate, retroactively."

I don't know why you'd want to write about "The Blue Beetle."

CI: I'm doing a comprehensive story because nobody has before. There's been an issue recently as to which artist created the character...

KANIGHER: I'm a painter, and when I say painter—there are no artists in the field. They are *illustrators*. They *illustrate* the written or verbal word. I am a writer and an artist. I'm an artist because I start with a blank canvas.

I promised Ross Andru the wedding present of an oil painting. This story is legendary. So, I brought along paints, pigments, a brush, a palette knife, and a stretched canvas. It was after work and people gathered around. I got down on my hands and knees (that's the way I do oils, on the floor). One person said, "Where's your sketch?"

I said, "No sketch."

"What's your subject matter?"

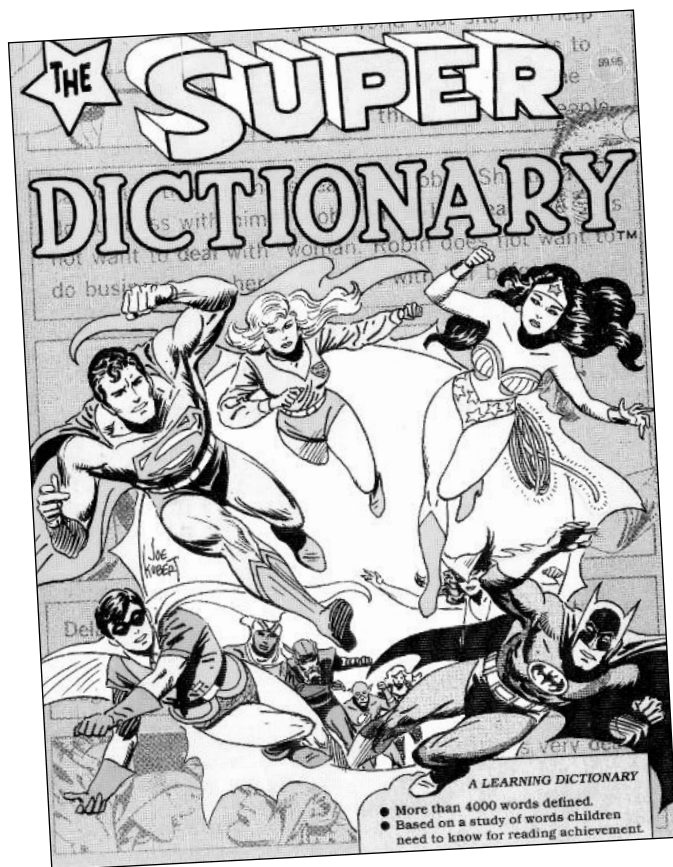
Now You Don't See Him—Now You Do!

The FLASH-y Disappearance And Reappearance of JOE KUBERT, 1947

by Al Dellings

Joe Kubert has gone on record more than once as saying that he wound up inking the two “Flash” stories in Showcase #4 in 1956 merely because he happened to be around at the right moment. And true it is that, when the character next appeared eight months later, he was too busy with other assignments to continue the on-again/off-again series. So we opted instead to spotlight Kubert’s nearly-as-small body of work on the Golden Age “Flash,” done circa 1947. And who better to put it in context for us than Kubert fan supreme Al Dellings? —Roy.

Many questions still remain unanswered about the sudden departure of DC’s latter-1940s “Hawkman” artist, Joe Kubert—who, at the peak of his game, disappeared like Houdini performing a magic trick. Even the powers of the great Sherlock Holmes would have been challenged



Sgt. Rock Jumped For Cover When He Saw Hawkman Coming

(Above:) Several years ago, Joe Kubert drew a wonderful cover for a limited-edition volume by Al Dellings. We printed Joe’s illustration in *A/E V3#4*; here is a version which Al has altered somewhat by replacing the Sgt. Rock figure on the original with his own tracing of a 1946 Kubert Hawkman. Joe seldom did even a spot illo of the Silver Age Flash; even here, he depicted only the 1940s version. [Art ©2006 Joe Kubert; DC heroes TM & ©2006 DC Comics.]

(Left:) Well, at least the post-1956 Crimson Comet makes a (minuscule) appearance on this cover Joe did some years back for a kids’ *Super Dictionary*! [Heroes TM & ©2006 DC Comics; portrait ©2006 Joe Kubert.]

by the lack of evidence associated with this case.

I believe it’s fair to say that Kubert probably took the Golden Age Hawkman character as far as it could possibly go, perfecting it with his gorgeous illustration during his tenure. His work on the Winged Wonder appeared in 15 consecutive issues of *Flash Comics* (#62-76) and in 12 issues of *All-Star Comics* (#24-30) during the time period 1944-46.

But his “Hawkman” story in *Flash Comics* #76 was the last work of his that would appear in a DC mag for nearly a year, except for the Hawkman cover of #83, which looks as if drawn somewhat earlier.

His next published artwork for DC was the “Hawkman” tale in *Flash Comics* #85 (July 1947)—in my view, not his best work, but he was *back!* Precisely what Joe was drawing, and for which companies, during much of the preceding year seems a bit vague. Joe maintains he has no memory that there was ever a period of a year or more when he didn’t work for DC after doing his first art for the company in early 1944 (a “Dr. Fate” chapter in *All-Star Comics* #21)—although, during this time, he did turn out some superb art jobs for Avon Publishing Company: two Western stories for *Cow Puncher Comics* and an adventure story for *Eerie Comics*.

“I Think I Was A Natural-Born Comic Writer”

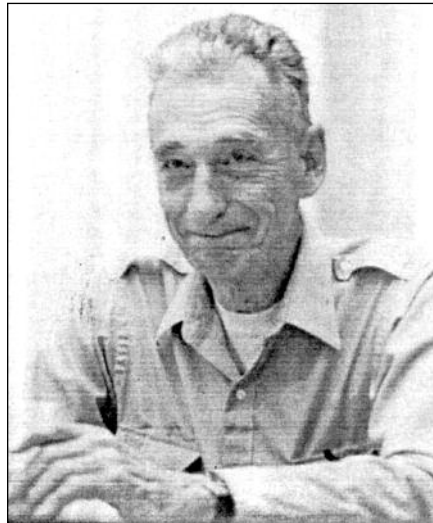
JOHN BROOME In San Diego, 1998—With MARK EVANIER, JULIUS SCHWARTZ, MURPHY ANDERSON, & MIKE W. BARR

Recorded, Transcribed, & Photographed by Don Ensign

A/E

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following panel took place at the

San Diego Comic-Con on Aug. 14, 1998, to (ahem!) showcase writer **John Broome**, who was making his first appearance ever at a comics convention. **Mark Evanier**, writer for TV and comics, was the moderator. Also on the podium were **Julius Schwartz**, original editor of the Silver Age “Flash” and “Green Lantern” features, among others—artist **Murphy Anderson**, who often inked Flash and Green Lantern material, and also drew the Broome-scripted “Captain Comet” and “Atomic Knights” features—and later comics writer & editor **Mike W. Barr**. Don Ensign’s transcript of this panel first appeared in full in Gene Keboe’s It’s a Fanzine #48 (Winter 1998-99). Another version of the panel appeared in The Comics Buyer’s Guide. Our thanks to **Brian K. Morris** for retyping the manuscript. We’d have loved to append a “John Broome Checklist,” and hope to print one in the near future; but there just wasn’t room this time around. For more info about Gene Keboe’s It’s a Fanzine, contact him at fangene@aol.com. We thank him and Don for their blessing in reprinting this landmark interview.



A New-Flash Broome Sweeps Clean!

John Broome on the panel in his honor at the 1998 San Diego Comic-Con—juxtaposed with a super-speed action sequence from his very first “New Flash” story, in *Showcase #4*. Art by Carmine Infantino & Joe Kubert, who else? [Photo ©2006 Don Ensign; page ©2006 DC Comics.]

JULIUS SCHWARTZ: [*South Seas* magazine] was edited by Ray Palmer—who was the real Atom. [NOTE: In 1961 editor Schwartz named the Silver Age Atom’s secret identity after a real-life science-fiction writer who was quite short. “Lance O’Casey” was a regular feature in Fawcett’s Whiz Comics. —Roy.]

EVANIER: At that time you wanted to write professionally and write comics.

BROOME: I think I realized that I wasn’t good enough to be a real top-notch science-fiction writer. You know, these things happen. You just want to be something and you don’t get to be it. Your wishes are completely disregarded by somebody who regulates these things. [*audience laughs*] And so when I found out that I could make money in comics, I became a comics writer.

SCHWARTZ: I must interrupt, Mr. Broome. I was your agent for a while and I sold at least 12 science-fiction stories. That’s not too bad!

BROOME: Not too bad. But they weren’t very good.

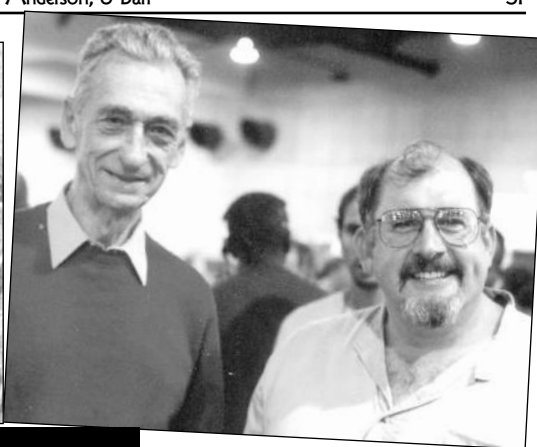
SCHWARTZ: I sold them—they must have been

‘I Wasn’t Good Enough To Be A Real Top-Notch Science-Fiction Writer’

MARK EVANIER: You have an enormous number of fans out here. We have all loved your work for many years, and I can’t tell you how much I have stolen from you over the years. [*laughs*] I want to go back to the earliest part of your career. I believe the first comics you wrote were for Fawcett. What was the first?

JOHN BROOME: I remember the very first one—I don’t remember much after that. [*laughs*] If I’m correct, and I might not be entirely correct, because that has been a long, long time ago, the first one wasn’t a super-hero at all, but was an ordinary guy in the *South Seas* called Lance O’Casey. It was just an adventure story, just like you might read in the *South Seas* magazine.





Dais Ex Machina

We don't have any photos of the entire grouping from the actual 1998 panel, so we'll show you its peerless personnel in palpitating pieces. (Left to right:) Mark Evanier from an earlier con... Murphy Anderson and Julie Schwartz, on the 1998 one... and John Broome and Mike W. Barr, in a photo taken later that day. (Mike didn't speak on the panel, but later recorded his own interview with Broome, which was printed in *Comic Book Artist* #5.) Anderson-Schwartz photo by Don Ensign, Broome-Barr photo by Maureen McTigue; with thanks to Mike.

great. *[audience laughs]*

BROOME: You were one salesman!

EVANIER: *What were your influences as a writer? What did you read that excited you?*

BROOME: I read everything. I read everything. I was a reader. I wasn't a writer, I was a reader! I loved reading. I loved them all. All the great writers—H.G. Wells, Bernard Shaw, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky. All of them. I read them all. That had nothing to do with my comics career. Comics is a very special field. And somehow, it suited me. That was what made me realize that somehow I was being cared over by something, somebody, somewhere. Somebody was taking care of me! I realized that all of a sudden—later on, it became more obvious. But at that time it was the first inkling that I wasn't going to have to go out and hold out a tin cup in order to make my dinner. I could make my money writing comics. That was the big event of my life!

"I Heard That Fawcett Was Publishing Comic Books"

EVANIER: *What was your first page rate?*

BROOME: A dollar a page. *[audience laughs]* Julie, is that right?

SCHWARTZ: Not at DC—I beg your pardon. *[laughs]*

EVANIER: *You worked for Fawcett. How did you get into Fawcett?*

BROOME: That's a good question. I think I heard that Fawcett was publishing comic books.

SCHWARTZ: Was it through Otto Binder?

BROOME: No, I'm quite sure it wasn't. I knew Rod Reed. Maybe Rod Reed told me.

SCHWARTZ: Rod Reed was the editor-in-chief over at Fawcett at the time.

BROOME: Then there was someone named Wendell Crowley who was editor at Fawcett, and somehow I got the chance to try out. To write a story and have it looked at. From then on it went like that.

EVANIER: *Was this before or after you sold the science-fiction stories?*

BROOME: I think it was right in the middle of it.

SCHWARTZ: Yeah, right. I think he was doing both.

BROOME: Julie and I were trying to figure out when we first met.

SCHWARTZ: Not just when, but who first introduced us. We came to

the conclusion that it was a good friend of John's—I think he went to Brooklyn College with you—named David Levine at that time. Then he changed his name to David Vern and wrote science-fiction and many comics under the name of David V. Reed. Also, David knew [DC editor] Mort Weisinger, and he

came up and did some comics and he brought John along. This is about as close as we can get.

BROOME: This is so long ago it is very hard to come up with details from that period. Especially when we were so young, we just didn't think about things like we do now.

EVANIER: *Did you do any super-hero stuff at Fawcett?*

BROOME: Yeah, I did "Captain Marvel." I know I did "Captain Marvel." Captain Marvel was a good character. He wasn't up to Superman or Batman, but he was a good character.

"I Immediately Put John On 'Green Lantern'"

EVANIER: *How did you get from Fawcett to DC?*

BROOME: Julie, whom I was getting to know fairly well. Then the Army intervened. I was in the army for 2½ years. After I came out, Julie was already established as an editor at DC, so all I did was to go up to Julie and start writing.

SCHWARTZ: That's not quite right. *[audience laughs]* When Alfred Bester, who got me my job at DC—or All-American, in that case—when Alfred Bester left, and he was writing "Green Lantern," I persuaded a science-fiction writer named Henry Kuttner to do some "Green Lantern." Which he did for a while, and then he decided to move on. I was doing fairly well with John on science-fiction. I said, "How about trying some comics?" That is about the most reasonable explanation I can think of.

BROOME: Do you remember some editor of *Amazing Stories*, I think, or *Astounding*, [who,] when he read one of my stories, said, "This guy's science is terrible!" Remember that?

SCHWARTZ: No.

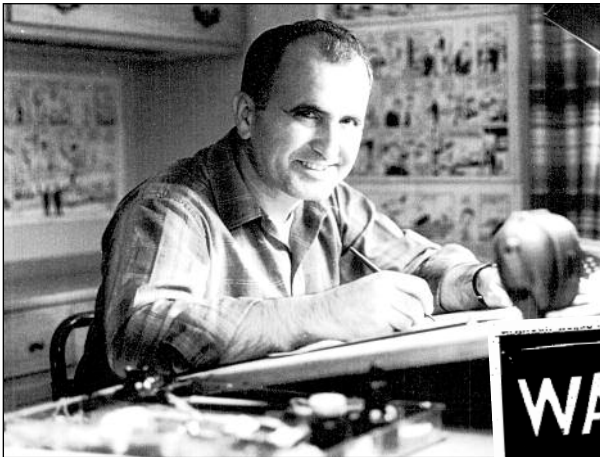
BROOME: You sent him the stories and he told you, "This guy's science is terrible." Well, I never claimed to be a great scientist! *[audience laughs]*

SCHWARTZ: But I bet I sold the story anyway! So, I think, I immediately put John on "Green Lantern" because I needed someone. And eventually he did some occasional "Flashes," but the main thing he did, as far as I was concerned—he took over the stories that were appearing

“We Were A Very Happy Group”

Artist TONY DiPRETA On Comic Books, Comic Strips, & The People Behind Them

Interview Conducted & Transcribed by Jim Amash



Maulers & Monsters
 Tony DiPreta in the 1960s, at work on the *Joe Palooka* newspaper comic strip—flanked by a daily whose original art he generously inscribed to A/E editor Roy Thomas, and the splash page to a DiPreta-drawn story from *Journey into Mystery* #15 (April 1954). The horror art, too, is repro'd from a photocopy of the original art. [*Joe Palooka* TM & ©2006 McNaught Syndicate, Inc., or its successors in interest; Timely page ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.; photo ©2006 Tony DiPreta.]

“Boy, We Were Millionaires, I’m Telling You!”

JIM AMASH: I’d like to get a little background info first. When and where were you born?

TONY DiPRETA: Stamford, Connecticut, July 9, 1921. I was the first of three boys, and the only artist. My brother Joe was just as good an artist as I was in high school, but he went in another direction, which was electronics.

Tony DiPreta is the perfect example of a young man who climbed the ladder of success step by step. He started out at McCalls Photo Engraving as a colorist for Busy Arnold’s Quality Comics line, then became a staff letterer for Arnold. Before long, he became an inker, and worked his way up to doing complete art on his stories. Tony spent a long time in comic books, working for publishers Hillman, Lev Gleason, Timely, among others. He got a toehold early on in newspaper strips as a letterer on Tim Tyler’s Luck and later became Lank Leonard’s assistant on Mickey Finn. He eventually did full art on strips such as Joe Palooka and Rex Morgan, M.D. Tony looks back with fondness on those times, and helps us see comic book talents like Charlie Biro, Bob Fujitani, Fred Kida, Ed Cronin, Gill Fox, and a host of other fantasy makers in their element. Special thanks to my friend Bob Fujitani (not a bad artist himself) for putting me in touch with Tony. Except where otherwise noted, all photos & art are courtesy of Tony D. —Jim.

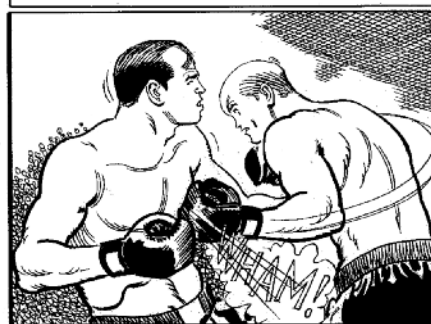


I took art in high school and decided to become an artist in junior high school. I was a fan of the newspaper strip artists. The paper we read was *The Advocate*, which only carried four strips: *Salesman Sam*, *Wash Tubbs* and *Captain Easy*, *Freckles and His Friends*, and *Boots and Her Buddies*. I also took life drawing classes at the Silvermine Guild, as did a lot of guys—including Elmer “Red” Wexler and Bob Fujitani—who were both very good. I took these classes after high school, and took them for years. It was one of the few places where I could draw from models.

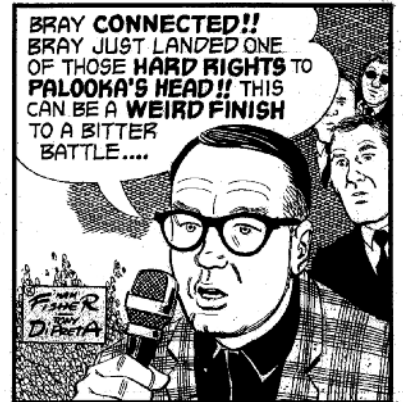
ROUND 15... BRAY IS BATTLING LIKE A WOUNDED BULL... HE IS SWINGING WILD... HOPING TO CONNECT WITH THAT ONE BIG RIGHT TO PALOOKA'S JAW AND END IT ALL BEFORE THE FINAL BELL....



JOE SIDE-STEPS THE HAYMAKERS... AND COUNTERS WITH LEFT HOOKS... AND THEY ARE STINGERS!



BRAY CONNECTED!! BRAY JUST LANDED ONE OF THOSE HARD RIGHTS TO PALOOKA'S HEAD!! THIS CAN BE A WEIRD FINISH TO A BITTER BATTLE....



WITH BEST WISHES TO ROY THOMAS, CHAMPION OF GOLDEN AGE COMICS - FROM JOE PALOOKA AND TONY DiPRETA

JA: You also took some writing classes at Columbia University and at the University of Connecticut.

DiPRETA: They were two different situations. One of them was in the early 1950s, when I was working for Lank Leonard on *Mickey Finn*. Someone told us Al Capp had taken a writing course at Columbia University, and I thought, "That's a good idea." I went down to Columbia and enrolled. The teacher was a writer of Westerns and he taught me a lot. When he found out I did comics, he was so fascinated that all his teaching became about writing for comics. That course helped me in my own writing, which I did on *Joe Palooka*. A couple of times when I went to McNaught Syndicate, Frank Markey wanted me to write the strip, and I said I didn't know if I could do it. He said, "Of course you can do it. You've been doing comics for so many years now—how come you can't write a story?!" [laughs]



JA: Bob Fujitani told me you two met at McCalls Photo Engraving.

DiPRETA: Right. I read an ad in the paper and applied for the job. That was in 1939. When I was in high school, my art teacher sort-of got me a job at an advertising agency. Let me explain what I mean by "sort-of." They used to put out sales bulletins with comic art on them. I went to work for this company while still in high school. Now, you must remember this was 1938 and the Depression was still going on. This job paid me \$8.20 a week—if I worked a full week—which was about 21¢ an hour.

My boss was a guy named Mr. Spears. One time, I was working down in the basement and he came down there, with a cigarette butt hanging out of his mouth—almost like Busy Arnold—and said, "How are you doing?" I said, "You know, Mr. Spears, there's an article in the paper yesterday that the minimum wage is 25¢ an hour." [laughter] He just looked at me, turned around, and went upstairs. I was worried about what was going to happen to me, but that raise was in my next check.

I worked there for less than a year when my father saw this ad for McCalls in the paper that said, "Artist wanted." I went there, and there was a mob of people wanting an artist's job. I got that job, which paid \$15 a week, and I thought things were beginning to hop. Then my dad got a job as a defense worker, and that was for \$25 a week. Boy, we were millionaires, I'm telling you!

JA: What did you do at McCalls?

DiPRETA: This is where Bob comes in. We all sat around there, waiting for work to come in. One of the photo engravers was a very good artist. Photo engraving was very big in those days and they had a strong union. This guy, Tony DeCamillo—and Bob Fujitani—were the two best friends I had in my whole life. We were all up there in a big, long room in the factory, sitting at art benches. Tony sat behind me; there were two people in each row, and of course Bob was there, too, along with Chris Hansen. There were four of us in that group. One time, somebody said that someone was half-Japanese—he was speaking about Bob. I looked at Tony and I looked at Bob. I thought that guy was talking about Tony, but he was talking about Bob. Shows you how much attention I paid!



Portraits Of The Artists As Young Men

Tony D. (on left) and Bob Fujitani. The note on this photo reads: "Tony DiPreta - Bob Fujitani - April 1, 1941 - venture into NYC, in search of freelance work. We found it—first time around."

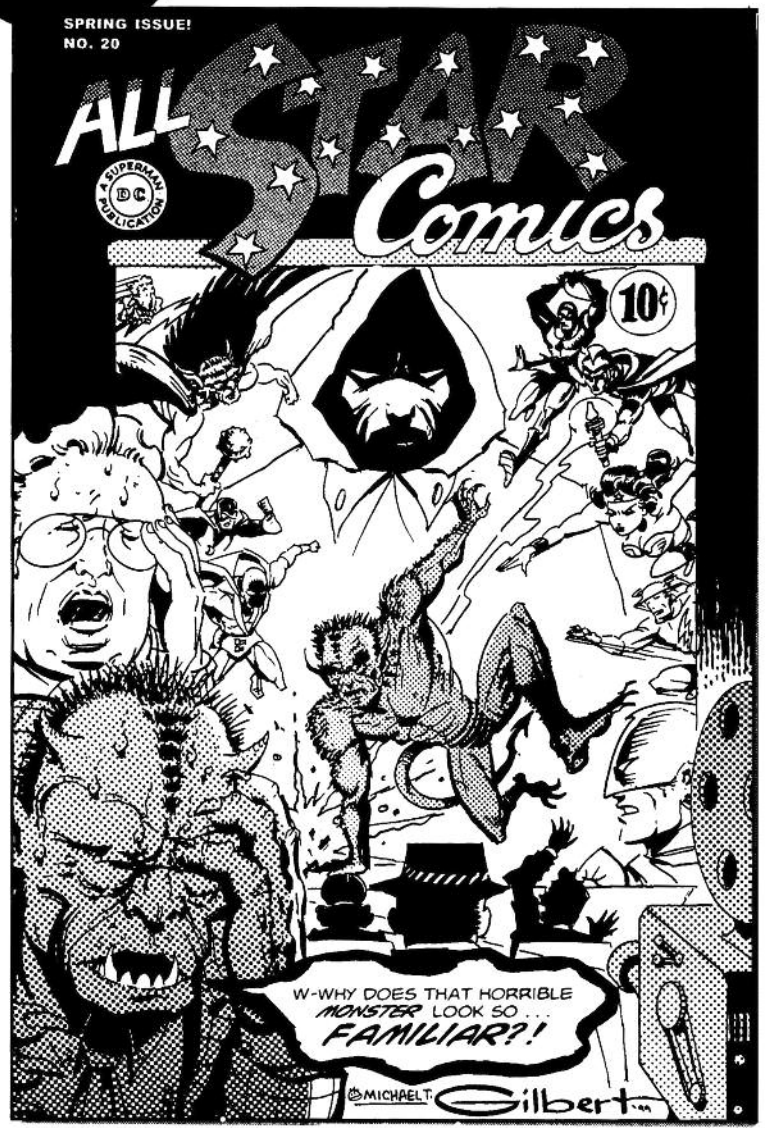
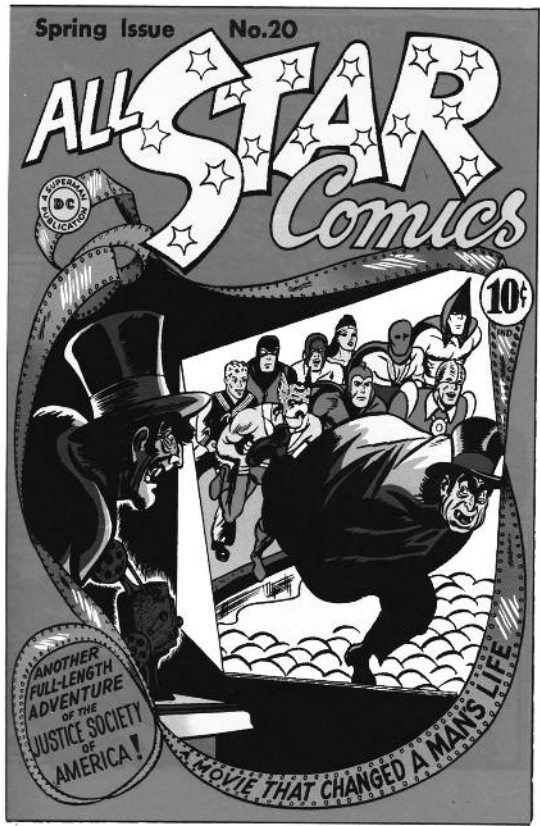
Above is a page from Fujitani's "Shock Gibson" story for *Speed Comics* #38 (May 1945), repro'd from a photocopy of the original art, courtesy of Ethan Roberts. More pages from this story can be seen with Fujitani's own in-depth interview, in *A/E* #23... see *TwoMorrrows* ad bloc at end of this issue. [Art ©Harvey Comics or successors in interest; photo ©2006 Tony DiPreta.]

Anyway, we heard that Quality Comics was going to have their comics colored by our firm. There were four black-&-white pages on a flat, and our job was not to color the comics, but to mask out the colors. As an artist, you know what I mean: you masked out everything that didn't have yellow in it. You masked out everything with red, and everything with blue. Boy, was that a boring job!

JA: Who decided what colors were going to be used?

DiPRETA: We did. Tony DeCamillo said he wanted me to color, and not to mask. I said, "No, no, I can't do that." I was dying to do it! But I couldn't bring myself to say it. Thank God he didn't take me at my word. All four of us colored.

Chris Hansen was a very creative, funny comic artist. He had a sense of humor, and I thought he would be the first of us to get a syndicated comic strip. Chris and Bob had a fellowship to one of the New York schools, and they went back to school. But he got married soon after, and that was the end of his comic book days. He went into advertising art and was more of an art director than an artist. And Bob only worked there for that summer. I worked there for about a year.



CHECK OUT JOE GALLAGHER'S CLASSIC **ALL-STAR COMICS** #20 COVER (ABOVE) -- ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1944. COOL, HUH? BUT, SAY! ISN'T THAT A **SECOND** VERSION OF THAT COVER ON THE RIGHT?

DON'T WORRY, READERS, YOU'RE NOT SEEING **DOUBLE!** YOU'RE SEEING **MICHAEL T. GILBERT'S** TWICE-TOLD COVER DEPICTING "THE MOVIE THAT CHANGED A MAN'S LIFE!" -- **GARDNER FOX'S** TALE ABOUT A CLUELESS **JEKYLL/HYDE** VILLAIN. THIS ALTERNATE COVER WAS DRAWN IN 1999 FOR JUSTICE SOCIETY FAN-SUPREME **JERRY BAILS**. BUT, WAIT! THERE'S MORE!

REGULAR READERS OF THIS COLUMN MAY RECALL **MICHAEL T. GILBERT'S** POPULAR **TWICE-TOLD TALES** FEATURE, WHERE HE MERCILESSLY EXPOSES CHEESY OLD **RECYCLED** COMIC BOOK STORIES AND ART.

OH, HE'S **BRUTAL**, THAT BOY! BUT THIS ISSUE WE'RE TURNING THE TABLES BY PRINTING **GILBERT'S** OWN **TWICE-TOLD** ART! HA! THE **BOSS** CAN DISH IT OUT, BUT LET'S SEE IF CAN HE TAKE IT!!

The Fabulous '40s – The First Full Decade Of Comic Books

A Panel Discussion With OTTO BINDER, LARRY IVIE, TED WHITE—And, For The First And Only Time, KLAUS NORDLING

Part VII of “1966: The Year Of (Nearly) Three New York Comics Conventions”

Edited by Bill Schelly (with Roy Thomas)

Transcribed by Brian K. Morris

Introduction

As reported in previous installments of this series (which began in issue #53), the first of three seminal comics conventions held in New York City between mid-1966 and very early 1967 was hosted by comics historian John Benson in July of '66. Although by then certain basic facts about the history of comic books had been clearly established, it must be remembered that only a small number of comics professionals who had been active during the Golden Age had ever been interviewed,



either in print or in public, and there were virtually no true reference works on comic books.

Thus, Benson put together a panel composed of moderator Ted White (already a professional writer, though in non-comics fields such as jazz criticism and science-fiction), Larry Ivie (a knowledgeable fan artist and writer who had done scripts for Marvel and Tower and would soon publish his own pro magazine, Monsters and Heroes), Otto Binder (Golden Age scripter of Fawcett's “Captain Marvel” and other features, who in the mid-'60s was writing



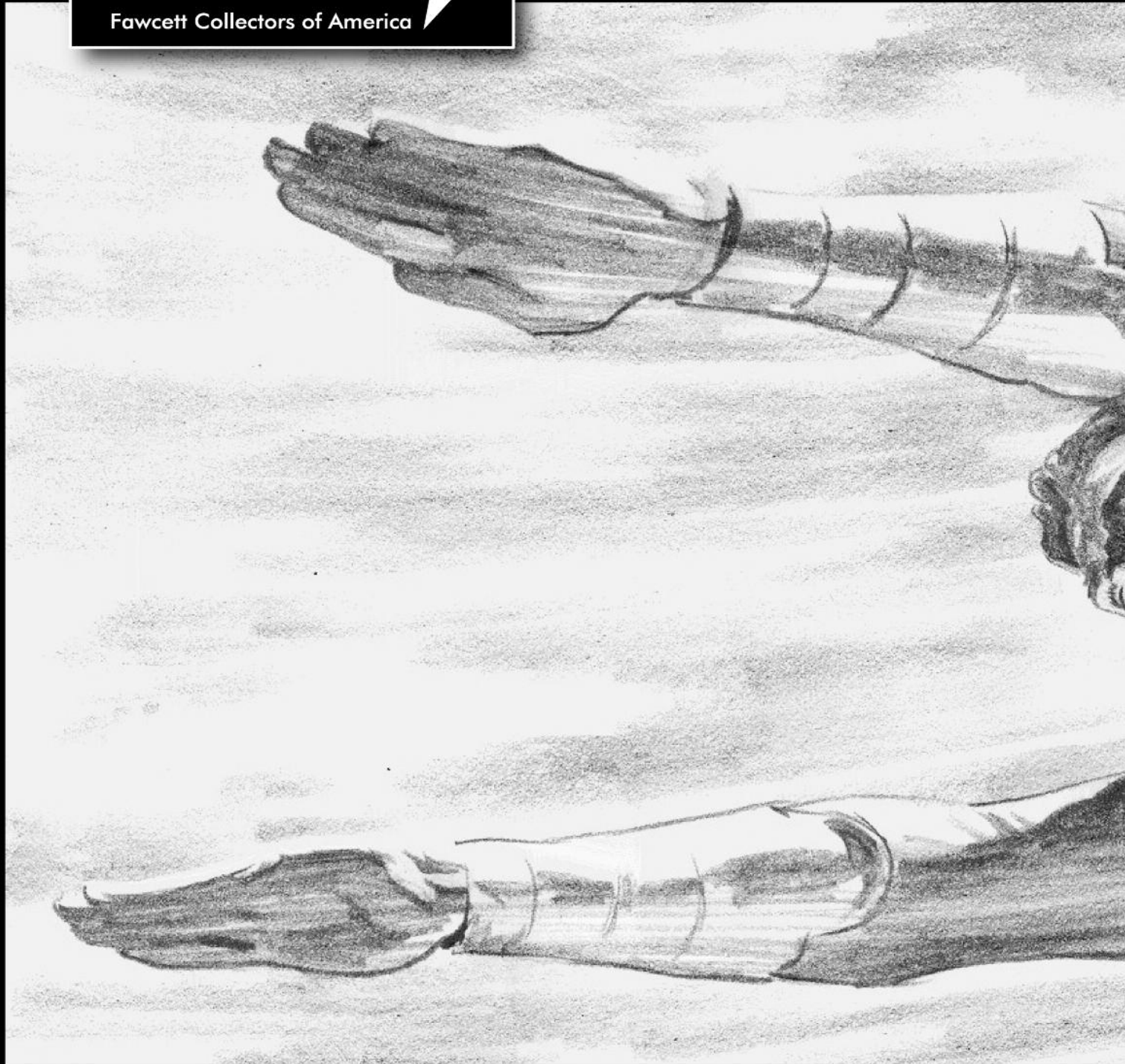
...And Four To Go!
Panelists (l. to r.) Klaus Nordling... Otto Binder... Larry Ivie... and moderator Ted White—juxtaposed with: (a) a Nordling “Lady Luck” splash... (b) the first meeting of the World’s Mightiest Mortal and Oggar, the World’s Mightiest Immortal, in *Captain Marvel Adventures* #61 (May 24, 1946) with story by Binder, art by C.C. Beck... and (c) the climactic page from Ivie’s solo scripting foray for Marvel, from *Strange Tales* #132 (May 1965), with art by Bob Powell & Mike Esposito. Ted White was about to commence writing the Captain America prose novel *The Great Gold Steal*. [Lady Luck art ©2006 Will Eisner Studios; CMA art ©2006 DC Comics; Human Torch/Thing art ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.; photo ©2006 Jack C. Harris.]



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[Jackson Bostwick as Captain Marvel — Captain Marvel TM & ©2006 DC Comics.]



ROSS

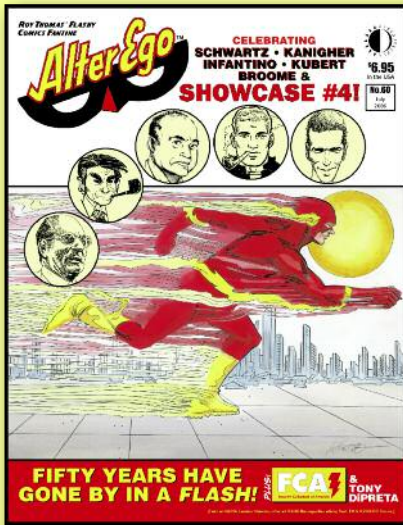
Roughs

Ross Roughts

Alex Ross needs no introduction to fans of current comics—the more so if they’ve seen his beautiful Shazam! Power of Hope book a year or two back. Thus, without further ado, except to note that all art is ©2006 DC Comics—and to thank him for our FCA cover a few pages back—here’s a dip into the Alex Ross Sketch Drawer and Big Red Roughts:



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

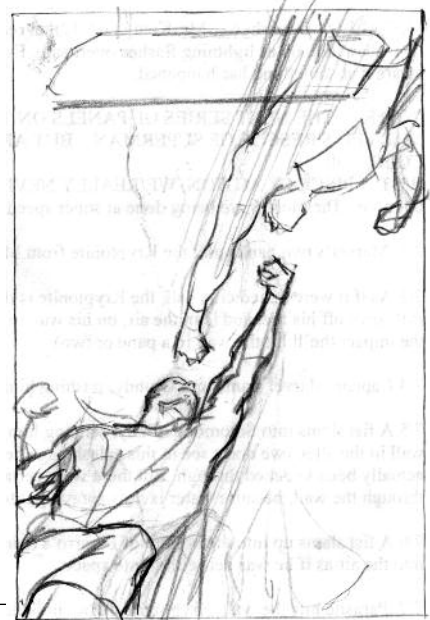


ALTER EGO #60

Celebrates 50 years since **SHOWCASE #41** FLASH interviews with **SCHWARTZ, KANIGHER, INFANTINO, KUBERT,** and **BROOME**, Golden Age artist **TONY DiPRETA**, 1966 panel with **NORDLING, BINDER,** and **LARRY IVIE**, **FCA**, **MR. MONSTER**, never-before-published color Flash cover by **CARMINE INFANTINO**, and more!

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CRISIS ON MULTIPLE EARTHS V.4 (a trade paperback collection reprinting *Justice League of America* #122-124, #135-137 and #147-148) - Ross: "The design for this cover is clearly influenced by the classic Bill Everett [& Carl Burgos] Human Torch/Sub-Mariner fight splash image, with one figure being upside down in symmetry to the other. I was hoping to try and wrestle the demon of doing my ultimate image of the Captain Marvel/Superman fight to honor the first moment in history they met. I imagine I'll still be trying this again in the future."