

Jack Kirby and Austin

Machine Man TM &
©2007 Marvel
Characters, Inc.

CONTENTS

KIRBYTECH!

OPENING SHOT	2
<i>(a whole lotta Kirby goin' on)</i>	
UNDER THE COVERS	3
<i>(are these inkers men or machines?)</i>	
UNEARTHED	4
<i>(an unknown Kirby sketchbook)</i>	
JACK F.A.Q.s	6
<i>(Mark Evanier discusses his new Kirby bio, and Joe Maneely)</i>	
CUT-UPS	10
<i>(the making of Kirby's collages)</i>	
INCIDENTAL ICONOGRAPHY	13
<i>(Mr. Machine to Machine Man)</i>	
INTERVIEW	14
<i>(a landmark unpublished interview with Kirby from Italy, in 1976)</i>	
BEFORE & AFTER	26
<i>(a pencils-to-inks comparison of Fantastic Four #75, page 11)</i>	
FINISHERS	30
<i>(the machineries of Jack)</i>	
BIG IDEAS	32
<i>(big head, small heart)</i>	
NEAR MYTHS	34
<i>(the myth of Tom Scioli)</i>	
GALLERY	36
<i>(only one gallery this issue, but what a doozy!)</i>	
KIRBY OBSCURA	48
<i>(Barry Forshaw runs in fear of Kirby's Atlas monster output)</i>	
FOUNDATIONS	50
<i>(a complete reprint of a 1957 Alarming Tales story)</i>	
TRIBUTE	53
<i>(the 2006 Kirby Tribute Panel, with Mark Evanier, Neal Adams, George Pérez, John Romita, Mike Royer, and Kirby lawyer Paul Levine)</i>	
MUSEUM PAGE	63
<i>(visit & join www.kirbymuseum.org)</i>	
KIRBY AS A GENRE	64
<i>(Adam McGovern runs down the usual suspects...)</i>	
INTERNATIONALITIES	66
<i>(French sculptor Bernard Pras' Kirby influences)</i>	
ACCOLADES	68
<i>(Kirby Award winner and Dark Horse publisher Mike Richardson)</i>	
THINKIN' 'BOUT INKIN'	70
<i>(how top inkers handled Kirbytech)</i>	
COLLECTOR COMMENTS	78
PARTING SHOT	80
<i>(the flip-side of the image at right!)</i>	

Front cover inks: **TERRY AUSTIN**
 Back cover inks: **TOM SCIOLI**
 Cover colors: **TOM ZIUKO**

The Jack Kirby Collector, Vol. 14, No. 48, Spring 2007. Published quarterly by & ©2007 TwoMorrows Publishing, 10407 Bedfordtown Drive, Raleigh, NC 27614, USA. 919-449-0344. John Morrow, Editor/Publisher. Pamela Morrow, Asst. Editor. Christopher Irving, Production Assistant. Single issues: \$13 postpaid (\$15 elsewhere). Four-issue subscriptions: \$40.00 US, \$64.00 Canada, \$68.00 elsewhere. All characters are trademarks of their respective companies. All artwork is ©2007 Jack Kirby Estate unless otherwise noted. All editorial matter is ©2007 the respective authors. First printing. PRINTED IN CANADA. ISSN 1932-6912



THE NEW JACK KIRBY~ COLLECTOR

ISSUE #48, SPRING 2007



COPYRIGHTS: Annihilus, Black Knight, Black Panther, Bucky, Captain America, Daredevil, Dr. Doom, Eternals, Falcon, Fantastic Four, Goliath, Hatch-22, Hercules, Hulk, Iron Man, Journey Into Mystery, Machine Man, Mad Thinker's Android, Magneto, Melter, Mephisto, Orog, Rawhide Kid, Red Skull, Rick Jones, Rro, Scarlet Witch, Sgt. Fury, Silver Surfer, Skrulls, Spider-Man, Spider-Woman, Sub-Mariner, Tana Nile, The Martian, Thing, Thor, UFO, Ulrik TM & ©2007 Marvel Characters, Inc. • Black Racer, Buddy Blank, Desaad, Dubbilex, Forever People, General Electric, Glorious Godfrey, Hawkman, In The Days Of The Mob, Jimmy Olsen, Kalibak, Kamandi, Manhunter, Mantis, Misfit, Mr. Miracle, New Gods, Newsboy Legion, OMAC, Spirit World, Superman, Virmin Vundabar TM & ©2007 DC Comics • Adam & Eve, Collages, Ding-Dong Twins, Robot, Space Charioteer, Visitor On Highway Six TM & ©2007 Jack Kirby Estate • Drac Pack TM & ©2007 Hanna-Barbera • Hidden Harry TM & ©2007 Ruby-Spears • Myth of 8-Opus TM & ©2007 Tom Scioli. • 2001: A Space Odyssey TM & ©2007 Warner Bros. • Stereon, Battle For A Three-Dimensional World TM & ©2007 Cosmic Productions. • Fighting American, "I Want To Be A Man" ©2007 Joe Simon and the Jack Kirby Estate • Thunderground TM & ©2007 Sega Enterprises, Ltd.

(right) Kirby front-facing ad artwork for a Sega *Thunderground* video game, circa 1983. See page 80 for more! Thunderground TM & ©2007 Sega Enterprises, Ltd..

by John Morrow,
editor of TJKC



Boy! I take a couple of extra months between issues, and there's all kinds of big Kirby news to report. So let's get started!
First: the long completed, but never released, documentary *Jack Kirby: Storyteller* is coming to DVD on June 5th! This hour-long look at the life and career of the King was hailed with cheers when we screened a short excerpt of it at the Kirby

THEY'RE COMING...

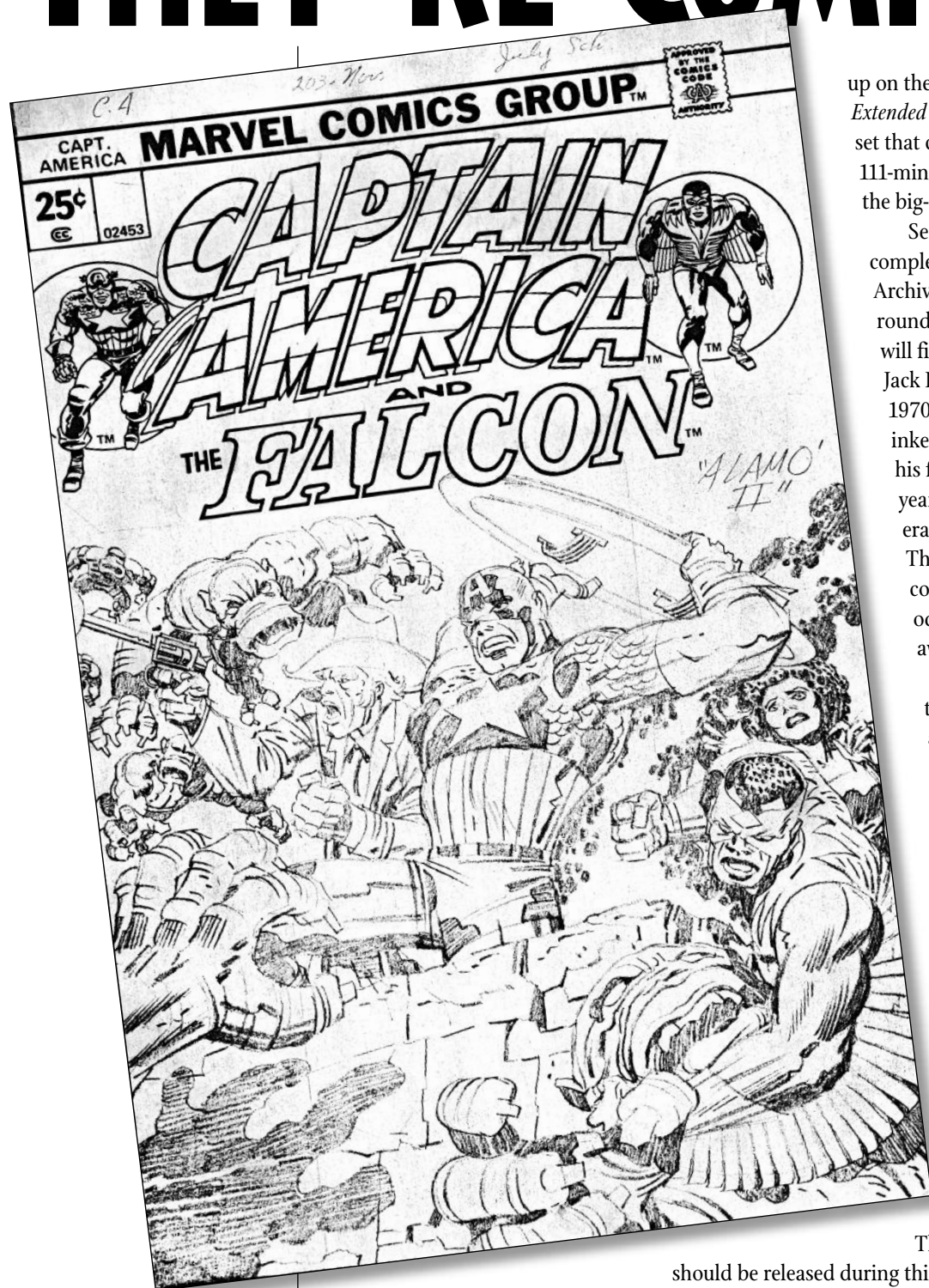
Tribute Panel at last year's Comic-Con International: San Diego (see elsewhere this issue for the panel transcript), and features a who's who of top comics pros telling the world why Kirby matters (plus a few seconds of me putting my foot in my mouth, unless it ended

up on the cutting room floor). The documentary is part of the *Fantastic Four: Extended Edition* DVD from 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment (a 2-disc set that contains the 106-minute theatrical version of the film as well as a 111-minute extended cut), which is being released just two weeks prior to the big-screen debut of *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer* on June 15th.

Second: I'm absolutely thrilled to announce that we're roughly 98% complete scanning the over 5000 pages of pencil xeroxes in the Kirby Archives! We started it back in 2003, and by summer, we should have rounded up and catalogued the last of the straggler images, and the task will finally be complete. For those not familiar with what we're doing, Jack Kirby xeroxed most of his pencil art, prior to inking, from the early 1970s-on, in case anything ever got lost in the mail on the way to the inker, or his publisher. Jack had xeroxes of some of his 1960s pencils in his files as well, and we've been scanning and archiving them for several years. There's a level of urgency to it, because xerox machines of that era weren't like today's; they used technology much like the old Thermal Fax machines, with that greasy-feeling gray paper, and the copies are susceptible to fading when exposed to light over long periods. So this amazing record of Kirby's pre-inked art was slowly fading away.

We've done basic tonal adjustments on each 11" x 17" scan, to restore the images to a viewable level, and these images are available for viewing to members of the Jack Kirby Museum & Research Center (www.kirbymuseum.org), so consider joining. A special thanks to Eric Nolen-Weathington for his dedication (and wear and tear on his scanner) in seeing this project to completion. I know I'll rest easier knowing that this great material will be preserved indefinitely, so future generations can discover Kirby's penciling wizardry.

Third: Marvel Super Heroes Stamps will be available this July from the US Postal Service. And where there's Marvel Super Heroes, you can bet there's Kirby art. Much like the DC Stamps released last summer (featuring Kirby's rendition of Green Arrow), these feature close-ups of several Marvel characters, including Kirby illos of the Thing, Captain America, and Silver Surfer, plus reproductions of several Klassic Kirby Kovers.



(above) To give you an idea of the material in the Kirby Archives, and in memory of poor old Steve Rogers who bit the dust in issue #25 of his current comic, here's pencils from Kirby's cover to *Captain America* #203 (November 1976).

Characters TM & ©2007 Marvel Characters, Inc.

They should be released during this summer's San Diego Comicon, so get your mail ready!

Last (but definitely not least): Mark Evanier announced that his long awaited biography of Jack Kirby will now be in two parts. The first will be a very nicely printed art book titled *Kirby: King of Comics*, to be released this October as a full-color hardcover volume; probably in a year or two, he'll publish the expanded version for hardcore Kirby fans. In the meantime, if you've got original art you'd be willing to have photographed for the book, please contact us at twomorrow@aol.com, and we'll pass it on to Mark for consideration to be included in the book. See Mark's column for more info.

And if it all works out right, just in time for the end of the year holiday season, we'll be releasing issue #50 of this magazine. It's still top secret, but stay tuned next issue for the details (gotta get #49 done first this summer).

Oh, yeah; 2007 is shaping up to be one Kirbyful year! ★



by Douglas Toole

Some inkers make their job look effortless, almost like it was produced by a machine instead of a man. This issue's cover inkers are a great example. Our front cover is an eye-popping image of Machine Man against a background of abstract machinery. The theme of this issue is Kirby Tech, and from his beginnings in Marvel's 2001 series and into his own series, Machine Man is one of Kirby's higher-profile "techno" characters.

This image comes to us straight from the Kirby household walls. David Schwartz, a friend of the Kirby family, said the Machine Man pencil drawing was one of about a dozen pieces hanging on the walls of the hallway at the Kirbys' home, which included both penciled pieces and finished production art.

Schwartz recalled that a pencil sketch of Kirby's western character, Bullseye, and the covers to *Strange Tales* #142, *Fantastic Four* #68 and *Captain America* #102 hung on the opposite wall, to the left of the Machine Man piece. To the right of the Machine Man artwork (also on the opposite wall) was a penciled *Stuntman* poster and a gorgeous large pencil drawing featuring a number of Marvel super-heroes. Next to the Machine Man artwork were two pencil drawings, one of Captain America and the other of Thor.

To the left of the Machine Man piece, Schwartz recalled, were two large drawings. The first, titled "Jacob and the Angel," was a large drawing of two figures locked in battle. The second, titled "Jericho," featured a man on a horse in the foreground, with a science-fiction apparatus in the background. "Jacob and the Angel" later saw print as a Kirby lithograph.

A version of the Machine Man piece, which was reproduced from its penciled form, was run in TwoMorrows' updated *Kirby Unleashed* portfolio in 2004 (still available from www.twomorrows.com). For the cover of this issue, we asked Terry Austin to ink the image. "I'm told that Jack did this piece after Roz requested some new art for the walls at home," Austin said. "So I'm sure that what the rest of us would have taken two days to accomplish, Jack bashed out before his morning cup of Ovaltine!"

Tom Ziuko did his usual outstanding job coloring the image, giving us a great lead-in to an issue filled with wacky technology. Thanks to all of you for your contributions!

About the image itself, Austin noted that the background 'tech' moves the eye around the page in an interesting way, and reminds one of a hunk of circuitry board. "It is simple, effective, and really quite lovely. As usual, my hat is off to you, Jack!"

Our back cover this issue was inked by Tom Scioli, who's profiled elsewhere in this issue. The artist has brought the Kirby style back into vogue with his recent work at Image Comics on *Godland*. His art evokes a bit of those great Neal Adams-inked Kirby covers from the early 1970s *Jimmy Olsen* issues at DC Comics. When we asked him to ink the 1966 Kirby robot drawing (seen in *TJKC* #45), he jumped at the chance, and added an amazingly Kirbyesque background. Tom Ziuko channeled the retina-scalding colors Jack used in his self-hued work, and finished off this visual feast. Great work by all, gents! ★



SKETCH ARTIST

by Henry Kraus

e-mail him at: 4hskpub@roadrunner.com

Have you ever started to clear out the garage or closets in your house and found something that you have not seen for years? The memories start to return. What a great feeling.

That is exactly what happened to me about a year ago when my wife asked me to clean out the garage to make room for more valuable things to be stored there. To my surprise, I found an old sketchbook that I got about 30 or 35 years ago. This sketchbook has followed me through four different schools that I worked at and six moves during my marriage. Believe it or not, it's still here and in good condition.

What am I talking about? A sketchbook by Jack Kirby with about fifteen drawings and sketches.

It was in the first school I ever taught in. We had the students from the upper grade classes come to an assembly. What a





(next page, top) Kirby's layouts for George Tuska, on *Tales of Suspense* #70 (Oct. 1965).

A column answering Frequently Asked Questions about Kirby by Mark Evanier

First off this time, let me tell you about the book—or rather, books (plural) I'm writing about Jack. As some of you may know, I've been working a lonnnng time on a biography of Kirby. Some people have described it as "definitive," but that's not my adjective.

This paragraph is an aside so you may want to skip it. The word "definitive" has many meanings, but people usually use it to denote

that something is the final say on a matter; like once you've done the definitive version, there's no point in anyone else addressing the topic. I don't

There were times when I thought he was wrong about something—including one time when I told him so and it did serious damage to our friendship for a year or so.

But I never thought he was dishonest about a thing. Incorrect? Sure, at times. Confused? Often. (Not long ago in this magazine, there was an interview in which both Jack and Roz talked about his work for the Fimation Cartoon Studio. I don't know how they both got that one wrong but they did. The studio they were talking about was DePatie-Freleng, not Fimation.)

So he never told me what to write. He answered every question I ever asked him but he always made it clear that if I wrote anything, it should be what I perceived as the truth. He believed the truth was his friend and that he'd come off pretty well in anyone's account...

... just so long as they wrote the truth.

I thought about a bio for a long time but, well, I've thought about a lot of things I haven't gotten around to doing. It wasn't until Jack passed away that Roz started encouraging me to put down everything I knew about Jack on paper and toss in everything I could find out about him. I keep trying to do that but there's so darn much of it.

The book in its present form is huge and still not finished. I won't say when it will get done since I keep finding out what I still need to find out. But in the interim, I've decided to put out another book on Jack



(above) After turning over the "Iron Man" strip early on, Jack was constantly called in to provide covers (such as this one for *Tales of Suspense* #47, Nov. 1963), spot illos (like the one at right, which saw print as a pin-up in *Iron Man Special* #2, Nov. 1971), and (next page, bottom) fill-ins like *Tales to Astonish* #82 (Aug. 1966).

All characters TM & ©2007 Marvel Characters, Inc.

believe that could ever be true about a subject like Jack Kirby. I also wince when I hear someone say that a given interpretation is "the definitive Batman" or "the definitive Spider-Man" or whatever. There are definitions of "definitive" that could be correct in that context, but I don't think that's the way people usually mean it. And I think the way they mean it is wrong.

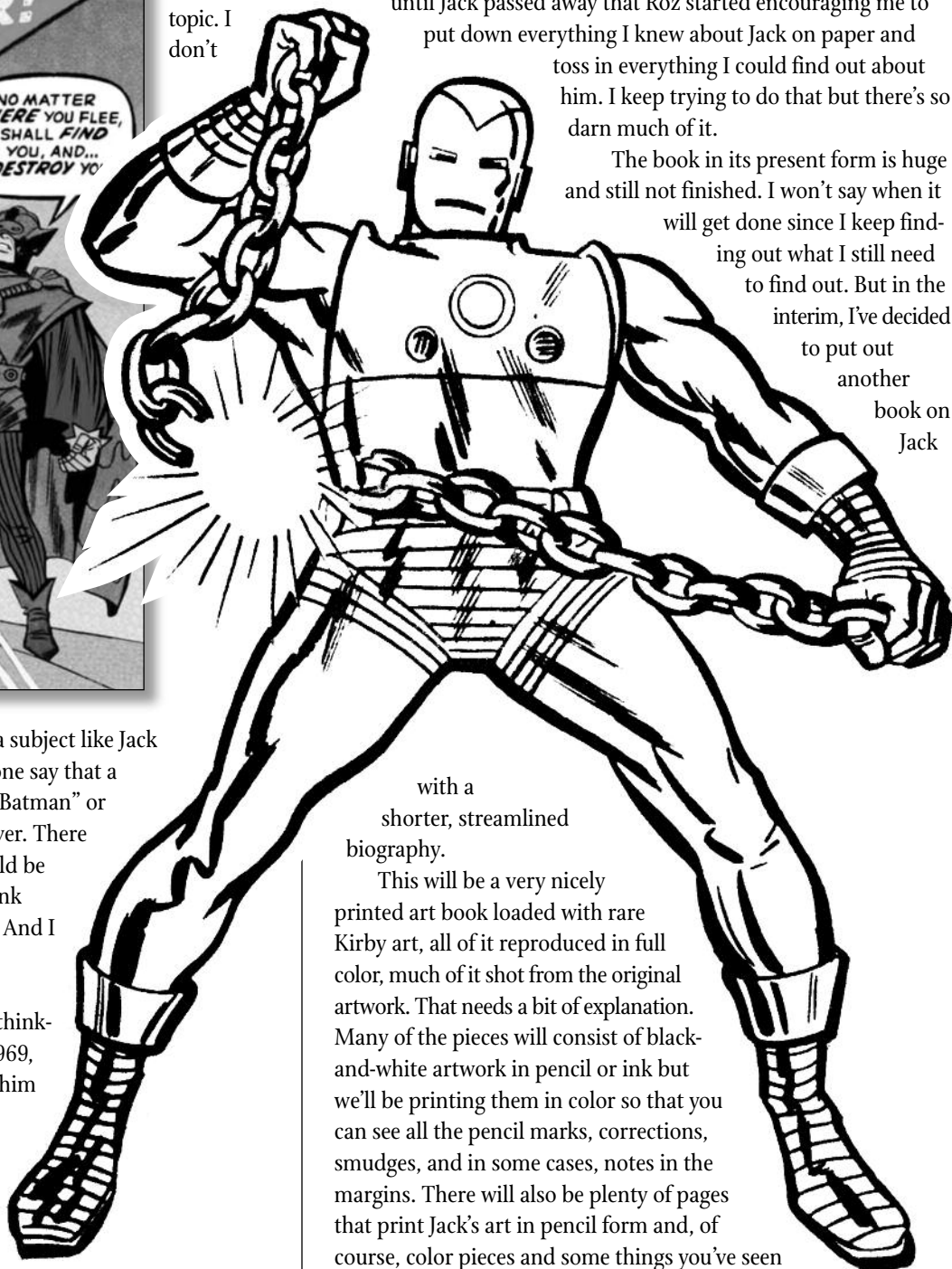
End of aside, back to Kirby.

I started the bio... well, I started thinking about it when I first met Jack in 1969, and more so when I went to work for him in 1970. He said several times that he wanted me to "write the history" and I was impressed that he never added or implied, "Write it the way I tell you."

Jack loved honesty. He was totally honest and I think that quality informed his work in many ways.

with a shorter, streamlined biography.

This will be a very nicely printed art book loaded with rare Kirby art, all of it reproduced in full color, much of it shot from the original artwork. That needs a bit of explanation. Many of the pieces will consist of black-and-white artwork in pencil or ink but we'll be printing them in color so that you can see all the pencil marks, corrections, smudges, and in some cases, notes in the margins. There will also be plenty of pages that print Jack's art in pencil form and, of course, color pieces and some things you've seen before but not in the way we're going to present them.



CUT & PASTE

(below) Gary Scott Beatty's *Spirit World* #1 collage (Fall 1971), recently purchased on eBay.

(next page) For those of you who didn't want to destroy your copy, or just don't have the issue, here's the *Souls* poster that ran as the centerfold in *Spirit World* #1 (and only).

(following page, top) Jack's collage for the cover of *Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen* #138 (June 1971), along with a repro of the cover, showing how it was used.

Images ©2007 DC Comics.

The Making of the Kirby Collages, by Robert L. Bryant, Jr.

"...you gotta know everyone in comics stepped back in wonder about those (Kirby) collages. Even today, no one dares attempt them. A true Kirby concept from thought to realization."

—Neal Adams, in *TJKC* #42

When Gary Scott Beatty got his first close look at the Jack Kirby collage he'd bought on the Web, this thought struck him: "What a craftsman the King was, even with an X-Acto knife."

Beatty, a writer, illustrator and comics colorist (reach him at www.comicartistsdirect.com), bought the collage—a page from Kirby's ill-fated *Spirit World* magazine—on eBay in 2000. It's from the "Amazing Predictions" story, and Beatty describes it as "an odd, war-and-peace-oriented collage, with World War II images, knights, and British colonial-era soldiers. The printed version, one color in blue ink, lost much of the detail."

"The first thing that struck me about the original is how carefully it was pieced together," Beatty says. "It's hard to see where the magazine pictures were cut out... I'm pretty sure he worked it over with inks to blend the pieces together, though how he kept everything from curling up, I don't know."

It's pure Kirby, even though he didn't draw it. That's the paradox of the King's collages, which are a sort of no-man's land on the map of Kirby's achievements in art. Since they didn't

spring from his pencil, the collages aren't of high interest to most fans and collectors. And since they usually didn't reproduce well in the published comics, most Kirby fans probably take the view of most Kirby inkers: Interesting, but Jack could have drawn something from scratch that looked better.

"Collages were another way of finding new avenues of entertainment," Kirby said (quoted in Arlen Schumer's magnificent *The Silver Age of Comic Book Art*). "I felt that magazine reproduction could handle that change. It added an extra dimension to comics. I wanted to see if it could materialize and it did. I loved doing collages. I made a lot of good ones."

Kirby aide Mark Evanier has said (*TJKC* #17) that in most cases, Kirby would do a collage, then figure out later how he would fit it into a given story. "He usually did not plan them," Evanier said. "He'd leaf through magazines in his sparse spare time and cut out shapes that were of interest to him. When he felt he had enough, he'd paste them into a collage.... Most were just built through instinct.... He didn't do many of them in his last few years. One of the reasons was that most of the magazines he used for material—*Life*, *Look*, *Saturday Evening Post*—had gone out of business."

I don't think anyone has done a detailed census of Kirby collages, but a quick check of TwoMorrows' *Kirby Checklist* indicates the King did several dozen photo collages in his comics, ranging in size from a small panel to a double-splash page, mostly during the late 1960s and early 1970s. They appeared on a fairly regular basis in *Fantastic Four* and less so in *Thor*, Kirby's flagship Marvel titles of the 1960s.

In *Fantastic Four*, you can see Kirby beginning to experiment with photo collages as early as 1964 (in *FF* #24, with two small shots of a starship in space that looks very much like the Martian manta-ray ships from George Pal's *War of the Worlds*). In *FF* #29 (1964), Kirby does a nearly half-page collage showing the Red Ghost's spacecraft approaching the moon. A few months later, in #32, he does an entire page of collages showing "a strange shimmering ray... knifing through time and infinity." In #33, there's a partial collage cover and a full-page collage inside, showing the *FF*'s submarine ploughing through the ocean depths. By the end of 1964, he was growing comfortable with the technique.

By 1965, Kirby was beginning his "cosmic" period, and he used collages more often, and more memorably. In *FF* #37, there's a collage page showing the *FF*'s starship zooming toward the Skrull Galaxy. (The caption describes it as a "photo taken by remote control via a special camera.") In *FF* #39, there's a collage page depicting Reed Richards' "world-famous lab," filled with crackling electrical equipment. In *FF Annual* #3, for a collage showing Reed and the Watcher jumping between dimensions, Stan Lee added this caption: "Instead of taking the easy way out, with a simple exaggerated drawing, we now present the published *photo* of a journey through the *Fourth Dimension*, for the benefit of the science buffs among you—!"

Then begins the Galactus Trilogy, and Kirby goes into hyperdrive with new concepts and characters. In *FF* #48 (1966), he does a collage page showing Galactus' probes testing the Earth's composition. Soon comes the Negative Zone, and Kirby found that surreal space-time continuum a perfect vehicle for photo collages. In *FF* #51, we get perhaps the most memorable of all the Kirby collages—the full page showing Reed plunging through a landscape of concentric rings and planetoids as he enters the Negative Zone. The dialogue says it all: "I'm drifting into a world of limitless dimensions!! It's the *crossroads of infinity*—the junction to *everywhere!*" Kirby would do at least two double-page Negative Zone collages (in *FF* #62 and *FF Annual* #6).

Kirby's inker on *Fantastic Four* at the time, Joe Sinnott, wasn't all that impressed by the collage pages, even though they saved him time—on a collage page, Sinnott only had to ink the characters, not the backgrounds. "I thought they were a visual distraction from the story, and they didn't print very well, either," Sinnott said in *TJKC* #38. "I always felt they'd have looked better if Jack had just drawn it."

Could he have just drawn the stuff in pencil? Sure. But it wouldn't have had the same psychedelic punch—using material



JACK KIRBY INTERVIEW

(below) Courtesy of Heritage Auctions, here's a 1960s wash drawing of Captain America. We're sure Jack did the pencils, but unsure if he also inked it and added tone.

(next page, top) A photo of Jack, age 21, taken at the 1939 World's Fair in New York. Note the bandage wrapped around his right hand; artist's cramp, or the result of a youthful brawl?

(next page, bottom) Fleisher's two big hits, Betty Boop and Koko the Clown.

Captain America TM & ©2007 Marvel Characters, Inc.

Conducted in Lucca, Italy in 1976

Submitted by Peter Hansen, and used with permission

Transcribed by Steven Tice

© 2007 Peter Hansen

(Jack Kirby was a guest of honor at the 1976 Lucca Comic Art Festival, and received the Yellow Kid Award while in attendance. This interview was conducted during that trip. A nice tidbit of previously unknown trivia comes out here: Kirby assisted Frank Robbins on the Scorchy Smith newspaper strip. If anyone has more information on this, please let us know.)

INTERVIEWER: Just a few facts to get started. When and where were you born?

JACK KIRBY: Well, I was born August 28, 1917, the Lower East Side of New York City.

INTERVIEWER: When do you first remember drawing? When you were a kid, you always drew?

KIRBY: Well, I drew randomly. I wasn't serious about it. I believe I was in the area of eleven years of age when I began to fool around with it.

INTERVIEWER: Were you drawing costumes at this time?

KIRBY: I was caricaturing my neighbors and perhaps just fooling

with the family. Never taking it seriously. But later on I became—well, I've always been attracted to the Sunday papers. I looked forward to the Sunday papers and maintained my interest in comics that way. But, of course, as a young boy, you don't make the association so easily. All you know is that you liked the Sunday papers and you liked to draw cartoons, and you just don't stop to analyze it.

INTERVIEWER: What were the strips you followed as a kid?

KIRBY: Well, I loved them, whatever strips they had. *Polly and Her Pals*, *Dumb Dara*, *Bringing Up Father*. Of course, *Blondie* came later. It was that type of stuff that they had going. *Gasoline Alley* and *Little Orphan Annie*, of course, were just great.

INTERVIEWER: When you were a boy I think they were mostly funny strips; they didn't have adventure strips.

KIRBY: Yes, they were. The first adventure strip I saw was *Dick Tracy*.

INTERVIEWER: Which was 1930.

KIRBY: Yes. Around that time.

INTERVIEWER: Did this attract you immediately, if at all?

KIRBY: It attracted me steadily, I should say, because I loved comics since my younger years, and of course the thing developed even more acutely when I was a teenager. Oh, I had no notions of

becoming an artist. It suddenly came to me that I could, because I saw this ad in a pulp magazine from a school of cartooning. And it was then that the notion popped into my head, well, maybe if I take this course I can learn how to draw and all that. And I fought my old man for the dough; of course, I couldn't get it. *[laughter]*

INTERVIEWER: You were at school then?

KIRBY: Yes, I was at school. But I did manage to get money enough for, oh, one or two lessons, I'd say, and that was enough to whet my appetite for drawing. After that, even though I couldn't get any more lessons, I did it on my own. They had the fundamentals of drawing, and starting from those particular fundamentals, I went out to do my own.

INTERVIEWER: Did you get art training at school?

KIRBY: No, none at all. The art training that I did get, I got from the newspapers. And I believe it's that way with most of the comic strip artists, one man becomes a school for the next man. You take a few elements from one man's style and you inject it into your own. And of course I used to cannibalize *[Milton] Caniff* and take apart *[Alex] Raymond*, people like that. And *[Hal] Foster*, of course, had the heroic impact of his strip. I liked that, and I used that in my drawings.

INTERVIEWER: Were you getting anything published at school in the school magazine?

KIRBY: Yes, in the school newspaper, I'd do illustrations for that. I belonged to a boy's club, and I was the editor-in-chief of that paper. Of course, it sounds rather pompous in a sense, but you boil it down to a teenage paper, and you can put it in its proper perspective. But I took it seriously, and as far as I was concerned, I was doing an important job. And for me it was a fairly good job.

INTERVIEWER: So what was your first job when you left school?

KIRBY: My first job was animating as an in-between, in-betweening the action at the Max Fleischer studios.



INTERVIEWER: How did you get that job? Did you apply for it?
KIRBY: Yes, I applied for it. I just got my nerve up and went up and applied.

INTERVIEWER: Were they somewhere near you?
KIRBY: Yes, the studios were in New York. I forget what street they were on. I think they were in the '40s and '50s, I forget the exact address.

INTERVIEWER: You were what, sixteen years old?
KIRBY: Oh no, I was about seventeen, eighteen, around there. And I got the job.

INTERVIEWER: Did you see a job advertised, or did you think there might be a job there?
KIRBY: You know, I forget the circumstances. No, somehow I heard about it myself. I found out on my own and I went up and got it.

INTERVIEWER: Were you working under any specific animator?
KIRBY: Yes, I worked on *Popeye* and *Betty Boop* and...

INTERVIEWER: I mean were you working under, alongside, rather, any—?
KIRBY: I was working alongside about three hundred other people. There was about three long rows of desks or tables in which you had lights underneath and you can put these cels—.

INTERVIEWER: Light boxes.
KIRBY: Oh, yeah, light boxes. And it looked like a factory to me. It looked like my old man's factory. And I think that's what turned me off about animating at that time. Somehow there must have been a kind of an individual streak, or... I like individualism.

INTERVIEWER: Were you a bit resistant to having to draw the other people's characters, anyway?
KIRBY: Yes, I was. I think I'm instinctively so. During my career, I've been offered jobs as assistant to some pretty good artists. In fact, I did assist Frank Robbins for a while, doing *Scorchy Smith*, in which I wrote and drew several sequences. Of course, I took that job not because I—I knew I could do it. There wasn't anything like that involved. It's just, I loved the stereo at his apartment, and the fact that he lived the kind of life that I thought I'd like to live when I became his age. *[laughs]* Or when I dared. *[laughs]* So it was a lot of fun for me, and of course I liked doing *Scorchy Smith*.

INTERVIEWER: But we've jumped a bit. How long were you in animation?
KIRBY: I was in animation for about a year, I'd say. Maybe less. Not too long.



INTERVIEWER: This was when they were turning out a lot of shorts?
KIRBY: Yes, they were turning out a lot of shorts, and bits of pieces from other productions. Then there was a strike. There were difficulties all along the way on the administrative level, and of course that seeped down to the working level, and they decided to move the entire studio to Florida. And, of course, that—.

INTERVIEWER: Is that why you quit?
KIRBY: Yes, that's why I quit. I couldn't go to Florida, and I didn't want to leave my parents, and those are just family circumstances.

INTERVIEWER: Yes. *[Interviewer and unidentified other participant overlap, asking what the Fleischer studio would've been producing when the strike hit.]*
KIRBY: Yeah, around *Gulliver*. And I think they had a big strike in New York at that time. '36, maybe.

INTERVIEWER: No, actually, it was after *Snow White* came out, because that gave him the idea to do a feature cartoon. About '37.
KIRBY: Yeah, '36 and '37, that area.

INTERVIEWER: But up till then, did you see yourself in a career as an animator? Was it this decision that they went to Florida that ended your career as an animator?
KIRBY: No, no. Working at those long rows of tables turned me off. I didn't like anyplace that looked like a factory. To be frank, I didn't like anyplace I'd work where my old man would work.

INTERVIEWER: What was he, actually?
KIRBY: He worked in the garment industry, and they did piecework. And I never put my old man down or anything like that, it's just that I—.

[brief interruption to get more drinks]

INTERVIEWER: Do you remember any particular sequences you worked on in animation at all, or was it just all...?
KIRBY: Oh, no, I'd have liked to be in a position of taking credit for an entire sequence, which I couldn't, see. I would do in-between action on small segments. Each in-betweener had a very small segment. They col-



lected these segments, and you had a small sequence in the overall story.

INTERVIEWER: Did you like working more on *Popeye* than *Betty Boop*, for instance?
KIRBY: No, I loved them all. I loved all those characters. I just wasn't attracted by the method in which they were turned out.

INTERVIEWER: There were other studios around at that time. Did you try them?
KIRBY: Well, I just didn't like the general atmosphere, and I felt that I would rather turn out something myself, or take the entire responsibility for what I was doing. I didn't like the idea of working for people that I couldn't see, see? Or I couldn't talk to, or I couldn't get any advice from. So...

INTERVIEWER: Why couldn't you get advice from them?
KIRBY: Well, it was all so impersonal. And if you work in a large organization, that's impersonal.

INTERVIEWER: I guess you were probably never involved with the creative end?
KIRBY: Oh, of course not. They had animators. They had their animators do all the creating. And, of course, I was far from being a head animator. Seymour Kneitel I think was the head animator at that time. Of course, he was very well known, and quite a competent man.

INTERVIEWER: He married Fleischer's daughter.
KIRBY: Well, I don't know much about that, but I would say that he had never heard of me, and didn't think much of asking for my advice. *[laughs]* So it was that kind of thing. And I felt that, not that I was a cog in a wheel, which is a cliché. I felt that the general atmosphere was impersonal, and I'd been brought up among people where the gang would get together, and one guy would say, "Well, what are you doing tonight, Barney?" Right? And that was a thing that I lacked in the office.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever meet Max Fleischer?
KIRBY: Oh, I saw him walk past once. And it didn't excite me that much.
INTERVIEWER: I wonder what sort of man he was.

THE MACHINERIES OF ~~JOY~~

Jack

Introduced and compiled by Jerry Boyd

Growing up, if you were a decent enough artist to be able to imitate the King's squared-off fingers, blockish kneecaps, and superb panel composition, you could feel somewhat

justified in giving yourself a congratulatory pat on the back.

Coming up with unique, Kirby-style costuming was a greater challenge (in my humble opinion). And doing his type of machinery—functional, sleek, imposing, majestic, even organic at times—was the toughest.

The hi-tech devices of Jack's were awe-inspiring to behold, and here, three of the King's collaborators reminisce about three of the many creations that sprang from the master's fertile imagination.

on Reed, Ben, and Johnny with devices that were unforgettable—in fact, Kirby would proudly use the cosmic gun ship in his tribute book to his wife and his fans.

MICK GRAY

Artist/inker on the *COSMIC GUN SHIP OF ANNIHILUS*

"The Annihilus job was offered to me at the end of the project (the inked version of Kirby's *Heroes and Villains*). I only had a couple of pieces to choose from. If it would have been earlier in the project I would have picked something else I'm sure, but in the end I was *very* happy I got to ink this piece!

"No, I never read that issue (*FF Special* #5, 1968). I know I have it in reprinted form, though. The way Jack designed that ship was something special. The Kirbytech really intrigued me and I saw that I could add to his penciled version with the star-spackle, etc."

Summer, 1977—and filmgoers in the United States were stunned by George Lucas's *Star Wars*. The special effects showed that new vistas had opened up and its incredible success opened up the way for movies like *Star Trek*, *Superman*, *E.T.*, etc. That fall of '77, Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* was released, featuring a memorable sequence where motorists meet a space-ship along a lonely highway. Was Kirby inspired by that? Let's hear from another friend of his.

STEVE ROBERTSON

writer/friend of the Kirby family on
THE VISITOR ON HIGHWAY SIX

"Unfortunately, I don't recall anything specific Jack may have said about the "Visitor on Highway Six" art back in 1978. What I can do is share with you memories I have relating to Jack and his take on UFO-related subjects at that time.

"As an aside, after *Star Wars* had just come out, Mike Thibodeaux and I were really excited about this film, and on a visit to the Kirby's asked Jack how he liked it. He said, "It's great, and do you know why? Because it's good old-fashioned story-telling! Good guys versus bad guys!"

"I don't recall any conversations specifically about *Close Encounters*, but we frequently discussed UFOs and the possibility of human and extra-terrestrial interaction. Jack had a copy of Von Danniken's *Chariot of the Gods*, a book that presents different archaeological anomalies as evidence of aliens visiting the Earth in ancient times. Kirby was really enthusiastic about this viewpoint, and he seemed to think that this was a likely scenario. He felt that unsophisticated humans would interpret advanced alien technology as supernatural power, with the aliens themselves becoming gods or demons to them. You can see a lot of this viewpoint expressed in *The Eternals* comic series that Jack produced for Marvel from '76 to '78.

"Jack didn't think that alien visitation was strictly something that occurred in the past, either. He felt that it was quite likely that some of the UFO sightings of the present day were real glimpses of outer space vehicles. This idea really excited his imagination, and we get to enjoy the artwork that Jack produced under this inspiration!"



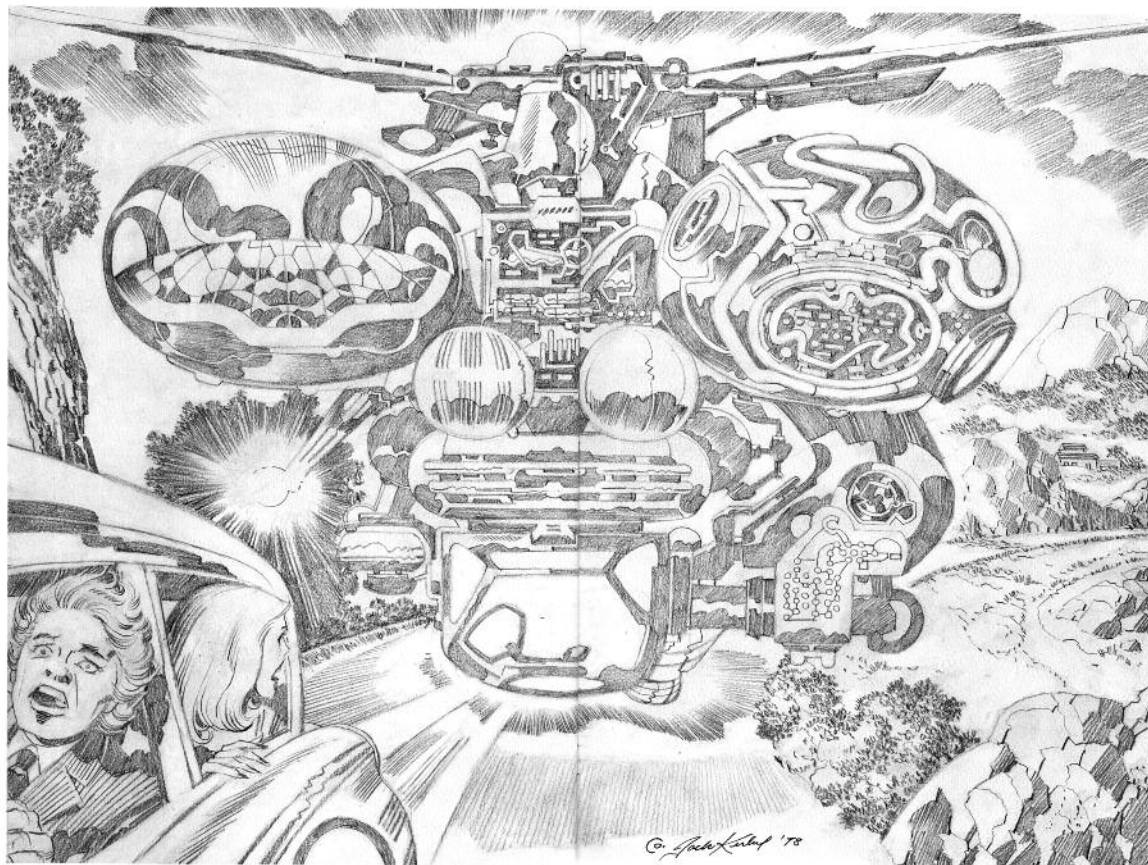
(above) Mick Gray's inks over Kirby's pencils.

(below) Kirby's "The Visitor On Highway Six", circa 1978, and (next page, top) Mick Gray's inks.

©2007 Jack Kirby Estate.

Spanning the inky expanses of the Negative Zone, Annihilus seemed to be just another of Stan and Jack's dictators from the great beyond, consumed with domination of others. But he was the greatest challenge to the three male members of the Fantastic Four, who were on a grim mission to secure the element that would save Susan Richards and her unborn child.

Annihilus, a villain Lee and Kirby would use again, would take



BIG HEAD, SMALL HEART

(below, left to right)
UFO the Lightning
Man from *Yellow
Claw* #3, General
Electric from
Sandman #1, The
Misfit from *Kamandi*
#9, Hatch-22 from
Black Panther #3, and
Hidden Harry from
*Jack Kirby: The
Unpublished Archives*
card set.

UFO, Hatch-22 TM & ©2007
Marvel Characters, Inc.
General Electric, Misfit TM &
©2007 DC Comics. Hidden Harry
TM & ©2007 Ruby-Spears.

A Light-Hearted Examination Of A Kirby Archetype
by Craig McNamara

Of all the recurring motifs in Kirby's body of work (the savage/civilized man dichotomy, the subversion of technology for mass subjugation, the secret societies and hidden races, etc.) perhaps the strangest is his fascination with oversized heads atop diminished bodies. This archetype surfaces in Kirby's art as early as 1940, and appears periodically thereafter in his stories for the rest of his career, including his post-comics animation concepts for Ruby-Spears.

On a very obvious level, the expanded heads most often denoted a greatly advanced and by implication, superior, intellect (and is a recurring motif in science-fiction and UFO lore as well). Along with this archetype, Kirby usually provided one of two basic body types to augment his desired characterization. Benign,

altruistic aliens and other beings had smooth, vertically elongated heads, androgynous features, slender frames and were of slightly less than average height.

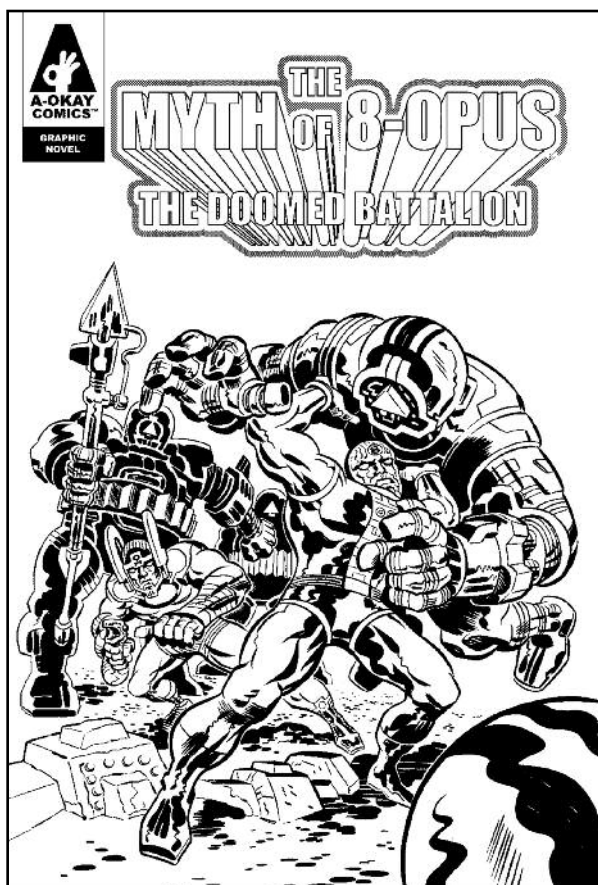
Shady and villainous characters, on the other hand, were generally more grotesque in appearance, with squat, asymmetrical heads, homely and disturbing features, and severely under-developed (and often useless) bodies, a very literal interpretation of an intellect that seems to have developed at the expense of the being's very humanity.

For Jack, these depictions were as iconic (and as intuitively understood by the reader) as his stylized representations of technology and the dot clusters that visualized radiation and other energy. Occasionally, Kirby would work against the paradigm for dramatic effect, but as the following examples show, he was remarkably consistent, no matter which medium, company or genre in which he was working. ★



Character	First Appearance	Co-creator(s)	Description	Origin	Representative Quote
Doctor Chuda	<i>Famous Funnies</i> #74 (Lightnin' and the Lone Rider) Sept. 1940	--	Professorial appearance (despite oversized cranium)	50,000-year old sole survivor of an ancient civilization.	"Chuda is no sentimentalist, but neither is he a villain."
Marto	<i>Blue Bolt</i> #6 Nov. 1940	Joe Simon	Mottled bulbous head atop squat robotic body with two metallic tentacles and wheels for mobility	Physicist whose experiments with cosmic rays caused his brain to evolve at the expense of this body	"With this change has come infinite knowledge, my dear. Allow me to put it at your disposal."
Uncle Hugo, the Head of the Family	<i>Black Magic</i> vol. 4, #6 May 1954	Joe Simon	Mottled, unkempt blockhead; no discernible body; tiny vestigial limbs	One of strange Fesker quintuplets who each possess 1/5 of the functions of a single body	"Yes, Francine, we are the identity you've heard called Uncle Hugo...I also possess a heart...with the capacity to love...but I suppose that means nothing to you now..." (Hugan Fesker)
UFO The Lightning Man	<i>Yellow Claw</i> #3 Feb. 1957	?	Lumpy melonhead, intense features, spindly body	Alien visitor from unnamed planet	"I know how vicious you Americans are! But you'll never get the chance to harm anyone!"
The Tyrans	<i>Showcase</i> #11 (Challengers of the Unknown) Dec. 1957	--	Striated, heavy-browed noggins with smaller lump at crest (housing an "auxiliary brain"); barrel chests with stick-like arms and legs	Inhabitants of the star sharing their name	"I find your species most interesting...I shall continue to do my best to preserve a few for study."
Alien Boy	<i>Challengers of the Unknown</i> #1 Apr. 1958	--	Smooth, pea-shaped noggin, opaque red eyes; giant, skinny body	Visitor from unknown planet	"It may shock you, gentlemen, but we were brought here for one purpose...to be kept as pets by that child!" (Ace Morgan)
Humans from 3000 A.D.	<i>Adventure Comics</i> #251 (Green Arrow) August 1958	--	Slightly enlarged brain pans; slender, delicate bodies	Apparent result of 1000 more years of evolution	"We of the future are now celebrating "Justice Week" in honor of history's greatest crime-fighters."
The Stone Sentinels of Giant Island	<i>House of Mystery</i> #85 April 1959	?	Massive elongated stone heads atop powerful bodies	Alien conquerors long buried up to their necks on Easter Island	--
The Things On Easter Island	<i>Tales to Astonish</i> #5 Sept. 1959	Stan Lee	Massive elongated stone heads atop powerful bodies	More alien conquerors long buried up to their necks on Easter Island	"The earthling has seen and heard...we must silence him before he warns the rest of the planet."
Thorr, The Unbelievable	<i>Tales to Astonish</i> #16 Feb. 1961	Stan Lee	Massive elongated stone head atop giant-sized body	Still more alien conquerors (actually robots) long buried up to their necks on Easter Island	"He waited a million years to destroy mankind!" (caption)
The Stone Giants of Easter Island	<i>Tales of Suspense</i> #28 Apr. 1962	Stan Lee	Massive elongated stone heads atop powerful bodies	Alien travelers long marooned on Easter Island and buried up to their necks	--
The Gargoyle	<i>Incredible Hulk</i> May 1962	Stan Lee	Swelled cranium, troll-like, misshapen features, dwarfish body	Russian scientist deformed by radiation from work on Russian "secret bomb tests."	"It's the most horrible thing in the world to be a freak...a gargoyle! Like me!"
Stone Men from Saturn	<i>Journey Into Mystery</i> #83 (Thor) Aug. 1962	Stan Lee Larry Leiber	Massive elongated stone heads atop powerful bodies	Native race of Saturn	"Without the slightest hesitation, I jump...for I know that nothing on this puny earth...can harm me!"

THE MYTH OF TOM SCIOLI



(these pages) Scenes from *The Myth of 8-Opus*. If you think these are cool, check out Tom's current work on *Gødland* from Image Comics!

The Myth of 8-Opus TM & ©2007 Tom Scioli.

by Johnny Nine

(Tom Scioli (pronounced Shee-ölee) won a Xeric Grant in 1999 for his Kirby-esque comic book series *The Myth of 8-Opus*." *Rave* reviews followed, including one from TJKC's own "Kirby As A Genre" column. *8-Opus*, to use Tom's own words, is "a space-faring demigod," a "son to Urdu, the living mother world," whose enemies "seek the destruction of all that is beautiful in the universe."

In July, 2003, his A-Okay Comics imprint released a new volume in the ongoing *8-Opus* epic, a 102-page graphic novel entitled "The Doomed Battalion." Packed full of super-science, deadly battles and cosmic concepts, the book shows Tom's art style evolving to new heights, while maintaining a love and respect for Kirby that is evident on every page. While it follows the events of the series, "The Doomed Battalion" can also be read as a stand-alone *8-Opus* story. As a

hardcore Kirby fan and a true believer in the timeless power of the King's work, Tom delivers bombastic thrills not often found this side of *New Gods*, *Eternals* and the *Lee/Kirby Thor*. TJKC spoke with Tom about the role Kirby plays in his life and work.)

THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR: When did you first discover Kirby's comics?

TOM SCIOLI: Growing up in the '80s, the comics landscape was a pretty dreary place. The best comics I had were reprints, although I didn't know at the time that they were reprints. The one bright spot in my comic collection was an old beat-up copy of the treasury-sized *Thor* comic with the classic Mangog story arc. Now this was a comic to feed a kid's imagination. I loved the idea of these pagan gods, who had all this advanced technology,

but related to it as though it were ancient. It was futuristic, but had a patina of age to it. Ego, the Living Planet made a brief appearance. It had all these cool ideas just packed in there. At the time I didn't think of them as "Kirby" comics. I didn't have a very clear idea of how comics were made. I didn't read the credits too closely or notice the artist's name. I thought of them as Marvel comics—if anything, maybe Stan Lee comics. That was a name I'd recognized as the narrator from the *Hulk* and *Spider-Man* cartoons that were on TV then.

Like a lot of people, I gave up comics by high school. I became a much bigger fan of comics when I was in college than when I was a child. At that point, I finally found out who Kirby really was. I was checking out the local comics shop just off of campus, Phantom of the Attic, here in Pittsburgh. I saw *The Art of Jack Kirby* book and some issues of the *Kirby Collector*. I saw the *New Gods* in there. A light went off, oh *this* is the guy. Not only did he draw Darkseid, but there is an entire universe that Darkseid's a part of. I saw that this "Jack Kirby" was the same guy who drew a lot of the stuff in *Thundarr the Barbarian*. It all just clicked in that moment. This Kirby is *the* guy. I hunted down what issues of the *New Gods* I could find and could afford. Each piece of the story blew my mind. From *New Gods* I found out about *Mister Miracle*, then the *Forever People*. I loved the whole story as I read it bit by bit and out of sequence. This is the way you're supposed to encounter comics, looking at the little pieces of this giant puzzle.

For comics fans older than me, Kirby is somebody they might take for granted, maybe think of as old-fashioned. For me Kirby was a breath of fresh air.

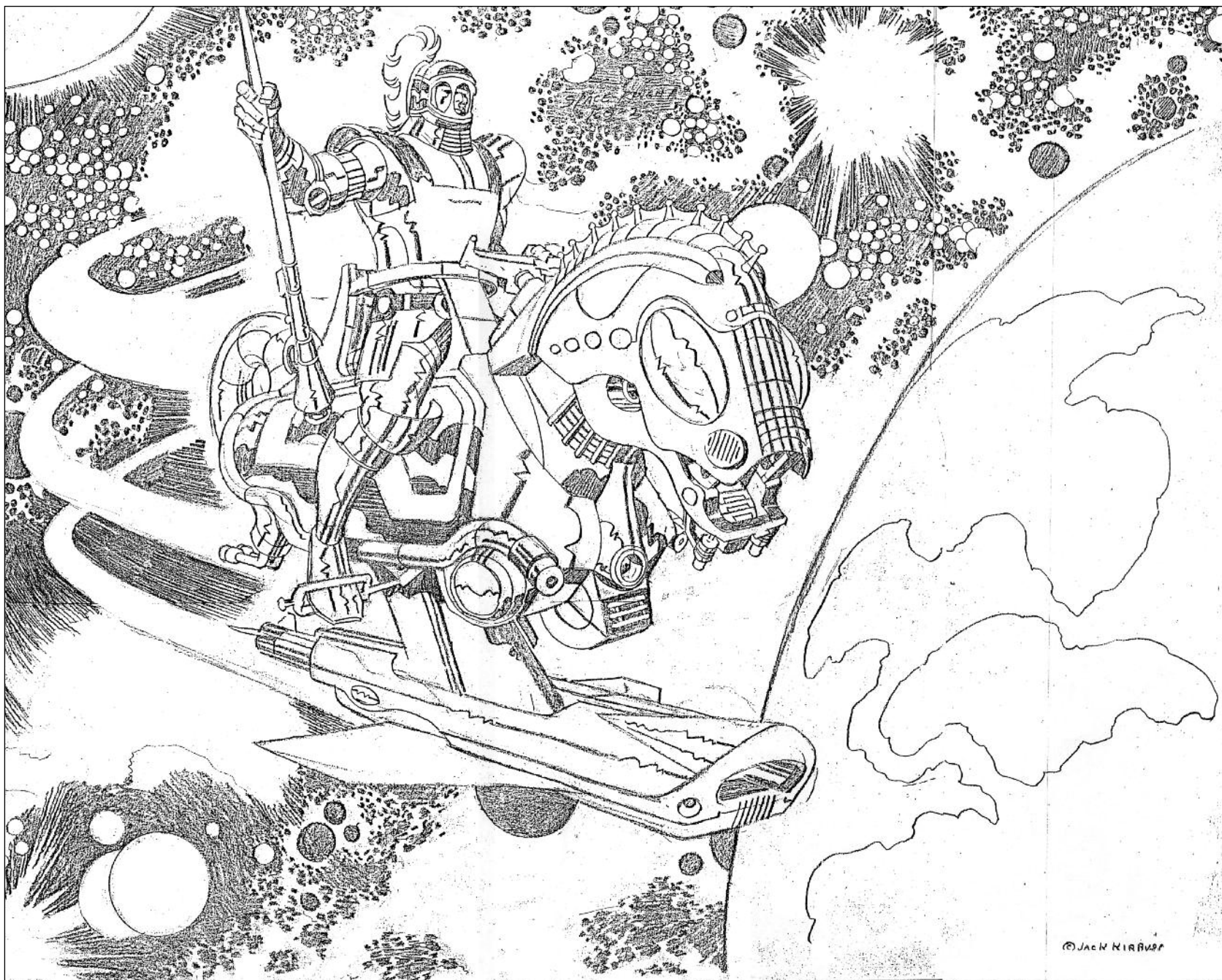
TJJC: You've never tried to deny your massive Kirby influence—your work reads like a celebration of that influence. How do you see your work in relation to Kirby's (homage, inspiration, tribute, etc.)?

SCIOLI: I use the Kirby similarity as a starting point for my own stories. Of course this puts me at an instant disadvantage. My stuff is always going to remind you of Kirby, and I'm inevitably going to suffer in comparison. I've been told by editors that the "Kirby thing" is a dead-end, but it's what I love. Your work is inevitably going to show signs of its influences. Why be influenced by anyone but the best? For me the appeal of Kirby's stuff was always so strong. I assumed everyone else felt the same way

about him that I do. I'm a fan of the original *Star Wars* movies. Think of all the money and all the people that went into making those movies. With Kirby, you have a guy who sat down at his desk, and made *Star Wars* every day of his life.

I guess I just look at what I'm doing as an apprenticeship. I studied the work of the master, learned from it, and now I try to continue what he started, building on it as best as I can. You just can't be a carbon copy. You'll inevitably bring a great deal of yourself to it. The alternative would be to ignore all I've learned from Kirby. I think Jack Kirby opened up a new doorway, showed the next step in the evolution of comics. For me to ignore these lessons would be a step backward. I can't do it any other way. There are enough people doing comics in a straight, classical, representational way. Once you've seen Kirby, everything else looks flat and stiff. I appreciate all kinds of comics, but for my own work, this is the way I've got to try to do it. For my money, if I'm going to do a swashbuckling cosmic adventure into the outer reaches of the imagination, I'm going to do it the Kirby way.





©2007 Jack Kirby Estate

For a guy who couldn't change a flat tire during his WWII basic training as a mechanic, Kirby sure knew how to draw convincing technology, as evidenced here:

(this page) **Space Charioteer** (early 1980s):

The horse head is all we get to tell us this is a techno-steed of some kind. But apart from that, there is nothing equine about the design, yet it works. It's all nicely composed and balanced shapes and decoration, using Kirby's trademark slashes, squiggles, shine lines and piping.

(page 37) **New Gods #10, page 10 (Aug. 1972):**

Kirby was a master of when to use the 'less is more' approach. The Boom Tube was always nothing more than a few circles depicting the end of the metallic tunnel—with white areas and flash lines left to represent blinding light and obscured vision. Yet how evocative it is.

(page 38) **Forever People #6, page 3 (Dec. 1971):**

Kirby was clearly a great observer. Note the Super Cycle's wheel at the left and the guard over the top. What is between the two? Enough shapes and shadows to suggest the mechanics that such a wheel would require to make it look convincing.

(page 39) **Mister Miracle #5, page 21 (Nov. 1971):**

Is Mr Miracle entombed in rock? Concrete? Metal? If not for the earlier caption, we would not know it was titanium. But it looks hard!!! So Kirby's purpose was fulfilled!

(page 40) **Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen #145, page 11 (Jan. 1972):**

Look closely—most of this cityscape (Brigadoom, the evil "Project") consists of simple cubes, cylinders and pyramids. But with decorative designs and deep shadows cutting across the forms, Kirby gives the hint of depth, breaking up the simple shapes and suggesting other shadow casting objects, which, in reality, often aren't even there. And because it's an evil city, there are lots of those blacks!

(page 41) **First Issue Special #5, page 5 (Aug. 1975):**

Note how Kirby often put elements of a face on things that aren't alive, to give them emotional quality. Here, he gives the unloving 'Electric Head' eyes to give the object menace. Gas erupting from its pipes hint at some technological function we can only guess at.

(page 42) **Kamandi #20, page 18 (Aug. 1974):**

In panel 5 we see a circle on the Chicagoland computer. But Kirby breaks it into other shapes that hint it's more than a circle. What is it? Who knows? Not even Kirby. But it looks anything but boring! Panel 6 has a flat wall, but Kirby energizes it and breaks the monotony of the flatness by running a wave of shadow along it.

(page 43) **OMAC #1, page 6 (Sept. 1974):**

Computer banks such as in this panel were a Kirby specialty, as seen on the *Kamandi* page. When you think about it, Kirby technology often seemed to be based more on what was hidden, under the casing, than what would be seen. Twisted wiring and circuits are much more descriptive and dynamic in storytelling than a bland cover plate.

(page 44) **Captain America #193, page 18 (Jan. 1976):**

How does one depict a bomb that is 'mad'? Kirby's way was usually to humanize it somehow. A face, like the Electric Head? Based on his record, I would assume Kirby considered that. But he decides instead to give the bomb a brain, suggesting it is a thinking menace. Subtlety is not something that Kirby usually aimed for in cases like this.

(page 45) **2001: A Space Odyssey #4, cover (March 1977):**

Kirby's slashes and squiggles give this space suit not of his design his typical strong, metallic look. But look at the ship behind the spaceman. Just as Kirby was the best at drawing the Hulk's torn pants, so he is the best at showing shredded metal. He seemed to find just the right moment of when the metal buckles and explodes from the pressure against it.

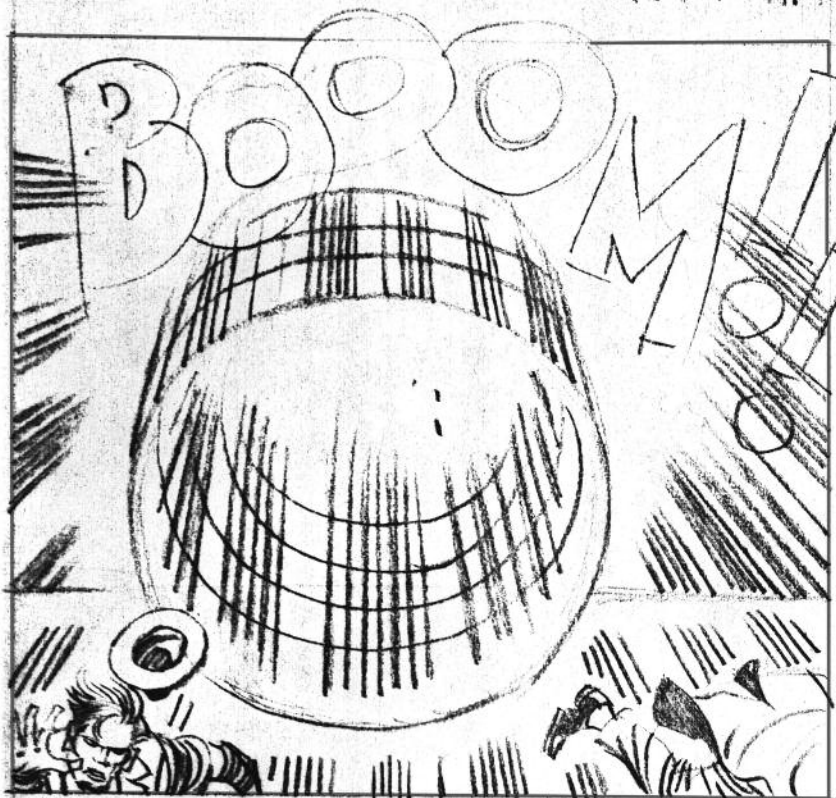
(page 46) **Black Panther #1, page 1 (Jan. 1977):**

How would one show a small carved frog is a thing of power? Kirby calls on his ability to fill it with bursts of energy. But is this mystical energy? Or is it meant to have a 'scientific' origin? (Because Kirby represented both types with the same sort of drawing techniques). The background 'computer bank' gives us Kirby's clue.

(page 47) **Super Powers toy designs (1983):**

As seen here on the cockpit of Mantis' craft, Kirby often depicted a pattern engraved onto screens, windows and glass to give the hint of technology woven into them. Where did he get this idea? I don't know (maybe from the heating elements in some car rear windows?) but it sure is effective!

SOMEWHERE, IN THE CITY, LIFE AT ALL LEVELS PROCEEDS IN ITS NORMAL COURSE... EXCEPT, IN ONE CERTAIN AREA...

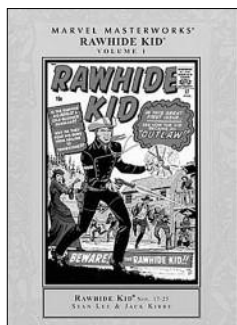


KIRBY

OBSCURA



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



In many ways, it's a shame that the Kirby/Ditko/Lee era of giant monsters that filled so many Marvel pre-hero titles is not taken too seriously these days. In some ways, of course, Stan Lee himself is to blame: His use of the increasingly ludicrous names that he gave to his world-trashing monsters (visualized by Kirby) showed that an element of self-parody was already built in. And as the monster era wore on, the dead hand of repetition quickly crept in. But many Kirby fans have a great affection for this period—in its early flush of enthusiasm, at least. In fact, looking at all the Lee and Kirby monster book collaborations today, it's clear that these can best be enjoyed mainly for the artist's exuberant visual imagination. Frankly, Lee's dialogue in these tales is largely clichéd and portentous, with the same plots reused *ad infinitum*—and *ad nauseam*. Matters were not helped by the mocking attitude that he and Kirby subsequently adopted in interviews to this material—and, of course, the fact that the glorious super-hero period that was to revolutionize the comics industry was just around the corner helped perpetuate the legend that the city-stomping adventures of Gagoom, Zontarr and Co., was undistinguished stuff, past its sell-by date and waiting to be swept away (a similar mythology exists today about the 1950s Batman period immediately prior to the Julius Schwartz/Carmine Infantino revamp of the character—readers are simply not obliged to take any of the Batman SF period seriously—when, in fact, there are many gems scattered throughout this era).

A glance at one of the earlier monster books, *Journey into Mystery* #57 (1959) shows how unwise it is to summarily dismiss this period. A striking Kirby cover has a brown, robotlike monster striding aggressively out of a spaceship—but “Orogo, The Thing from Beyond” (the aggressive alien) never looks as good in the comic



Journey into Mystery, Rawhide Kid TM & ©2007 Marvel Characters, Inc.

Looking for inexpensive reprints of the stories featured this issue? *Journey Into Mystery* #57 and #58 (March and May 1960, respectively) are reprinted in *Marvel Masterworks* volumes, as are the *Rawhide Kid* stories discussed here.



as he does on the cover, as this tale is in fact drawn by another Marvel workhorse, Don Heck, who would probably have been the first to admit that he wasn't in Jack Kirby's league. But there is something of a mystery here, and true Kirbyites will spot that the splash panel is actually penciled by the Master: the suit design of the robotic alien, its legs-akimbo stance (seen from behind, taking up almost 80% of the whole panel, with terrified humans visible through its legs)—and even the design of the skyscrapers in the distance, shriek out: “Drawn by Jack Kirby!” And if further proof were needed, look at the rendering of Orogo himself in the story: a more pedestrian, humanoid figure that is very little like either of Jack Kirby's renditions of the character on the cover or splash panel.



The tale itself is predictable but fun, as is the highly unlikely Steve Ditko piece that follows, “The Earth Crawlers,” in which giant out-of-control plants menace the planet. But after a disposable Paul Reinman tale about a perambulating steam shovel (“The Metal Monster”), we come to the grand finale of the issue, and here we are in prime JK territory. *Journey into Mystery* was one of the earliest Marvel comics to be available in the UK (there is some dispute whether issue #57 or #58 was the first US issue to be imported directly, after the black-and-white UK reprints were supplanted), and I can still remember the pleasure that the splash panel of “The Martian Who Stole My Body” produced: Kirby's giant orange-skinned alien with its elaborate front-laced costume (and facial tendrils that seemed akin to some of the more exotic members of the insect kingdom) was unlike anything we'd seen before (even from Kirby himself) and its subsequent reappearances are all subtly different from this full-page debut. To be truthful, the tale itself is distinctly unexceptional (although Stan Lee was to bring back the body-stealing Martian in the very next issue), but The King's visuals made sure that we more than got our money's worth.

The succeeding issue, *JIM* #58, cover-featured “I Found Rro! The Monster from the Bottomless Pit!”, with a curiously clunky monster erupting from the ground and manhandling a train, but the issue (despite Steve Ditko doing duty as cover artist) is of particular interest to Kirby fans, as there's a plethora of Kirby—with one truly exuberant piece, one period tale (a “twist” ending tale concerning Salem witches) and—as a bonus—the King even supplying a splash panel for another (lesser) artist's work. As mentioned above,

I THINK, THEREFORE...

*Art restoration
and text by
Christopher
Fama*

In 1957 found Jack Kirby working for several publishers. He had recently finished *Yellow Claw* for Atlas Comics, and had returned to *Young Romance* and *Young Love* after a few years' hiatus. This story from *Alarming Tales* #2 (Nov. 1957) was published by Harvey Comics, who hired Joe Simon to create and edit a series of short-lived adventure titles.

Jack's style had changed quite a bit by the late '50s. It almost seems someone suggested Kirby rein in his flair for the dynamic in favor of a more staid approach—and he listened. Also noticeably absent are inks by Joe Simon, who added a very distinctive fleshy touch to Jack's pencils.

Story and characters TM &
©2007 Joe Simon and the Jack
Kirby Estate.



TRIBUTE

2006 KIRBY TRIBUTE PANEL

(below) Jack's pencils from page 8 of *2001: A Space Odyssey* #10 (Sept. 1977), the last issue of the series, before Machine Man was spun off into his own book.

All characters TM & ©2007 Marvel Characters, Inc.

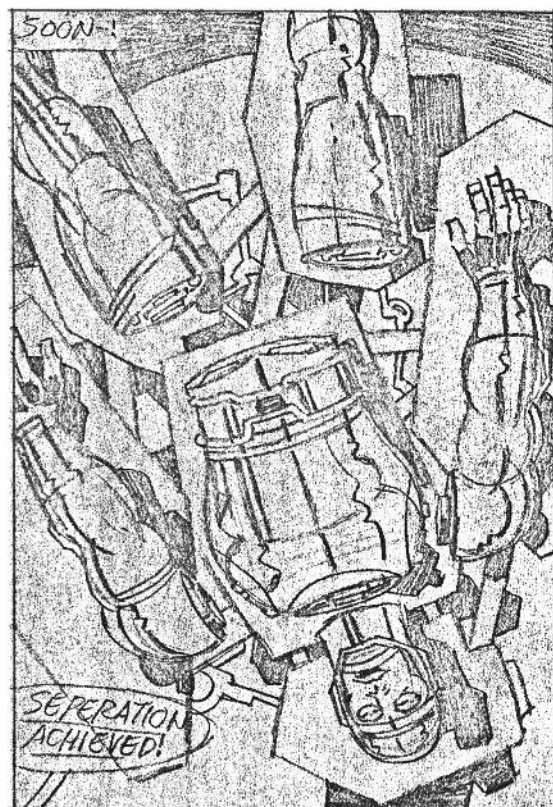
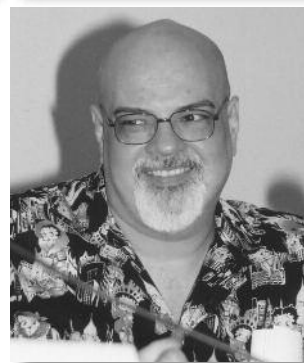
Moderated by Mark Evanier (top), and featuring (shown here, clockwise) Neal Adams, George Pérez, John Romita, Mike Royer, and Kirby lawyer Paul Levine. Transcribed by Steven Tice. Photos by Chris Ng.

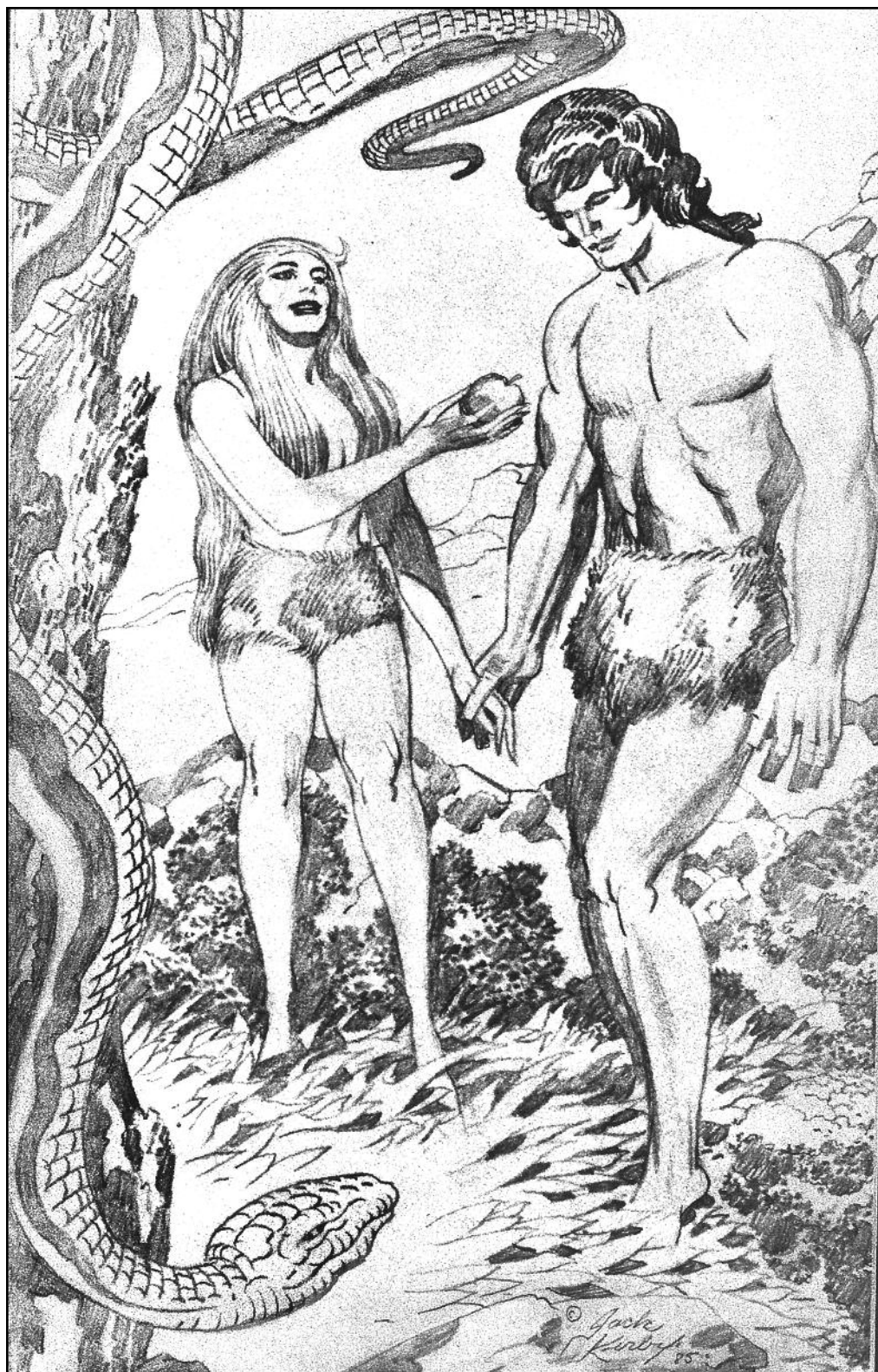
MARK EVANIER: As we wait for our other panelists to arrive, I think I'm going to get started here, because we've got a lot to go through. This is the annual Jack Kirby Tribute Panel. That means I'm Mark Evanier. [applause] I do these at any convention that will let me do these as often as I can, because at any convention we spend a certain amount of time talking about Jack. And the other day I was talking to Steve Rude, and we were just talking about how often—it was like dueling. "How often do you talk about Jack or how often do you think about Jack?" "Well, I think about him six or seven times a day." "Well, I think about him twelve times a day." "I think about him fourteen times a day." And it's really true. And it isn't just a matter of comics. I've said this before, but it's a thought that bears repeating. I was fortunate enough to know Jack. I met him in July of '69. I knew him the rest of his life. I worked for him for a time. We socialized. We had an era where we didn't speak, we had a little spat, but then we got back together.

And I learned an awful lot about Jack, not just about comics. I learned about life, I learned about the way you treat people, the way you relate to other people. There's a number of people here who have had the fortune to meet Jack, and I'm sure they would all agree that Jack had this wonderful way of treating people as equals. I mean, there was nobody more revered at this convention, and yet if you went up to Jack and said, "Hello, Jack"... first of all, if you said, "Hello, Mr. Kirby," he would make you call him Jack. And he would talk to you and no matter how tired he was, he would stand, because if you were standing, he felt he should be standing. He would talk to you as an equal and would answer your questions. And if you asked him the stupidest question in the world, and many people did, he would make up an answer for you because you deserved an answer. If you cared enough to ask him, "What's Captain America's shield made out of," even though Jack had never thought of this before, he would make up an answer for you. Because you deserved that.

VOICE: And he could!

EVANIER: He could do that. And I never—there were people I thought that Jack treated really well that didn't deserve it. If you'd taken him your artwork, no matter how rotten you were, he gave you encouragement. He didn't do sketches for people. He didn't give them art lessons. He wouldn't sit there and say how many heads high to make the anatomy, but he would give you some philosophical concept, some way of treating the artwork when somebody would approach your work, and some encouragement to try and do the best possible work you could. And this convention is filled with people, not just comic book artists, but people whose work—who are we waiting on, here?





(above) A 1985 fan commission of the Biblical story of Adam and Eve.

(next page) George Pérez got to experience what it was like to be inked by Joe Sinnott on this 1978 Spider-Woman illo.

Spider-Woman TM & ©2007 Marvel Characters, Inc.
Adam & Eve art ©2007 Jack Kirby Estate.

NEAL ADAMS: Neal.

EVANIER: Oh, Neal! There he is, okay. Anyway, so in these panels we talk about Jack. The way we do this panel is in three acts. In Act One, we're going to talk a little bit about upcoming Kirby-related projects with a few people in the audience who are involved in them and we'll let people talk about what's coming up about Jack Kirby. Act Two, I'm going to talk to Mike, John, Neal, and, when George gets here, George, about the influence that Jack had on the industry and on their work. Act Three, held over from last year, we have at the far end the gentleman who is one of the many people who aided Jack over the years and helped him a lot as one of his attorneys. This is Mr. Paul Levine, ladies and gentleman. [applause] Some of you have seen this before, but we're going to give you an expanded version of the story of the time Jack got into a war with Johnny Carson. Paul represented Jack in that in a legal action, which we'll talk about. I'll show you this video. And we also have a couple other little videos here.

So let me introduce to you the rest of the dais at this moment. Starting over on the far right, not counting Paul, is a gentleman who had probably more influence on the comic book industry in the late '60s and '70s than anyone who ever picked up a pencil in this field; Mr. Neal Adams, ladies and gentlemen. [applause] Most of Neal's influence was at DC. Over at Marvel, the influence was coming from their lead artist and art director, Mr. John Romita, ladies and gentlemen. [applause] And then

Kirby's work looked so good for many years, and that it came out on time constantly, due to the efforts and skills of a man who did an incredible job, Mr. Mike Royer. [applause]

Let me introduce to you a couple of members of the Kirby family who are present. Let me introduce you to Lisa Kirby, who's standing in the front row. Take a bow, Lisa. [applause] Let me introduce you to an artist who is sneaking up here onto the dais, a gentleman who over the years did a number of the strips that Jack did and did them really well, Mr. George Pérez. [applause] Let me ask the gentleman to take a bow who is responsible for the fine publication *The Jack Kirby Collector*, Mr. John Morrow. [applause] The only publisher in the world that gets all the attention. All right. Is Ray Wyman here?

VOICE: There he is.

EVANIER: Most of you have a fine book called *The Art of Jack Kirby*. Mr. Ray Wyman is back there. [applause] And I'll introduce other people as we go along. Is Nat Gertler ready? Yes. There's a couple of Kirby projects coming out that we want to mention to you. Let me introduce to you a friend of mine who's a writer and a publisher, Mr. Nat Gertler. Nat, do you want to stand up and talk about your book? [applause]

NAT GERTLER: Next year is the 25th anniversary of a project which isn't one of the biggest comic books in Kirby's career, but it had surprising significance in the comics industry at the time; a little book called *Destroyer Duck*. [laughter, applause] So we're going to be putting out a nice, portable collection of about a hundred pages of the material that Steve Gerber, Jack Kirby, and Alfredo Alcala did on that book. We've got Steve doing some introductory comments and the like, so this will be an excellent thing. And not quite sure what month, but it should be out before the convention next year.

EVANIER: Thank you. [applause] Lisa, would you like to talk about the new strip you're doing?

LISA KIRBY: Oh, I wasn't prepared to stand up. Okay.

EVANIER: Okay, come on up here and you can hold the mike.

LISA: Oh, no. [laughter]

EVANIER: Yes, you can talk to these people. They love you.

LISA: No, actually, I just want to thank everybody, because I've had so many people coming up and saying such nice things about my father, and it's just really heartfelt, and I really appreciate it. So give yourselves a big hand. [applause] But, you know, even after all these years, it's just always amazing to me that, year after year, this room fills up. And I speak for everyone in my family, we really appreciate it. And, you know, that everybody remembers him. And what I've done, and Mike Thibodeaux, who I think is here somewhere—he's hiding, I bet. A group of us found a concept of my father's after he passed, and we called it the *Galactic Bounty Hunters*, and it just came out under the Marvel Icon imprint. We developed it over the years, and it's a series that just came out. If you haven't seen it, go buy it and check it out. It's a concept my father originally started, and we kind of took it from there and developed it. We used as much of his artwork as we possibly could. And with a lot of talented people helping out, it looks like a really nice book, and I hope people enjoy it. And if you have a chance to take a look at it, please do. Thank you. [applause]

EVANIER: Please give a well-deserved round of applause to another Mike who did a fabulous job inking Jack, Mike Thibodeaux. [applause] As some of you know, when the *Fantastic Four* DVD came out, missing was a documentary that was produced about Jack and his work. I have not seen this yet. I have just been given a copy of it here, and I thought we'd run about three minutes of it just to show you what's in it. I think I'm in this, and if I am, I am eighty pounds heavier than I am now. [laughter, applause] All it takes is diet, exercise, and gastric bypass surgery. [laughter] I'm just going to play a few minutes of it and I'll stop it at some appropriate moment; it's too long to run here, but... could we have the lights down, please? [pause, laughter] I said lights down,

MIKE RICHARDSON SPEAKS



(above) Mike Richardson in a recent photo.

(this spread) Pencil versions of Kirby's interpretations of God, from the *Dark Horse Portfolio*.

©2007 Jack Kirby Estate.

A 2006 interview, conducted by Christopher Irving

(Mike Richardson is the President and publisher of Dark Horse Comics, the award-winning international publishing house he founded in 1986, which is currently celebrating its 20th anniversary. Mike is the President of Dark Horse Entertainment, for which he has produced numerous projects for film and television, including The Mask, Hellboy, The Mystery Men, and Barb Wire. Mike owns a successful pop culture retail chain, Things From Another World, stretching from Universal's City Walk in Los Angeles to his hometown in Milwaukie, Oregon. He has written numerous comics series, as well as Comics Between the Panels and Blast Off, two critically acclaimed books about pop culture. Our thanks go to Mike for taking time from his busy schedule to do this interview.)

TJKC: You received the Kirby Award in 2004 for the *Jack Kirby Portfolio*. I was wondering how that project came about?

MIKE RICHARDSON: Roz and I became good friends, particularly after Jack's death, and we were involved in a project together at that time. During the course of that project, I discovered that many people were taking out licenses for Jack's work and paying Roz with product, as opposed to green dollars.

TJKC: With funny money?

RICHARDSON: *(laughs)* Yeah, unspendable paper, we might say. On one visit, I noticed an amazing series of Jack's drawings in one of the hallways. Roz told me that these were amongst the favorite

also made a substantial offer involving the kind of paper she could spend. She liked that idea and we went forward. Basically, the whole project began with a casual conversation. I believe our portfolio remains the only time the artwork has ever been reproduced.

TJKC: When did you first meet Jack and Roz?

RICHARDSON: I started calling Jack and Roz immediately after I started Dark Horse in 1986. My goal was to get all of the writers and artists I'd admired in the comics industry to work for, or with, Dark Horse at some point. I would call and Roz usually answered. I kept calling and telling her that I'd be persistent and she'd say Jack was too busy to entertain any additional work. I'd send her books and try to convince her that we were a serious publisher, and that she shouldn't rule us out because we were new. The first piece of art we got Jack to do for us was the result of an annual scholarship we were doing with the Kubert School. We wanted to call it the Kirby Scholarship for Young Artists. We created an ad for the Kubert School, and Jack did a piece of artwork for us for the ad. I have that piece on my wall and I'm looking at it right now. That's the first piece he did for us, and for a number of years, the only contact I had was with Roz, and always by phone. I finally met Jack when he came to San Diego, maybe during that birthday party they had for him in the early 1990s. I was so amazed because I was someone he didn't really know, and he sat down and talked with me for maybe half an hour. Here was the greatest comics creator of all time, and he was so giving of his time.

TJKC: So you'd consider Jack a pretty humble person?

RICHARDSON: Oh, yes. He was just a regular guy. Again, I'm sure there are many people who could tell you better than I. Those times I had contact with him, he was very friendly and open and straightforward about his work. He knew that the fans respected him and his work, but Jack never put on any airs. Roz, who I knew much better, was as nice a person as I've ever met.

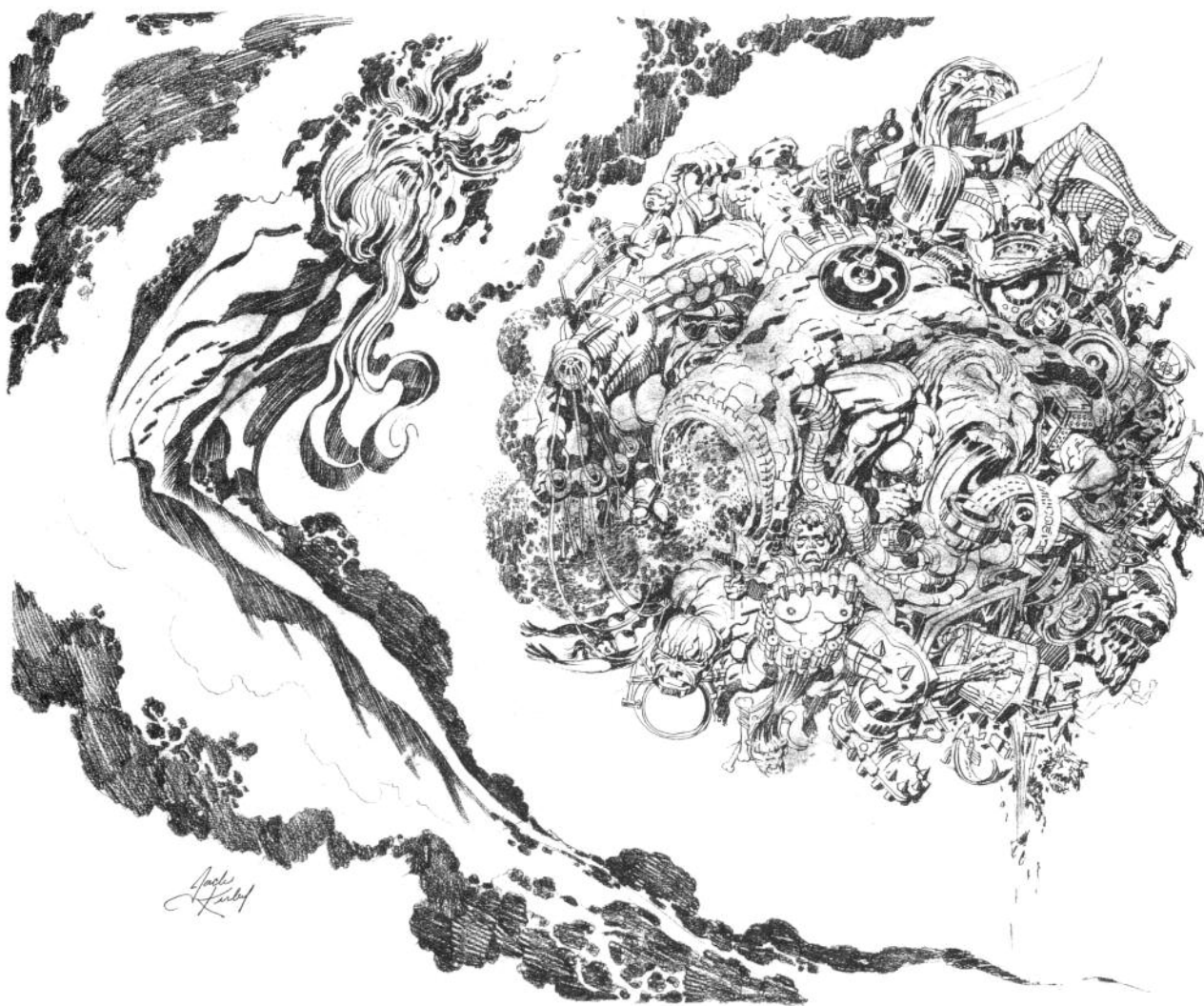
TJKC: In every interview I've read with people who knew both Jack and Roz, she was apparently the boss and took care of him.

RICHARDSON: I'm sure that's true. Again, I ended up knowing Roz much better than Jack. I got to know her well after Jack passed away. I'd get together with people such as Dave Stevens and we'd go pick her up and take her out to dinner. I got to know Tracy pretty well, and became friends. She had an entertainment project that she brought to us at one point.

TJKC: What do you feel the Kirby legacy is?

RICHARDSON: Clearly, Jack's influence goes beyond the comics industry. I don't know how you can express the influence

he had, and still has, on generations of comics artists. He invented part of the language that is comics. He was there at the industry's beginning and was involved for more than five decades in that particular medium. The interesting thing is that Jack was at Marvel during both of their most creative periods, during their beginnings in the '40s and again during the Marvel re-launch in the '60s. Throughout his career, he constantly created new characters. After Jack left Marvel and went to DC, he created what many fans regard as their favorite characters with The Fourth



things Jack had ever done. He had never allowed them to be reproduced. The artwork was not framed particularly well and I discussed with Roz the idea of reframing them. While we were talking, she said, "If you really had a good idea for these, I'm sure Jack wouldn't mind if you reproduced them in a quality format." I suggested the idea of featuring the art in a portfolio and, because we'd have the artwork in our possession while scanning the assorted pieces, we'd reframe them in UV sensitive glass. I

(below) Joe Sinnott inks Kirby machines (and androids) on this page from *Fantastic Four* #71 (Feb. 1968). Don't miss our biography of Joe (shown below), now shipping!

(next page) Inks by Terry Austin (top, done for a fan) and Dick Ayers (bottom, from *Tales to Astonish* #82).

All characters TM & ©2007 Marvel Characters, Inc.

Kirby's inkers speak to Douglas Toole

While it is easy to appreciate the dynamics of a Kirby-drawn figure or the choreography of a Kirby battle, it is also easy to take for granted the costumes, weapons, rockets and machinery that appeared as backgrounds or props in much of Kirby's artwork. Certainly, some Kirbytech stood out in splash pages—such as Galactus' armor, the death traps faced by Mister Miracle, the S.H.I.E.L.D. heli-carrier—but there was so much of it on so many pages that a casual reader could almost overlook all the detail that went into the technology on the page.

One group of people who did not overlook those details was Kirby's inkers. *The Jack Kirby Collector* contacted seven of them, and they were kind enough to share their memories and impressions of Kirby's technology. All interviews conducted by telephone were transcribed and reviewed and edited by the interviewees.

JOE SINNOTT

Interviewed by telephone on May 22, 2006

TJKC: Are you much of a science-fiction fan?

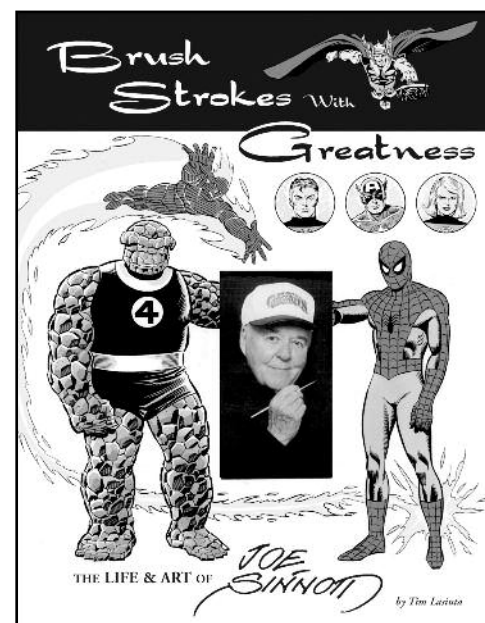
SINNOTT: No, not really. I was a big *Flash Gordon* fan, and that had science-fiction elements to it. But I don't think I ever saw a whole episode of *Star Trek*. I also didn't follow the space program much, although I drew comics about the life of Robert Goddard, the father of the rocket, and Alan Shepherd, the first American in space, for *Treasure Chest Comics*. I liked drawing those simple little five- and six-page science-fiction stories for books like *Adventures Into Weird Worlds* in the 1950s because I didn't have to use references. You could make up everything. Aside from the work I did, I rarely watched science-fiction programs or read science-fiction books.

TJKC: People probably remember your inking of Kirby on *Fantastic Four* the best, but what other work of his did you ink?

SINNOTT: I think the first work of Kirby's I inked was "I Was Trapped By Titano" (*Tales To Astonish* #10, July 1960) during the monster period. Stan Lee called me up and asked me if I could squeeze the Titano story in, so I inked it. Stan liked it, so he kept calling me and having me ink five- and six-page Kirby stories around my regular assignments. I did some Kirby westerns, some Kirby science-fiction stories and some early *Thor* appearances—just some odds and ends. One short story I liked very much was "Pildorr, The Plunderer From Outer Space" (*Strange Tales* #94, March 1962). Pildorr had a rocket ship and a bunch of cronies—a real bad guy. The story came out about the same time as *Fantastic Four* #1, and I thought Pildorr looked like a prototype of The Thing.

TJKC: How tight were Kirby's pencils?

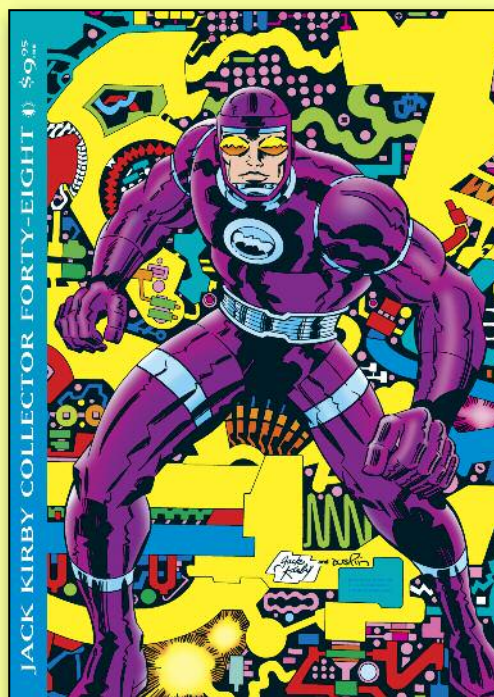
SINNOTT: His pencils were very tight. If Jack drew a button, he would put the four little holes in the middle of the button. His pencils were always that way. I inked *Fantastic Four* #5, and then worked on the book for about four years starting with #44, and by the end I was just so burned-out and beat that I called Stan and said I wanted to take a month or two off—I had not ever had a vacation. So Frank Giacoia, who was a great inker and who worked well on Kirby's stuff, took over for a couple of issues. Then I returned to the book and worked with Jack on the *Fantastic Four* until he left for DC. It was a good run. A lot of pages. I worked with a lot of people over the years. Sometimes you would get good penciled pages to finish, and sometimes not. But Kirby's work



PARTING SHOT

The flip-side of Jack's ad artwork for Sega's *Thunderground* video game, circa 1983. The final ad that incorporated this art can be seen in *TJKC* #15, but we're unsure if the head-on shot on page 1 was ever used. *Thunderground* TM & ©2007 Sega Enterprises, Ltd..

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



KIRBY COLLECTOR #48

KIRBYTECH ISSUE, spotlighting Jack's high-tech concepts, from Iron Man's armor and Machine Man, to the Negative Zone and beyond! Includes a rare **KIRBY** interview, **MARK EVANIER**'s column, two pencil art galleries, complete 1950s story, **TOM SCIOLI** interview, Kirby Tribute Panel (with **ADAMS**, **PÉREZ**, and **ROMITA**), and covers inked by **TERRY AUSTIN** and **TOM SCIOLI**!

(84-page tabloid magazine) **\$9.95**
(Digital Edition) **\$3.95**

http://twomorrows.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=98_57&products_id=519