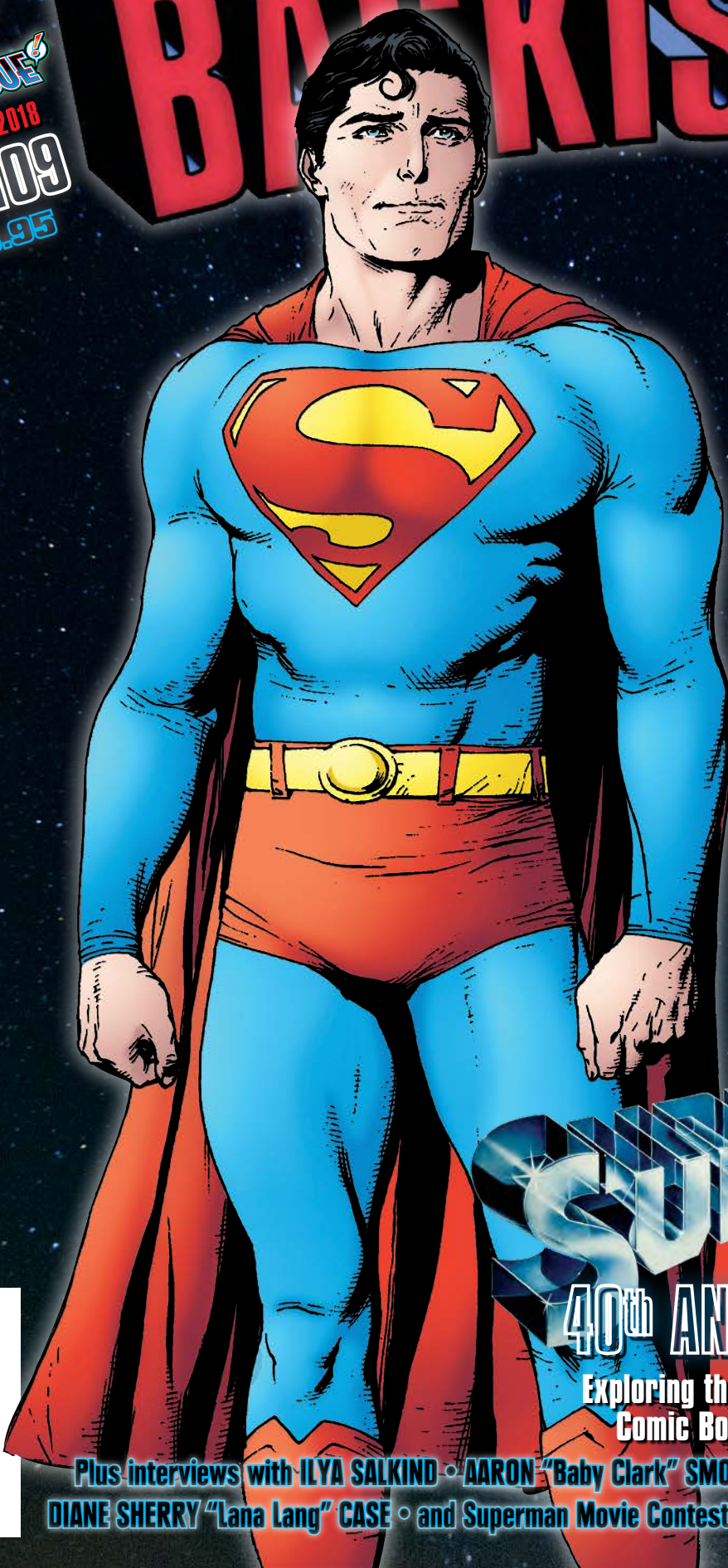


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NON SPEAKS!
JACK O'HALLORAN INTERVIEW



SUPERMAN NOVELS BY ELLIOT S. MAGGIN



CARY BATES' PLANS FOR SUPERMAN V



SUPERMAN THE MOVIE

40th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Exploring the Superman Movies' Effects on
Comic Books, Media, and Collectibles

Plus interviews with **ILYA SALKIND** • **AARON "Baby Clark" SMOLINSKI** • **JEFF "Young Clark" EAST**
DIANE SHERRY "Lana Lang" CASE • and Superman Movie Contest winner **ED FINNERAN's** recollections



Volume 1,
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December 2018

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BACK ISSUE

Comics' Bronze Age and Beyond!

YOU'LL BELIEVE A MAG CAN FLY!

SUPERMAN

THE MOVIE

40th ANNIVERSARY

Superman created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster
by special arrangement with the Jerry Siegel family

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Gene Hackman's Lex Luthor was obsessed with real estate in *Superman: The Movie*, and at the 2018 Superman Celebration in Metropolis, Illinois, I also discovered the value of real estate. As a guest of the event, I lucked into a table right next to Ilya Salkind, the executive producer (with his father, Alexander Salkind) of *Superman*—as well as *Superman II* (1980) and *III* (1983), *Supergirl* (1984), *The Three Musketeers* (1973) and *The Four Musketeers* (1974), *Santa Claus: The Movie* (1985), and TV's *Superboy* series (1999–1992). During a break from signing autographs, Mr. Salkind graciously consented to this interview and allowed me to chat with him about how the Marvel of Metropolis became the Hero of Hollywood.

— Michael Eury

MICHAEL EURY: *What's your earliest Superman memory?*

ILYA SALKIND: Very simple; I started reading the comic books when I was seven, and I loved them and continued [to read them].

EURY: *How did you and your father bring Superman to Hollywood?*

SALKIND: My father was my partner, and we had two big successes in America and worldwide: *The Three [Musketeers]* and *[The] Four Musketeers*.

EURY: *I saw them both and enjoyed them.*

SALKIND: Very good movies. After that we were very excited and happy and all that. [We thought,] What will we do next? We were having dinner and I said, "Why don't we do Superman?" My father was European and said, "What is Superman?" I said, "Well, he flies and he's got these powers, he's as known as Jesus Christ." He said, "Let me talk to my backers." The next day he said, "They like the idea."

EURY: *So the backers knew who Superman was?*

SALKIND: Yes, the backers knew who he was. When the backers said they liked it, [my father] reacted.

Then we had a long negotiation with Warner Bros., who owned DC Comics. It was then called National Periodical Publications and they changed the title of NPP to DC Comics, because that was the way not to pay Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, who had invented the character. They absolutely bamboozled them and took their credit off the comics, everything, *but* in the contract, it still said "based on the comic books created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster."

EURY: *It was for \$130 that Siegel and Shuster famously sold the rights of Superman back in 1938.*

SALKIND: Exactly. The poor guys were destitute; one of them was going blind... it was a terrible time.

So, the backers liked it and we started a very long negotiation with NPP. It was after they changed from NPP to DC Comics.

EURY: *The name changed after your negotiation?*

SALKIND: It changed after we started shooting. We went to them, and then Warners said, "Sell it; it's not worth anything. Who cares about a comic book?"

The three months of very difficult negotiation was with NPP because they, not Warners, were very protective about the character. There was a whole clause about the identity of the character we had to agree on: He couldn't be obscene, we couldn't go out of the range of activities; he couldn't be a burglar—he had to be Superman. The negotiation took a long time. Warners still didn't care about the film.

My father was a genius about finding money and backers, and bought the rights to the film until 1999.

EURY: *Until 1999? What limitations were there to your terms?*

SALKIND: It went until 1999—any amount of films we wanted to do until then; no limitations. Then, even in 1999, there was some kind of statute of limitations where we could have extended it, but then [there was] another story that happened; unpleasant, but all in the past.

Warners didn't care about the film yet, but the European buyers went crazy; Italians, French, German, Japanese... all wanted the film. So, we presold the movie and then Warners started to say, "Wait a minute..." The deal we made with them was a negative deal; they still had the rights to pick up the film for an amount for American

The Art of the Super-Deal

SUPERMAN THE MOVIE

Executive Producer

ILYA SALKIND

conducted by **Michael Eury**
transcribed by Rose Rummel-Eury



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STORY BY MARY KURTZ • SCREENPLAY BY JOE MANTLO • MUSIC BY JOHN WILLIAMS • COSTUME DESIGNER JOHN MURPHY • EDITOR JAMES NEWTON HOWARD • EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS ALEX SALKIND • PRODUCED BY PHILIP H. LAZAR • DIRECTED BY RICHARD DONNER

Supermovie's Supermen

A 1978 one-sheet Mylar poster promoting the premier superhero film, *Superman: The Movie*, brought to you by executive producers (inset) Alexander and Ilya Salkind. Poster courtesy of Heritage Auctions (www.ha.com).

Superman TM & © DC Comics.



WE'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER SMALLVILLE



The Kids from Smallville

Three iconic images from *Superman: The Movie*: (left) Baby Clark (Aaron Smolinski) reveals he's a Superbaby (with Phyllis Thaxter and Glenn Ford); (center) cheerleader Lana Lang (Diane Sherry Case) befriends outcast Young Clark (Jeff East); and (right) Pa Kent (Ford) assures Young Clark (East) that "You are here for a reason."

© Warner Bros.
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Superman: The Movie is considered by many film critics and comic-book fans as the definitive superhero film, the movie that led the way for today's blockbusters. It tells the story of the Man of Steel and how he comes to Earth from the doomed planet of Krypton, grows up on our world, and eventually becomes our planet's greatest champion.

The film is broken up into three acts that follow Superman from infancy to adulthood. Act One is the story of Kal-El on Krypton. His father, Jor-El (Marlon Brando), and mother, Lara (Susannah York), place him in a rocket and send him into the heavens and to safety. Act Three is the story of Superman in Metropolis. This is where the fully grown Clark Kent (Christopher Reeve) begins to fulfill his destiny and find his place in the world with the one, true love of his life, Lois Lane (Margot Kidder), and his most trusted friends and allies, Jimmy Olsen (Marc McClure) and Perry White (Jackie Cooper), and faces off with his greatest enemy, Lex Luthor (Gene Hackman).

Right now, we're here to talk about Act Two of *Superman*, which concerns young Kal-El's arrival on Earth and the teenaged Clark Kent deciding the path he will follow—and this part of the legend is set in Smallville.

In many comic books, Smallville was located in Kansas. For *Superman: The Movie*, the countryside around Calgary in Alberta, Canada, filled in for Superman's hometown and afforded director Richard Donner the idealistic small town that looks like it was taken right off the comic-book page. The very first scene set in Smallville is when Kal-El's ship crashes and the child is discovered by Jonathan (Glenn Ford) and Martha (Phyllis Thaxter) Kent.



AARON SMOLINSKI

By the time he had arrived on Earth, little Kal-El had aged some since being rocketed as an infant from Krypton. Actor Aaron Smolinski was just three when he was cast to play baby Kal-El/soon-to-be Clark Kent in the early Smallville scenes. In spite of his age, though, the actor has vivid and wonderful memories of his time on the set. "I do remember a lot of the behind-the-scenes stuff," says Smolinski to *BACK ISSUE*. "Like talking into Richard Donner's walkie talkie. [I also remember the scene where I'm] standing under the truck and my arms are getting tired from holding them up. I remember hugging Phyllis Thaxter and riding the bus to set. We all parked at a gas station and then were bussed to the location."

Being the baby on set, literally, Smolinski found himself the center of attention between takes. "It was a magical time for a three-year-old," he recalls. "I got lots of attention and I got to do fun things. [Plus, I got] all the candy and food I wanted. It was wonderful. Everyone on set was fantastic. To this day, I am still in contact with Richard Donner. He is such a kind, warm man. It wasn't work to me. It was fun. I loved it."

Part of Aaron's wonderful memories include his time with the acting legends that played his adopted parents in the movie. "I remember how sweet Phyllis was," says Smolinski. "[She was] very nurturing. I felt a real connection to her. And Glenn Ford was nice, but very professional." Compared to some other performers in the movie, Smolinski's work on *Superman: The Movie* was relatively short. "[I was there for] eight days of filming. This time included a series of additional shots

Once East had secured the role of Young Clark, things moved faster than a speeding bullet for the young actor. "[Being cast in this movie] was an experience of a lifetime," says East. "I was thrilled and left the morning after I was cast for London [to begin] shooting and rehearsals. [As it turned out,] I flew over with Margot Kidder, who was testing for Lois Lane at the time." Most transatlantic flights can be long and tedious, but East was able to put that time to good use, getting to know the icon he would be playing by reading Superman and Superboy comics on the plane.

East's excitement was soon tempered by the process that would be needed to help make him look more like Christopher Reeve. "I was concerned about the wigs and nose pieces they were using and testing on me in the first few weeks," he recalls. "But it all turned out good, after several variations; the wig helped me find the soul of Clark."

Central to the Smallville scenes was the love interest of teenaged Clark, Lana Lang, played in the movie by Diane Sherry Case (who was then billed as Diane Sherry). Hearing how she came to be cast, it seems Donner saw some very Lana-like qualities in the young actress. "I was cast because the casting director was familiar with my work and Donner viewed my photo and liked the mischievous glint in my eye," Case informs *BI*.

Case had a determination early on that would have made Lana Lang proud. Instead of wanting to uncover Superboy's secret identity as Lana did in the Silver and Bronze Age comics books, Case's desire was turned toward acting. "My family is from the boot-heel of Missouri, about three hours from Memphis," Case says. "My parents were attending college in Tulsa when I was young, and we moved to Beverly Hills when I was seven. The story my mother used to tell was that I threatened to run away from home if she wouldn't get me an agent. She says she thought I'd get discouraged by the interview process, but I landed a job at my first audition. That was for a segment of *The Bill Dana Show* entitled 'The Brat.' I got to act out in ways I would have never gotten away with at home and I just fell in love with acting!"

Case was delighted to join the cast of *Superman: The Movie*. Even if she wasn't familiar with Superman or his mythos, she was aware of another acting legend who was tied to this movie. "[I had no prior knowledge] at all to Superman or Lana Lang," says Case. "I was simply excited to be in a film that also starred Marlon Brando."

Brando aside, joining the cast of this film was quite the feather in the cap of the young actress as this was one of the biggest projects of her career up to that point. But then Case had a track record with big-budget epics. "I had done another film, *Hawaii* (1966), in which I played Julie Andrews' sister," recalls Case. "[That movie] had a \$15-million-dollar budget and it was nominated for several Oscars." *Hawaii* also featured a young Gene Hackman in an early role for the man who would one day be Lex Luthor.

"I had also been Bing Crosby's daughter in *The Bing Crosby Show* (1964–1965) and sang with him nearly every week," says Case about her other early projects. "I'd been in a film directed by Roger Vadim, *Pretty Maids All in a Row* (1971). [He was] the director who made Bridget Bardot and Catherine Deneuve stars, and who was married to Jane Fonda at the time. I just read a portion of a biography about Gene Roddenberry, who produced that movie, telling just how irritated Vadim was that I wouldn't do the role I was cast in that required nudity. I was hoping he'd drop the nudity and he was hoping I'd drop my clothes!"



DIANE SHERRY CASE



The Girl Next Door

(top) From the collection of Diane Sherry Case, a painting by fan Trevor Hawkins of the actress in her Smallville glory. (middle) On the set with *Superman* director Richard Donner (left) and cinematographer Geoffrey Unsworth, in a photo taken by Diane Sherry Case. Unsworth died shortly before the release of *Superman*, on October 28, 1978, and the film is dedicated to him. (bottom) Behind the scenes in "Smallville" with Unsworth, Donner, and Sherry (Case), the latter of whom kindly contributed this photo to *BACK ISSUE*.

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Lana Lang TM & © DC Comics.

YOU COULD BE IN THE
SUPERMAN MOVIE
--DETAILS INSIDE--

WINNING THE GREAT



SUPERMAN MOVIE CONTEST

by Edward Finneran



EDWARD FINNERAN

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2. Enter as often as you like, but be sure each entry is complete with all the necessary letters and each entry is mailed individually.
3. Only the entire coupon - containing the phrase "The Great Superman Movie Contest" and the specific letter - will be valid.
4. All entries must be received by DC Comics before 5 PM, July 15, 1977. All entries will be placed in a drum and two first prize envelopes will be selected on July 18, 1977 on the set of the Superman movie. First prize winners will be notified by telegram. Second prize drawings will be held during the week of July 18, 1977; winners will be notified by mail.
5. Employees of Warner Communications Inc. and its subsidiaries and affiliates, and DC Comics' free-lance artists, writers, colorists, and letterers, any of the participating wholesalers of Independent News Company, and the immediate families of those employees are specifically excluded from this contest.
6. There are no age or racial restrictions; males and females are equally eligible to win. First prize winners must be available for work on the Superman Movie set during a specific date and time in late summer of 1977. During this period, the first prize winners and each winner's companion will be taken on a personal tour of DC Comics in New York. If the first prize winner is a minor, said winner's companion must be a parent or guardian of the winner.
7. Second prize winners will receive a card in the mail offering the various prizes, from which they will indicate their preferences. These prizes will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis; and all second prize winners will receive one of their noted preferences.
8. Contest void where prohibited by law and subject to all applicable Federal, State and local laws and regulations.

I was fortunate enough to be one of two people, along with Tim Hussey of California, to win the grand prize in "The Great Superman Movie Contest" of 1977, with the winners receiving a small part in the movie. As a teenage comic and science-fiction fan, of Superman, Wonder Woman, Justice League, the Legion of Super-Heroes, and other DC (and a few Marvel) works, it was quite exciting.

ENTERING THE CONTEST

The contest involved cutting out special strips with a letter on them, placed at the bottom of the editorial/letters page of each DC comic. Entrants were then required to spell out "SUPERMAN" and either "CLARK" or "KALEL" using these letters, and mail it in. I was interested in possibly winning one of the 5,000 second prizes, a *Secret Origins of the Super DC Heroes* book, so I entered. I would buy almost all my comics at a small local store in Springfield, Massachusetts, called Williams Luncheonette, that had a soda

fountain and everything—but a very small selection of comics to choose from at any given time. In order to spell out the two words, you'd have to buy a minimum of 13 comics. Most of those I would have bought anyway, so I only had to buy a couple that I wouldn't have normally in order to spell out SUPERMAN and KALEL.

WINNING AND ARRANGEMENTS

Christopher Reeve, along with Sol Harrison, president of DC Comics, and Jenette Kahn, publisher, picked the winners out of the avalanche of entries they received. The first two entries to be drawn only spelled out SUPERMAN and so did not qualify, so they pulled two more. I was either the third or fourth entry drawn—I don't know which. I found out I won when we got a telegram delivered to the house, which was a first for me, being a teenager at the time.

Correspondence followed, with Sol Harrison and also Mike Gold of DC, to fine tune when and where my mom and I would need to travel to participate in the movie. That was cool, not only for what it said, but it was printed on DC Comics stationery with a fairly normal front side, but with seven DC Comics characters (Superman, Shazam! [the original Captain Marvel], Batman, Flash, Aquaman, Robin, and Wonder Woman) standing on each other's shoulders on the back so if you held it up to the light, they appeared to be holding up the "DC Comics" round logo on the front side.

We were to be in some of the scenes where Clark Kent is a teenager, so it wasn't off to New York, but to

How Lucky Can One Guy Get?

Make that two guys, as Tim Hussey joined guest columnist Ed Finneran as the winners of the original Great Superman Movie Contest in 1977. This DC Comics house announced the competition.

TM & © DC Comics.

ELLIOT S! MAGGIN: Paperback Writer

by Philip Schweier

FlashBack!



Super Novels

Movie images illustrated the covers of Elliot S! Maggin's first two Superman novels, *Last Son of Krypton* and *Miracle Monday*.

Superman TM & © DC Comics.

In the days before home video, movie fans could revisit their favorite films thanks to adaptations in novel form. An entire generation of fans snatched up paperback copies of *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* from the shelves and spinner racks of bookstores coast to coast.

Conspicuous in its absence was a mass-market paperback adaptation of *Superman: The Movie*. Instead, Warner Books (a corporate sibling of both DC Comics and the studio that released the film) published *Last Son of Krypton*, an original story by DC Comics writer Elliot S! Maggin.

FROM SUCH HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Maggin was born and reared in the NYC area, and like many kids at the time, read comic books until entering his teens. In an interview for *The Amazing World of DC Comics* #2 (Apr. 1974), Maggin described Superman as the prototype of the hero, the ideal person. "He and President Kennedy probably influenced me more than anyone I've ever known, except my father."

While attending Brandeis University in Boston in the early 1970s, he managed a tutoring program for kids, providing comic books to help them read. The *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* series caught his eye and prompted him to submit a Green Arrow story entitled "What Can One Man Do?", which was published in *Green Lantern* #87 (Dec. 1971–Jan. 1972).

This led to a lengthy career writing for virtually every major character in the DC Comics library, usually credited as "Elliot S! Maggin."

Legend has it his habitual use of exclamation points in his comic-book scripts led to a typo in his byline, which caught the attention of DC editor Julius "Julie" Schwartz. Schwartz liked it so much he made it policy that Maggin's middle initial always be punctuated with an exclamation mark instead of a period.

Maggin was one of the primary writers for the Superman titles in the mid-1970s. He submitted a loose outline of *Last Son of Krypton* in 1974 to DC publisher Carmine Infantino as part of a Superman feature film proposal. It included a theory that the time for heroes was returning—from a sociological standpoint. "I guess I was right, huh?" Maggin says.

However, Maggin wasn't the only one who saw Superman's big-screen potential. Independent producers Alexander and Ilya Salkind had begun development on what would become *Superman: The Movie*. To help give the project credibility as a film, they enlisted screenwriter Mario Puzo, a two-time Oscar® winner for his *Godfather* movies.

Prior to penning his screenplay, Puzo paid a visit to the DC Comics offices for research. He met with publisher Carmine Infantino, editor Julius Schwartz, and writers E. Nelson Bridwell, Cary Bates, and Maggin. Having such a celebrity in their camp was pretty casual, according to Maggin. "No one seemed particularly cowed over it," he says. "When I first found Puzo, he and Nelson Bridwell were sitting on the floor in the big library archive early one day, looking at old comic books."

Maggin says Puzo didn't know much about the character to start with. "Mostly Cary and I sat with Mario in a conference room with the

Bronze Age Breakout

(top) Maggin's extraordinary Green Arrow tale in 1971's *Green Lantern* #87 put the young writer on the map. (middle) In 1974, Elliot (rendered here by Kurt Schaffenberger, from the cover of 1974's *Amazing World of DC Comics* #2) submitted to DC's head honcho Carmine Infantino a rough outline for what would become his *Last Son of Krypton* Superman novel.

TM & © DC Comics.



door closed for two days, talking about who Superman was," explains Maggin. "Cary and I talked a lot about Superman's origin, and about how he tended to handle most emergencies. Bank robberies, volcanoes, exploding planets, that sort of thing. Mario mostly took notes. Then at some point he picked his head up out of his notepad and said, 'I see it now. This is a Greek tragedy.' And Cary said, 'That's what we've been trying to tell you.'"

According to the Internet Movie Database, Puzo was promised a financial piece of any book adaptation of his story. Though a screenwriter might be credited as the author of the book, novel adaptations are often written by someone else. In this case, Maggin says Puzo suggested his son Gino write the book version of the screenplay.

However, the novelization never happened. One theory is that Puzo was annoyed that David and Leslie Newman were hired to rewrite his screenplay extensively—adding a few "questionable ideas"—while the producers continued to use Puzo's name to attract cast members.

Instead, Warner Books published two other mass-market paperbacks in conjunction with the film. David Michael Petrou, in addition to instructing Clark to have the football team uniforms ready for Saturday's game in the Smallville High scene, wrote *The Making of Superman: The Movie* [see this issue's Superman collectibles article—*ed.*]. It chronicled how the film came to be made—how the producers developed the project, and brought key people such as Puzo, Marlon Brando, and director Richard Donner on board. Much attention is paid to casting the perfect Man of Steel, as well as other key roles such as Lex Luthor, Lois Lane, and Perry White. However, in order for the book to coincide with the film's December 1978 release, the final stages of production—including frequent arguments between the producers and director—are not included.

LAST SON OF KRYPTON

The other book was Maggin's *Last Son of Krypton*. Dailies from the film had attracted a great deal of interest at Warner Bros., DC's corporate parent. Striking while the iron was hot, Maggin enjoyed a quick elevator ride up two floors to Warner Books to pitch his movie treatment as a novel. With a sequel already planned, it was originally intended to publish Maggin's book between the two films, to maintain interest. "When it became clear that Mario was not going to exercise his right to do a novelization, Warner Books bumped up the publication date," says Maggin.

Last Son of Krypton retells Superman's origin, featuring Albert Einstein in a pivotal role. A Kryptonian navigational device sent ahead of Kal-El's spacecraft contacts Einstein and informs him of Kal-El's imminent arrival in Smallville. Jor-El had hoped the greatest intellect of Earth would safeguard the infant, but a chance encounter with Jonathan and Martha Kent changes that plan. Instead, Einstein decides a simple Midwestern upbringing is what the boy needs. He is able to place the Kents in the right place at the right time to find the child. Einstein

Seeing Red

Actor Red Buttons (left) visits author Mario Puzo (center) and future Jor-El Marlon Brando (right) on the set of *The Godfather* in 1972. Set photo by Jack Stager, from the archives of Heritage Auctions (www.ha.com).

The Godfather © Paramount Pictures.



NON SPEAKS!

A Super Interview with

JACK O'HALLORAN

He helped put the Phantom Zone on the map as the mute and menacing Non, one of the three Kryptonian supervillains seen briefly in *Superman: The Movie* (1978) but extensively in its sequel, *Superman II* (1980).

Yet Jack O'Halloran's career spans far beyond his role as the bad guy we love to hate, stretching from a rough-and-tumble upbringing to his victories in the ring as a heavyweight boxer (where he scored 17 knockouts!) to his cinematic tutelage by one of the greatest screen legends of the 20th Century to his more recent success as a novelist. In addition to the first two Superman movies, he has also appeared in the films *Farewell, My Lovely* (1975), *King Kong* (1976), *March or Die* (1977), *The Baltimore Bullet* (1980), *Dagnet* (1987), *Hero and the Terror* (1988), and *The Flintstones* (1994), among others.

What follows is an edited transcription of a panel conducted on Sunday, October 22, 2017 at the Fayetteville (North Carolina) ComicCon. Special thanks must go to the convention's organizer, Michael Chaudhuri, for arranging Jack O'Halloran's appearance, and to Mr. O'Halloran himself for his kind cooperation.

— Michael Eury

MICHAEL EURY: Hello, folks, I'm Michael Eury, editor of *BACK ISSUE Magazine*. I went over and introduced myself to Jack a few minutes ago and found him to be one of the friendliest celebrities I've had the pleasure of meeting.

[to Jack] But, Jack, in my favorite movie, I heard you described by Marlon Brando as "A mindless aberration whose only means of expression are wanton violence and destruction." [laughter]

The Zod Squad

Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (www.ha.com), a villain-centric *Superman II* movie poster autographed by the late Margot Kidder (Lois Lane) and the subject of this interview, Jack O'Halloran (Non).

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JACK O'HALLORAN

Photo: Cornstalker / Wikimedia Commons.

by Michael Eury

transcribed by Rose Rummel-Eury



[to audience] Don't listen to Brando—our guest is a pretty cool guy. Let's have a big round of applause for Mr. Jack O'Halloran! [applause]

Now, we're going to talk Superman in a few minutes, but that's only one small part of your career. It started with boxing as "Irish" Jack O'Halloran in the mid-1960s, is that right?

JACK O'HALLORAN: Actually, it started with football. I played a little pro ball for the Philadelphia Eagles and the Jets, and I got angry at some people so I went into boxing. I saw [Muhammad] Ali win the title and I thought, "I can beat that guy." Some friends of mine said, "What a good idea."

So, next thing I know I was in a gym, training for a professional career in boxing. I figured it would be better than me fighting in the street all the time. It worked out pretty well. I boxed for about nine years, but they found that I had a disease called acromegaly, which is a tumor of the pituitary disease, and I shouldn't have been boxing at all. [Editor's note: According to Wikipedia, acromegaly is a disorder that results from excess growth hormone (GH) after the growth plates have closed. It is typically due to the pituitary gland producing too much GH.]

But we just soldiered through a lot of things and it worked out. I enjoyed fighting with a lot of pretty good people. Muhammad [Ali, originally Cassius Clay] and I were signed [for a bout], I think four different times, and it unfortunately didn't work out, so I went into the movie business.

EURY: How did you transition from boxing to acting?

O'HALLORAN: When I first started fighting, Steve McQueen was doing a picture called *The Thomas Crown Affair* (1968), in Boston. I was living in Boston, and we took care of him [bodyguarding] while he was there, and we became friends. He said, "You ought to come back with me to Hollywood and I'll put you in the movie." I said, "Eh, I don't think I'm ready for that yet."

Then they did a picture called *The Great White Hope* (1970), with James Earl Jones, and they wanted me to play [a part] and brought me out to Hollywood. I had just knocked out the Number One heavyweight champion in the world and they said instead, "You want to go to Spain for six months?" I said, "You want me to give up boxing and go play in a movie?" "Yeah, man." They thought the deal was all set for me. Some people in the East Coast wanted to see me get off the street and go to a foreign country. Some other people would like that as well. But I turned them down. They couldn't believe it.

I was leaving Fox, going down the steps, and James Earl Jones was coming up the steps, and said, "Jack O'Halloran, is it true that you just told Hollywood to take the biggest movie in Hollywood and 'stick it'?" I said, "I don't know, it depends on what you heard." "Did you?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "I gotta shake your hand. I never met anyone who told Hollywood to take a leap." [laughter] So, we became good friends. I continued with the boxing and in 1975, they made me quit because of the acromegaly.

Then they offered me a picture called *Farewell, My Lovely*, with Robert Mitchum. I had an agent in San Diego when I was boxing because I was California heavyweight champion. I became one of ten fighters in the history of fighting that became a world-ranked fighter without boxing [as an] amateur.

So, I had an agent and did a lot of commercials with Royal Crown Cola. She called me and said, "They want you to do this movie with Robert Mitchum, and I think you should do it." I looked around and said, "Hmm,



maybe the time has come." I met with the director, and he said, "You're the guy." They sent me to Hollywood and I met a man named Robert Mitchum, who was an incredible actor and incredible human being. He took me by the hand and guided me through a tour of Hollywood, and here I am. I owe it all to him.

EURY: Did you undertake any acting lessons?

O'HALLORAN: Robert Mitchum.

EURY: That was it?

O'HALLORAN: I'll tell you a funny story. The very first day I was going to work, he arranged for us to drive down together. He had me laughing all the way to the set. We got out of the car and he said, "I'll meet you there. Get the monkey suit on." We were walking up the steps and he said, "Did you read the script?" I said, "Read the script?! I read your part, her part, this part, that part." He said, "Throw it in the trash can. Don't let me catch you doing like so many people in this town—acting. Just be yourself. Throw it in the trash. Just be yourself and you'll be fine." I thought, "What a concept."

He taught me eye levels and eye contact. We got on the set and did the first shot. We got done and they started moving cameras around. I looked at him and said, "What's the deal?" He said, "You really don't know? That's it." I said, "Wait, that's all there is to this stuff? I'm a star!" [laughter] He laughed, and that became a tagline for the movie.

That opened the door for a phenomenal career I've loved with a passion. He was an amazing man and became like a father and a mentor and led me down the street. I was halfway through the movie and I was coming out of the Samuel Goldwyn lot and someone grabbed me and said, "Is this your first picture?" I said yes. He said, "Let me tell you, son, you're going to be a star." I went back to Mitchum and said, "Maybe I should take some elocution lessons, go to UCLA and really get into this thing." He looked at me, and laughed. "If you go to those classes, they'll ruin you, or you'll ruin them. Stick with me, kid, and you'll be fine." I said, "Okay, here we go." Here I am.

EURY: You couldn't have had a better teacher.

O'HALLORAN: No, the man was an amazing individual. One of the most well-read individuals I'd ever met. He was a trip.

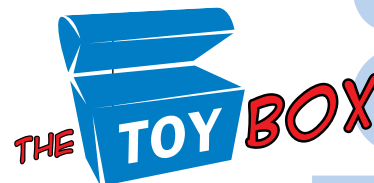
Hard-Boiled

Lobby card (courtesy of Heritage) from O'Halloran's breakout role as Moose Malloy in the 1975 crime drama, *Farewell, My Lovely*, with his mentor Robert Mitchum as gumshoe Philip Marlowe.

© 1975 Avco Embassy Pictures.

SUPERMAN THE MOVIE

COLLECTIBLES



by Joe Stuber



Mags of Steel
Superman: The Movie was a popular subject on magazine covers in late 1978 and early 1979. (Join us in two months for *BI* #110, themed "Make Mine Marvel," for a look back at Marvel's Pizzazz Magazine.)

Superman: The Movie © Warner Bros. Superman TM & © DC Comics. Famous Monsters of Filmland TM & © Philip Kim. Fantastic Films © Blake Publications Corp. MAD TM & © EC Publications, Inc. Newsweek TM & © Newsweek LLC. People TM & © Time Inc. Pizzazz © Marvel. Playgirl TM & © Playgirl. Starlog © The Brooklyn Company.

You'll believe a man can fly...
 ...and a kid can buy!

It was a particularly frigid day in late December 1978. My mom and I, along with some family friends, were planning to head out into the western Pennsylvania winter weather to see *Superman: The Movie*... again. But this night would be extra special. One of our friends brought a gift for me. I didn't think anything could top rushing out for another round of Christopher Reeve soaring across the big screen, but I would soon be proven wrong.

Tearing off the wrapping paper, I beheld a 12 1/2" x 12 1/2" thing of beauty—the original movie soundtrack by John Williams! Even though our friend had kindly thought to remove the price tag, I could still see the impression left behind on the cover—\$11.98. Double album coin. Growing up in a working-class family, you quickly get a sense of what things cost, so I truly appreciated her generosity and incredible thoughtfulness. I treasured this gift immensely and immediately jotted my name and address on the gatefold right below the stunning image of Reeve flying high as my hero. It would be quite some time before I learned about the term "mint condition."

I could not wait till after the movie to listen to the soundtrack. I had to hear a bit before we braved the cold for our trip to the theater. I removed the first record carefully, placed it on the turntable, and lowered the needle. With the vinyl disc spinning at 33 1/3 RPM and the sound of Williams' Superman Theme thundering out—as much as it could—from our Zenith Circle of Sound OmniDirectional stereo speakers, I stared wide-eyed at the photomontage of movie images on the record sleeves. The destruction of Krypton. The journey to Earth. Super-rescues. The movie was coming to life in my living room! But I needed more. More images, more information, more... stuff! Thus began one kid's quest to seek out and find all things... *Super*.

SUPER PUBLISHING

Some people can read *War and Peace* and come away thinking it's a simple adventure story. Others can read the ingredients on a chewing gum wrapper and unlock the secrets of the universe.

— Lex Luthor

One thing made evident in the late '70s following the explosion of *Star Wars* (with an earlier assist from *Planet of the Apes*) was that a movie franchise could make much more money in the realm of merchandising than it could at the box office. This concept was not lost on the marketing team at Warner Bros.

Perhaps the biggest merchandising push for the Superman film was from the rights holders—Warner Bros. Prior to the soundtrack from Warner Bros. Records hitting store shelves, the book division (Warner Books) promised "the most ambitious movie/publishing tie-in of all time." They did not disappoint. Ads touted a novelization of the film, "Making of" book, wall calendar, "telephone book" with room for 400 contacts (how many friends did Warner Bros. think I had?), packet of super-blueprints, portfolio of amazing art, and a kit of collectible diorama cut-outs.

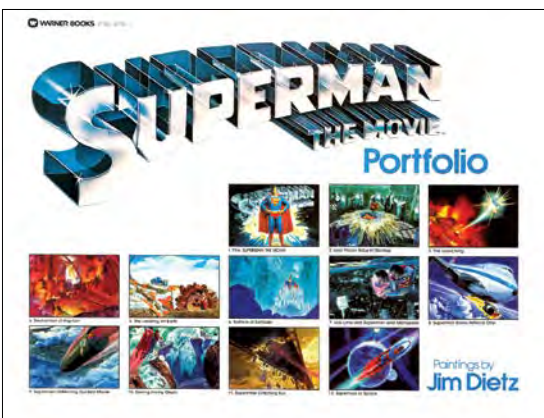
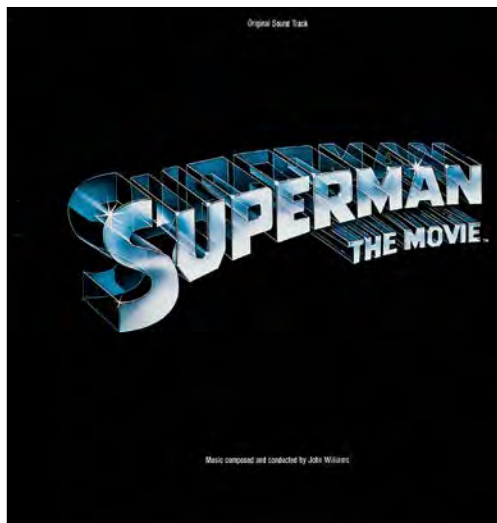
A few years earlier, Ballantine Books released of package of 12 *Star Trek* blueprints, and Warner Bros. hoped to cash in on the "burgeoning pop-blueprint market," as an early ad stated. To this day, I'm not quite sure how prosperous that market was, but it did result in a cool collectible, *Superman: The Movie Blueprints*. Topping Ballantine with 15 layouts, the Superman set includes the entire floor plan of Lex Luthor's lair, for the budding architect with space 200 feet below ground. What more could anyone ask?

Superman Cut-Outs, designed by John Harrington and Aldo Coppelli, is a more hands-on activity packet. Featuring three "action sets" from the film—Krypton, Kansas, and Metropolis—kids and parents could recreate baby Kal-El's starship, young Kal giving Pa Kent a hand fixing

Super Soundtrack

(right) The album cover for John Williams' *Superman: The Movie* soundtrack two-album set, (middle) its interior image of a flying Man of Steel, and both sides of its picture-packed inner sleeve. Scans courtesy of Heritage Auctions (www.ha.com).

Superman: The Movie © Warner Bros.
Superman TM & © DC Comics.



a flat, and Superman saving Lois Lane in the memorable helicopter rescue scene.

Superman: The Movie Portfolio is a true prize. Inspired by scenes from the movie, artist Jim Dietz crafted 12 sensational paintings that capture the spirit and spectacle of the epic film. Standouts include "Lois Lane and Superman over Metropolis" (a perfect image of Reeve and Margot Kidder), "Superman Saves Airforce One," and "Superman Deflecting Guided Missile."

While we didn't get the promised novelization of the film, we did get an original Superman origin story from author Elliot S! Maggin—*Last Son of Krypton* (detailed elsewhere in this issue). And no super-book collection would be complete without the pride of the Warner Books Superman series, *The Making of Superman: The Movie* by author David M. Petrou.

In my interview earlier this year on my podcast, *Comic Book Central*, Mr. Petrou (who was working for Random House Publishing in the mid-'70s) explained how a chance meeting on the tennis court with *Superman* producer Ilya Salkind set the stage for his chronicling the Man of Steel's journey from comics to cinema. Petrou stated, "Everybody says, 'Oh, it's luck. You were in the right place.' No, it's more than that. You have to be in the right place, at the right time, with the right talent. And I filled all of those bills for Ilya."

He certainly did. *The Making of Superman: The Movie* is an outstanding fly-on-the-wall account of pre-production, casting, filming, and of course, the famous in-fighting during production. The paperback also features a 16-page insert of photos, including a hilarious (and highly personal) picture of Valerie Perrine mocking the numerous delays in filming. No other item in my collection has

Suitable for Framing

(bottom left) A dozen dynamite prints of painter Jim Dietz's recreations of movie scenes were featured in Warner Books' *Superman: The Movie Portfolio*. This set in Mint condition commands at least \$100, often more, in today's collectors' market. (bottom right) Writer Joe Stuber's much-loved original copy of *The Making of Superman: The Movie* and his replacement copy. Inset is its author, David M. Petrou, who kindly contributed this photo for *BI*'s readers.

Superman: The Movie © Warner Bros. Superman TM & © DC Comics.

Greatest Stories NEVER TOLD

While *Superman III* was in production in 1982, I was sent to England by Warner Bros. and DC Comics as a liaison to deliver studio notes regarding the script. As I later came to learn, my trip was a consequence of studio politics—the Salkinds were contractually obligated to address DC's notes in order to trigger Warner Bros.' next production payment. But with principal photography already well underway, any script alterations at this late date had to be restricted to minor tweaks. So it was no surprise director Richard Lester and screenwriters Leslie and David Newman were not happy with the studio input or the comic-book writer who was the messenger. All in all, it was a very intense few days. However, the trip wasn't a total bust because Ilya Salkind and I got along very well. More about that to come.

Not long after the frustrating *Superman III* experience, I decided I'd take a shot at pitching my own Superman movie to Warners. Even though I had been writing Superman comics for 15 years by then, I knew success would be far-fetched and the odds slim. On other hand, I had been down a similar road a decade earlier. In 1974, with the help of Roald Dahl, two years of perseverance and some dumb luck, I managed to sell an original James Bond treatment for *Moonraker* to Cubby Broccoli (no, they didn't go with my story, although certain plot elements from it turned up in later Bond films). At least with a Superman film, so I figured, I'd have a leg up due to my DC Comics connection. The villain in my treatment was Brainiac. As for the plotline, a lot of the details are fuzzy now, though I do recall a major Ragnarok-ish off-world sequence involving shrunken cities vying for the right to be restored to their home planet. But unlike the Bond treatment, after working on it for months between comics assignments, I still hadn't reached the point where I felt the story was fully developed enough to send out. And since *Superman IV* had just been announced, I put it on the back burner. A further setback was the fact the Salkinds were no longer involved; they had temporarily licensed their Superman rights to Golan-Globus' Cannon Films. But the Salkinds were by no means inactive. Their original deal with Warners had granted them rights to not only Superman but *all* Superman-related characters. And that included Superboy.

Superboy was a syndicated series Ilya and his father Alex were co-producing with Viacom, filmed at Universal Studios Florida. In late 1988 Ilya hired me as a scriptwriter and story editor, so I relocated to Orlando. At some point during the second season I showed Ilya my aborted movie treatment, not really expecting much since he no longer had the film rights. But as I was to find out, things were in flux—on several fronts. After *Superman IV*'s lackluster box

(Super)Man vs. Machine

Our fantasy poster for a Superman movie penned by Cary Bates. The main image is from an Australian poster for 1983's *Superman III*, inserting Brainiac (by José Luis García-López and Dick Giordano) from the cover of 1977's *DC Special Series #5: Superman Spectacular*.

TM & © DC Comics.

THE SUPERMAN MOVIE YOU DIDN'T SEE

by Cary Bates

If the world's most powerful computer can control even Superman... no one on earth is safe.



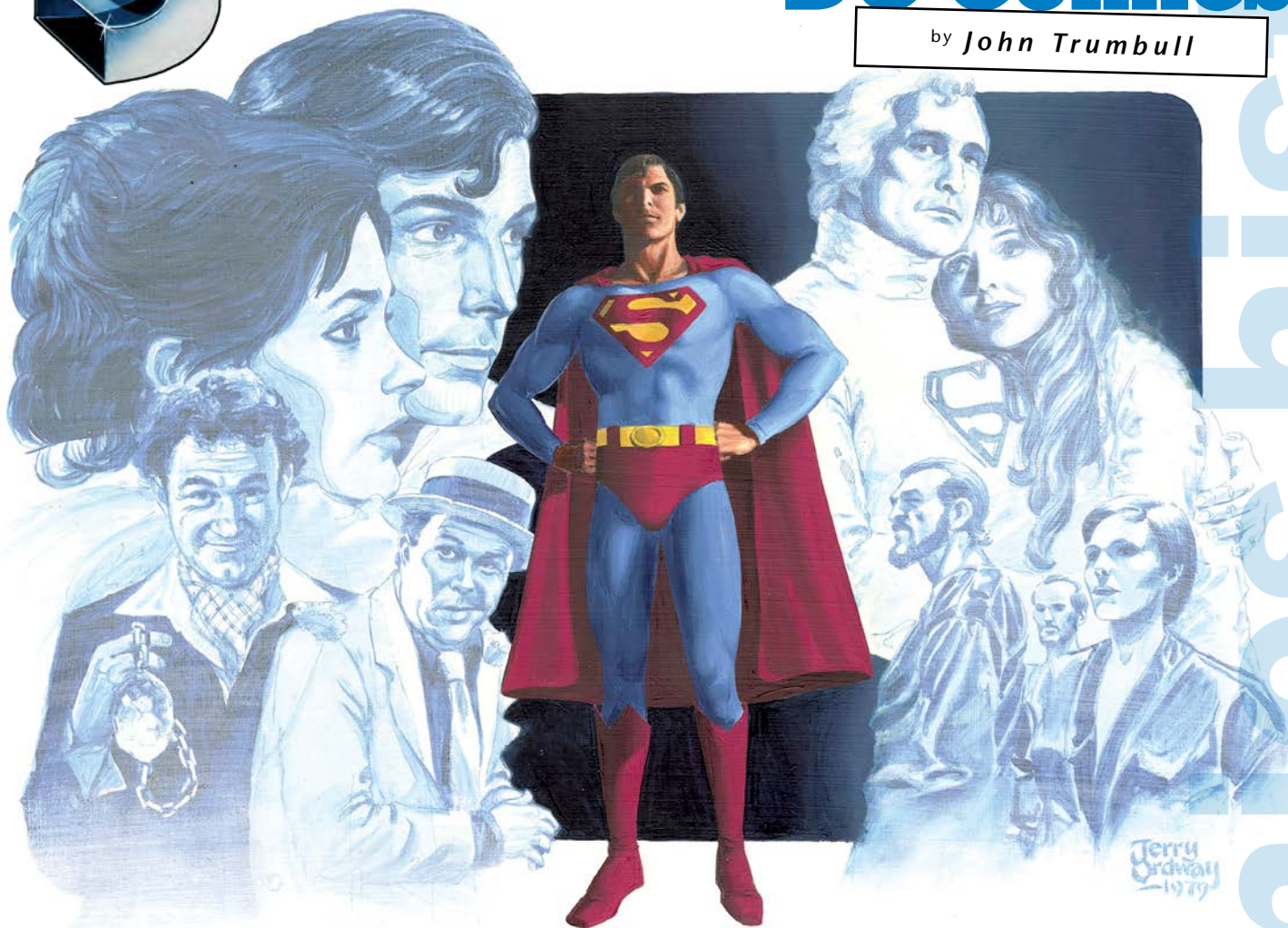
CAPED WONDER SWAYS COMICS:

FlashBack!

SUPERMAN THE MOVIE'S

Influence on DC Comics

by John Trumbull



For almost as long as there have been superhero comics, they've been influenced by outside media adaptations. Kryptonite, Jimmy Olsen, and Perry White all originated on the 1940s' *The Adventures of Superman* radio show. Alfred Pennyworth's appearance was remodeled to look like the actor from the 1943 *Batman* serial, and the 1966 television series inspired Alfred's return to the comics. And one of the most popular Batman villains, Harley Quinn, made her first appearance in 1992's *Batman: The Animated Series*.

1978's *Superman: The Movie* was no different. Although initial screenwriter Mario Puzo's contract prevented DC Comics from doing direct adaptations of *Superman* and *Superman II*, many elements of the movies still made their way into the comics, years and even decades later. This article will examine some of the most prominent examples, in the order they occurred in *Superman: The Movie*.

THE PLANET KRYPTON

One of *Superman: The Movie*'s biggest changes from the comic-book mythos came right after the opening credits: Superman's home planet of Krypton. Gone was the futuristic *Buck Rogers* Krypton of the comics with its colorfully clad, head-banded populace. In its place was a majestic, but sterile, world carved from icy white crystal, where even the citizenry's clothing emitted an unearthly white glow.

This reimagining came directly from Tom Mankiewicz's shooting script, describing Jor-El and Lara's home city of Kryptonopolis as "a magical city, constructed of pure white crystalline matter that encloses and protects it from the blazing red sun." From this, production designer John Barry and miniature model director/creator Derek Meddings gave Krypton a new, distinctive alien appearance, establishing *Superman*'s epic scope in its opening minutes.

The Adventures Continue

A 1979 *Superman: The Movie* tribute by Jerry Ordway, who would, in the next decade, go on to become one of the premier Superman artists of all time.

TM & © DC Comics.

A Whole New World

(top left) With his 1986 *The Man of Steel* reboot, writer/artist John Byrne reimagined Superman's homeworld, also writing this 1988 miniseries providing Krypton's backstory. Cover art by Walter Simonson. (top right and bottom) The John Tenniel card men and the Syd Mead tower were both influences on John Byrne's version of Krypton. Scans courtesy of John Trumbull.

World of Krypton TM & © DC Comics.
Mead art © US Steel.

The new look proved instantly iconic, and the white crystalline Krypton of *Superman: The Movie* became the planet's default appearance in live-action for the next 20 years. Marlon Brando's white-garbed Jor-El inspired the looks of several actors, as detailed in Chris Franklin's article following.

Superman: The Movie's version of Krypton proved so popular that John Byrne even considered using it when he was revamping Superman in the 1986 miniseries *The Man of Steel*. In an interview with Peter Sanderson in *Amazing Heroes* #96 (June 1, 1986), Byrne said, "I liked the cold, antiseptic Krypton of the movie. Dick [Giordano] said he loved the Krypton of the movie, but we couldn't do it for copyright reasons. So Dick and Jenette [Kahn] said, 'Redesign Krypton. That's the first thing we're going to see in the new series. The very first page should tell us that everything is different.' So I sat down and over a process of four sketches designed Jor-El, and what Jor-El looked like told me what the rest of Krypton looked like."

Expanding on his process in a 2009 post on his forum *ByrneRobotics.com*, Byrne explained, "I knew the biggest problem I'd have redesigning Krypton was coming up with a look for the clothes and architecture that wouldn't look dated ten, twenty, or fifty years later. So, after some

unsuccessful attempts to adapt [Joe] Shuster's *Buck Rogers* approach—very cutting edge in 1934, but kept around far too long—I realized the answer lay in finding a look that was *alien* rather than 'futuristic.' I ended up taking my cue from the playing cards in [John] Tenniel's original illustrations for *Alice in Wonderland*." The sleek, mile-high towers that Byrne designed for Krypton were inspired by the work of futuristic film designer Syd Mead [*Blade Runner*, *Tron*].

In a 2000 interview with Michael Thomas on *ComicBookResources.com*, Byrne admitted that he tried to make his Krypton noticeably different from *Superman: The Movie's*: "Oddly, the one thing in my version that most people seem to think was heavily inspired by the movie, my portrayal of Krypton, was not at all. I came from an entirely different direction, looking for that 'look.' I even went so far as to make 'my' Krypton a desert world, so as not to be 'confused' with the ice planet of the movie." But while the two Kryptons were very different in look, the emotional harshness and antiseptic quality of Byrne's version created a linkage between them in fans' minds.

Byrne's Krypton remained the default in the comics for the next 17 years, when Superman's origins were once again revised in the 12-issue series *Superman: Birthright* by Mark Waid and Leinil Francis Yu. But in revamping the Last Son of Krypton, Mark Waid says that the Krypton of *Superman: The Movie* did not influence them at all. "While I realize how visually striking the *STM* Krypton is, I always felt it was a missed opportunity," Waid explains. "It seems to me that the tragedy of Superman's loss is underscored if Krypton is a thriving planet full of life rather than a near-dead husk of a world."



JOHN BYRNE

Corey Bond /
Wikimedia Commons.

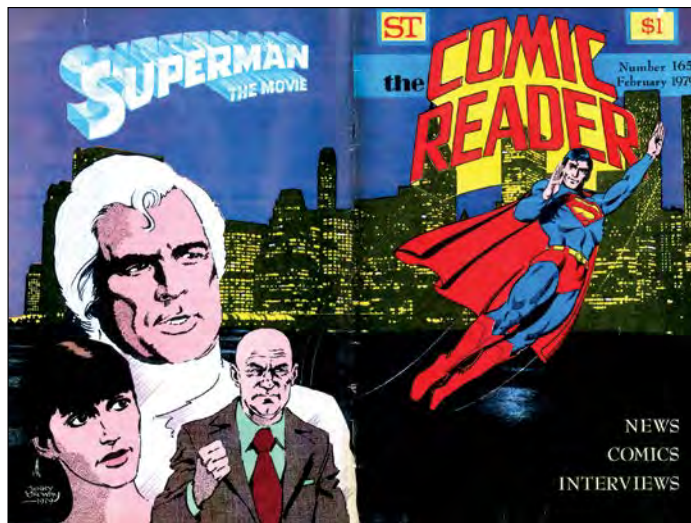
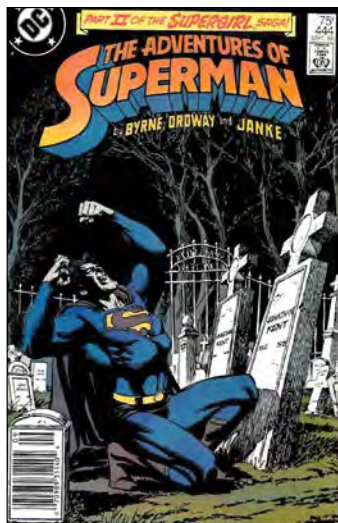


WHAT DOES THE "S" STAND FOR?

Director Richard Donner's watchword for *Superman: The Movie* was *verisimilitude*. Even though the movie depicted fantastic events, everything was shown in as honest and truthful a manner as possible. As screenwriter Tom Mankiewicz explained in the behind the scenes features of *Superman: The Movie*, "When you can make an audience believe what's happening on the screen, even though it's totally extraordinary, that this is *actually* happening, that's when you have verisimilitude."

This attitude of believability extended to all aspects of the production, even the Man of Steel's chest emblem. The opening scenes of *Superman: The Movie* have Marlon Brando's Jor-El wearing Superman's "S" symbol on his chest, showing it to be a symbol of Kryptonian origin. In his DVD commentary with Richard Donner, Tom Mankiewicz explained, "One of the great riddles we tried to figure out was why Superman has an 'S' on his chest, because it obviously stands for 'Superman,' but he wasn't called Superman 'til he got this [costume]. Why does he have an 'S' on his chest? So we decided to give everyone [on Krypton] a family crest with a different letter, which didn't really exist in the comic books." A similar idea is evident in the original script by Mario Puzo, which describes the Elders of Krypton as all having "the futuristic letter 'S' imprinted on their clothes, as does JOR-EL. There should also be a huge futuristic letter 'S' design on the wall of the Council Chamber." (Intriguingly, Puzo also suggested that the same actor play both Jor-El and Superman, in order to





in her hatred of all males). With no other superheroes in this world thanks to the Time Trapper's manipulations, the Phantom Zone villains make quick work of the Earth's defenses. Zod sets himself up as king of the world, with Zaora as his queen and Quex-UI as his entire army. Smallville becomes Earth's last stronghold against the Zoners, as others like Bruce Wayne, Hal Jordan, and Oliver Queen join the resistance of Luthor, Pete Ross, and Lana Lang.

Determined to end all opposition to their rule, the three Phantom Zoners burrow down to the Earth's core, releasing super-heated steam, boiling the seas, and ripping away Earth's atmosphere. With the Smallville fortress now containing the last life on Earth, the Pocket Universe's Luthor desperately sends the superpowered Lana back in time to contact the Superman of the regular DC Universe, in the hopes of finally defeating the Zoners once and for all.

Superman #22 (Oct. 1988) features the final battle between the resistance and the Phantom Zone villains. Zod, Quex-UI, and Zaora ruthlessly murder the last of Luthor's troops, and Supergirl is revealed to be merely a protomatter clone of the real Lana, an early casualty of the war. Finally, a dying Lex Luthor tells Superman of one last hope: a stash of gold kryptonite underneath the old Kent home in Smallville. Superman uses the gold K to permanently remove the Kryptonians' powers, but it's a hollow victory at best: the three Phantom Zoners have successfully murdered all five billion people on Earth.

Horrified at the thought of the Phantom Zoners escaping and destroying another world, Superman realizes that he has no choice but to act as judge, jury, and executioner. Exposing Zod, Zaora, and Quex-UI to green kryptonite radiation, Superman watches them perish slowly and painfully, fighting each other with their dying breaths. Although he had no other choice, Superman is still devastated by his actions, and knows that his world will never be the same again.

Penciler and co-plotter Jerry Ordway offers some insight to the origins of the Supergirl Saga, telling *BACK ISSUE*, "Byrne was drawing two Superman issues to my one at that time. *Action Comics* was turned over to be a weekly anthology, *Superman* shifted to twice-a-month schedule, and so John did the first and last part of that story, so I had little input except on my own issue. He and I both loved the first [*Superman*] film, but he had a lot more love for *Superman II* than I did, and I recall chatting at one point when he first took over scripting *Adventures*, about whether the movie implies that the movie Superman de-powered the Phantom Zone criminals and left them for dead in the Fortress. We knew there was an outtake that seemed to show the bad guys carted away by the 'Arctic police,' but it didn't quite count, as it wasn't in the theatrical release. I can't speak for John, but in my mind, I always thought that that was his inspiration for Superman killing the criminals in the 'Pocket Universe' story."



JERRY ORDWAY

© Luigi Novi / Wikimedia Commons.

Pocket Universe

(left) Superman's lament, from Jerry Ordway's dynamic cover to *Adventures of Superman* #444 (Sept. 1988).

(middle) The next month, the Man of Tomorrow executed three Phantom Zone menaces in John Byrne's controversial *Superman* #22. (right) Another early Ordway *STM* tribute, for the cover of *The Comic Reader* #165 (Feb. 1979).

Superman and related characters TM & © DC Comics.

Although the Supergirl Saga turned out to be Byrne's last storyline on the Superman titles, it was a major turning point for the character. Superman's guilt over executing the Phantom Zone villains grew until he ultimately exiled himself into outer space. The "Matrix" Supergirl became a regular supporting character, gaining her own title in 1996. And Superman's travels in space led to his discovery of the Eradicator, a Kryptonian artifact that became a major part of the 1992–1993 "Death of Superman" storyline.

DONNER AND JOHNS' "LAST SON"

In the years following the Supergirl Saga, Superman creators introduced several other versions of General Zod, hoping to make him a recurring villain once again. Two of the Zods were from alternate dimensions, and one was a Russian dictator mutated by kryptonite, but none of them took hold of readers' imaginations. Finally, in 2006, Geoff Johns restored Zod to his place of prominence in Superman's Rogues' Gallery, bringing Non and Ursa into DC continuity for good measure. Johns' co-writer was a man who had experience with the

Phantom Zone villains: *Superman: The Movie* director Richard Donner. Before he broke into comics, a young Geoff Johns got his start as Richard Donner's assistant. In a 2008 interview with Jami Philbrick on *ComicMix.com*, Johns explained his bond with Donner: "He's been a big part of my life for a long time now. He taught me a lot of things about writing, production, and life in general when I worked for him. We grew really close and obviously he's my mentor. I started writing comics when I was working for him, and he loves comics, so he would see the stuff that I was working on." The affection was obviously mutual, as Donner agreed to collaborate on his first Superman story in over 25 years. As a cross-promotion with the Richard Donner cut of *Superman II* being released on DVD, Johns and Donner co-wrote the storyline "Last Son" in *Action Comics*, beginning with issue #844 (Dec. 2006). Fan-favorite artist Adam Kubert came aboard as well, telling *BACK ISSUE*, "That was the first project that I did when I moved from Marvel to DC. And I wanted to draw Superman. That was the character I wanted to do."

Sound Familiar?

Scripter Elliot S!
Maggin's tribute
to *Superman: The
Movie*, from
DC's *Superman*
#417 (Mar. 1986).
Original Curt Swan/
Dave Hunt art
courtesy of Heritage
(www.ha.com).

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over the course of the story, a disgraced Lex Luthor unearths an ancient Kryptonian sunstone crystal that crashed on Earth in 1938. Discovering that the sunstone is self-replicating and infinitely programmable, Luthor uses it to recreate a gigantic Kryptonian warship once commanded by Admiral Dru-Zod. After defeating Luthor's warship, Superman takes the sunstone crystal to the Arctic, where the crystal recognizes his Kryptonian brain waves and activates its full potential. In a scene highly reminiscent of *Superman: The Movie*, the Man of Steel tosses the sunstone over the horizon, where the crystal builds him a new Fortress of Solitude in the Kryptonian style.

As Kurt Busiek recalls on using the movie version of the Fortress, "Geoff wanted to do it, perhaps because he was going to be co-writing [*Action Comics*] with Richard Donner, and my reaction was, 'Sure, why not?' We built on that to expand the crystal tech to

other things. But I don't think I was consciously influenced by *Superman: The Movie* all that much. I liked it, but I wasn't trying to bring elements from it in. And even if I'd wanted to, with Donner himself co-writing *Action*, I'd have left it to him and to Geoff. It felt more like their area."

Adam Kubert used the movie Fortress in the Johns/Donner storyline "Last Son" beginning in *Action* #844, but doesn't recall being asked to do so. "That was the one that came to mind," he says today.



KURT BUSIEK

Joshin Yamada.

WHO, DISGUISED AS CLARK KENT...

Clark Kent travels to Metropolis, where he gets a job as a reporter at the *Daily Planet*—in part because he's the fastest typist editor Perry White has ever seen.

Clark's persona as a well-meaning klutz is quickly established when he tries to open a soda bottle for Perry and ends up spilling it all over himself. Christopher Reeve reportedly based his Clark Kent on Cary Grant in the 1938 comedy *Bringing Up Baby*. Although Clark had always been meek and mild in contrast to Superman's heroics, Reeve differentiated between the two identities more than any previous actor, making Superman's Clark Kent disguise more convincing than ever before.

Reeve's performance certainly left a positive impression on many comics creators. In an April 2018 interview with Mike Avila of *Syfy Wire*, John Byrne remarked, "There's an amazing scene in the first Christopher Reeve movie where Lois has gone into the bedroom to change and Clark is standing there and he realizes he's got to tell her. And he takes off his glasses and he stands up, and he stands up like *another* four inches, and then he puts his glasses back on before she comes in. Christopher Reeve convinced me that you could part your hair on the other side and wear a pair of glasses and slouch and look like somebody else. He really did."

When Byrne got the job to revamp the Man of Steel in 1986, he told *Amazing Heroes* that in terms of personality, "my Superman pays homage to Christopher Reeve," specifically citing "the slightly self-deprecating sense of humor" that Reeve gave Superman. "This guy is so good at what he does that if he didn't have a sense of humor about it, he'd be intolerable. I'm giving him that kind of sense of humor."

Marv Wolfman agreed, telling Peter Sanderson in *AH*, "I think Superman in the comics can be as warm as Christopher Reeve in the first movie. I think he needs to be as young as Christopher Reeve in the movie, where the character has a sexual attractiveness. Superman's not your father. The day he becomes your father, he's a dead character. I think Superman has to go back to being a young, virile character."

Reeve's portrayal of the Man of Steel also motivated Byrne to scale Superman's powers down to more manageable levels. Talking to *Syfy Wire* in 2018, Byrne said, "I saw the first *Superman* movie 112 times—and that is actually the number of times I saw it—and I noticed that the civilian audience [went], 'Oh, look, he's flying!' 'Oh, look, he's knocking the dam over!' But the moment they cheered, the whole audience *cheered*, every time I saw it, was when he ripped off the car door to get to Lois. And I said, 'Because that's relatable.' That's something—nobody has ever wanted to push over a dam, right?—but everybody's wanted to tear a car door off [and] save somebody. And I said, 'That's what we need to think about.' Yeah, he's Superman, but he's not inconceivable. We can relate to what he does."





WE'RE ALL PART OF THE SAME TEAM

Richard Donner's motto for his production of *Superman: The Movie* was *verisimilitude*. The subject matter—the legend of Superman, as he considered it—was to be treated sincerely, and with deep respect and regard. But that didn't mean that the film would be completely slavish to 40 years of comics storytelling. Donner and the other filmmakers would adapt the characters, the locales, and the trappings to suit their needs, the times, and to add their own stamp to that legend.

These additions, these changes, have now endured as long as the comics they were inspired by. Forty years after *Superman: The Movie* was first projected in theaters, its unique influence continues to permeate, and sometimes even dominate, the ongoing legend of the Man of Steel, in both the comics, as discussed elsewhere in this issue, and in other media. From animation to further live-action adaptations on both large and small screens, the mark of *Superman: The Movie* has been readily apparent since shortly after it ended its theatrical run.

"OTISBURG?"

Not surprisingly, the film's influences are first felt in Superman's other active media adaptation of the time. The animated Saturday morning adventures of the *Super Friends* began in 1973, and through many incarnations, voice actor Danny Dark's Superman had been the big man at the Hall of Justice. In 1978, the Justice League met their match in the supervillain-filled Legion of Doom, in perhaps the most famous and beloved version of the show, *The Challenge of the Super Friends*. Although producers Hanna-Barbara had originally hoped to add Captain Marvel to the League, with his arch-foe Dr. Sivana as the evil Legion's mastermind, it was Lex Luthor who became the uncontested leader of this anti-JLA. With Superman's big-budget, big-screen debut fast approaching during production, there is little doubt the movie had an influence on Luthor's addition and appointment as lead rogue.

Challenge ran a full hour on ABC, with one half hour devoted to the League vs. Legion battles, and the other to tales of the core *Super Friends* from the previous seasons. Perhaps the impending release of *Superman: The Movie* influenced the episode "Terror from the Phantom Zone," written by Jeffery Scott, where three Kryptonian villains escape their ethereal prison and invade Earth. The basic premise of this episode would be mirrored in *Superman II*, a good portion of which was filmed during the first movie's production.

The Adventures Continue

From its glassy logo to its use of the icons of New York City (doubling as Metropolis), it was clear that the Salkinds' *Supergirl* was a continuation of the *Superman* movie franchise... although the Man of Steel's appearance in the Girl of Steel's film was relegated to a cameo as a wall poster.

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SUPERMAN THE MOVIE'S IMPACT ON OTHER SUPER-MEDIA

by Chris Franklin



The following year, Luthor (once again angrily voiced by Stan Jones) returned in *The World's Greatest Super Friends* episode aptly titled "Lex Luthor Strikes Back," also written by Scott. Lex is visited in prison (where we last saw him in *Superman: The Movie*) by Jimmy Olsen and a very Margot Kidder-like Lois Lane. Lex, who seems much more smug and Gene Hackman-like in this outing, has turned the tables on Lois (Wonder Woman voice actress Shannon Farnon). Jimmy is not who he appears to be, but Lex's dim-witted stooge Orville Gum in disguise. Orville is the spitting image of Ned Beatty's Otis, from his face to his pork-pie hat and loud, outdated suit. He and Lex plot their revenge against Superman and his teammates in a somewhat-familiar lair deep below the streets of Metropolis. When Luthor's deal with evil sun aliens backfires, Superman is forced to fly around the globe at super-speed to repel his flaming foes, in a move similar to the climactic end of the film. While Lex still sports his comic-accurate Bronze Age purple-and-green jumpsuit and jet-boots, this episode could almost be seen as a completely kid-targeted sequel to *Superman: The Movie*.

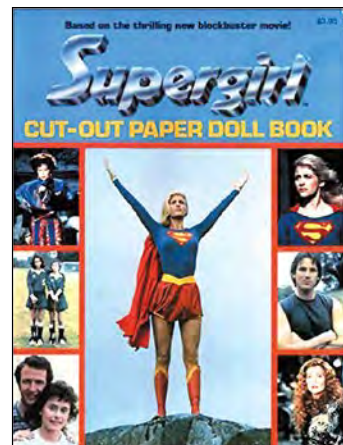
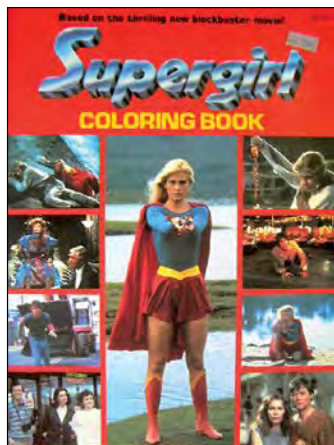


"YOU'LL BE SAFE HERE, SON."

Of course, the Salkind Superman films continued into the '80s, without Richard Donner, but with another Richard (Lester, in this case) filming the remainder of 1980's *Superman II* and its follow-up. Marc McClure's Jimmy Olsen got more screen time in *Superman III* (1983), in one of that film's best action sequences, but his role was even more important in the Salkind's next super-production. The following year, *Supergirl* was brought to the big screen with the hopes of breathing new life into the franchise, a franchise that Christopher Reeve officially stated he was done with after his third outing in the red and blue. Unfortunately for fans wanting to see a House of El family reunion with Supergirl Helen Slater, Reeve stood steadfast on this statement during *Supergirl*'s production. The small visual cameo by the Man of Steel was provided by a poster of Reeve from the first film, displayed on the wall of Supergirl's new roommate, Lucy Lane (Maureen Teefy). Yes, Lucy Lane, sister of Lois from the comics (apparently *not* the sister Lois mentions in the first film who has a family, mortgage, etc.), and on-again-off-again girlfriend to one Jimmy Olsen. Jimmy (played again by Marc McClure) bridges the continuity between the films, creating a shared cinematic comic universe 25 years before Tony Stark walked into that bar at the end of *The Incredible Hulk* (2008). Jimmy is in on the action when Supergirl battles a mystically controlled backhoe, and is also held captive by Faye Dunaway's hammy sorceress Selena in the film's climax.

While Jimmy figured into Supergirl's adventures on Earth, her Kryptonian heritage was a very important part of the movie's wandering plot. But Argo City, the surviving colony of Krypton from which Kara Zor-El came, is nothing like the cold, crystalline world envisioned by John Barry in Donner's film. Beyond the outer crystal-like structure of the city, the interior looks more like a hippie commune/shopping mall, with lots of earth tones and sweaters for clothing, instead of the 3M reflective outfits Jor-El and Lara sported. When Selena traps Supergirl in the Phantom Zone, she encases her in floating pane of glass like Zod and his minions. But that pane shatters on a desolate, barren world, which seems to be the *actual* Phantom Zone, contradicting what we had seen before.

In 1985, Marc McClure continued to wave the Superman brand flag in a commercial promoting Kenner's Super Powers Collection action-figure line (inset). In the *Daily Planet* offices (looking quite a bit different than the movie), Jimmy informs kids that they can send in proof-of-purchases from Super Powers figures in order to receive a free Clark Kent action figure. Jimmy notices that Clark's "Power Action Feature" is the same as his pal Superman's. Hmmmm....



Shared Super-Verse

(top) *The Challenge of the Super Friends* episode "Terror from the Phantom Zone" featured (inset) a trio of Phantom Zone escapees who were corralled by both Superboy and Superman. (middle) The inclusion of *Superman* supporting cast actor Marc McClure—shown here with Helen Slater as Linda Danvers and Maureen Teefy as Lucy Lane—connected 1984's *Supergirl* with the *Superman* movies that preceded it... and Jimmy was even included in (bottom) *Supergirl* merchandising!

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You're Never Too Big for Smallville

(top) Annette O'Toole so charmed fans as the adult Lana Lang in *Superman III* that she was cast (middle) as Martha Kent in TV's long-running *Smallville*. (bottom) No *Smallville* Superman film star cameo was more memorable, however, than Christopher Reeve's turn as Dr. Swann.

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The Andrew Wyeth-esque Smallville scenes in *Superman: The Movie* no doubt helped to inspire the series in general, but there were numerous other film influences felt throughout the series during its ten-season, 217-episode run.

Direct nods to the films include the series version of the Fortress of Solitude, a fairly straight adaptation of John Barry's design, and even the crystalline means of its creation. In flashbacks Jor-El and Lara are once again seen in white, with the "S" shield, although it is *Smallville* that establishes the authentic Kryptonese version of the symbol means "hope," which will be carried forward in later Superman productions. The character of Tess Mercer (Cassidy Freeman), introduced in Season Eight as Lex Luthor's heir apparent, is, of course, named after Valerie Perrine's "Miss Tessmacher."

But *Smallville*'s strongest connection to the Superman film series is its cast. *Superman III*'s own Lana Lang, Annette O'Toole, played another famous native of Smallville, Martha Kent, throughout the run of the series, first as a regular, then as special guest-star in later seasons. She replaced actress Cynthia Ettinger in the role before the pilot was aired, and reshot all of her scenes.

While O'Toole shared the task of raising her very special son with former *Dukes of Hazzard* star John Schneider as Jonathan Kent, another Superman film alum gave voice to Kal-El's biological father. Beginning with Season Two's episode "Calling," General Zod himself, Terence Stamp, would be giving disembodied voice to his cinematic jailer. Stamp's casting as Zod seemed to fuel the rather confusing portrayal of the character over the course of the series. It often seemed this Jor-El was far less benevolent than previous versions, and Stamp's presence only added to that slight air of menace in 22 episodes across the remainder of the series, including the finale. Jor-El's wife Lara was played by *Supergirl* star Helen Slater in three episodes beginning in Season Seven. She appeared alongside sci-fi/horror mainstay Julian Sands as Jor-El in those familiar white robes, recalling the celebrity stunt casting seen in both *Superboy* and *Lois & Clark: New Adventures of Superman*.

Smallville (Doomsday) and before becoming Man of Steel's previous iteration Superman's pal for some true Kryptonian exile Dax-Ur in his *Daily Planet* of the role of Bridge was meant to be production soon to telecommur (possibly name artist Curt Swan be the show's g

In Season Two Millar, Clark rec symbols similar delivered him to looking for any observatory, he but is called back Welling is face-to

Everyone real tragic horse-ri paralyzed, and his tireless work in the following years to further paralysis research and awareness. Although wheelchair-bound and immobile from the neck down in his scenes with Welling, Reeve commands the screen,

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