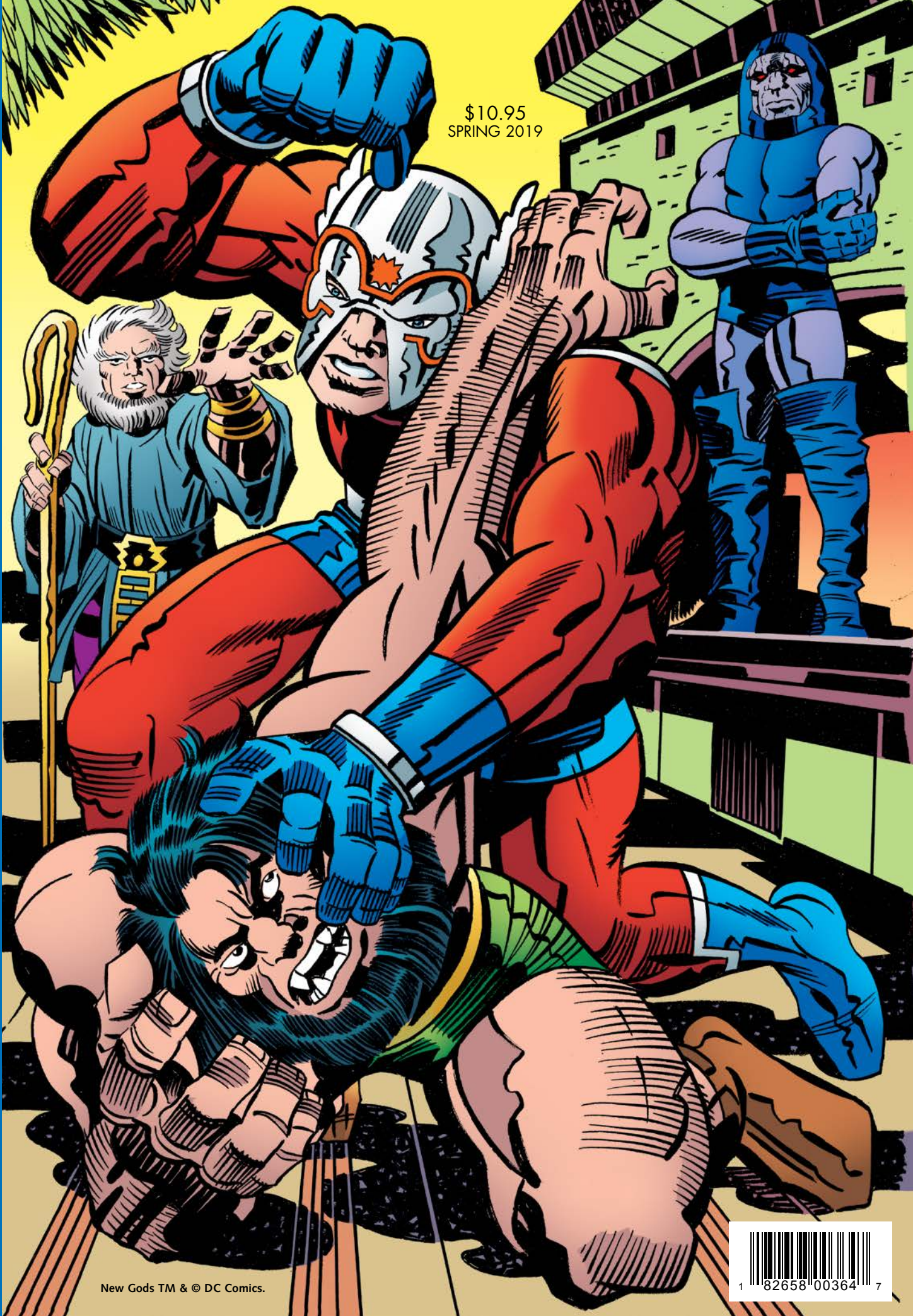




JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR SEVENTY-SIX

\$10.95  
SPRING 2019



New Gods TM & © DC Comics.





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Cover inks: **AL MILGROM**

Cover color: **GLENN WHITMORE**

Guest designer: **LILY MORROW**

Dedicated to the memory of my dad James R. Morrow (aka Rex Rhezor).

Numerous images in this issue are courtesy of the Jack Kirby Museum and [whatifkirby.com](http://whatifkirby.com), which have our brotherly thanks!

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THE

# JACK KIRBY

ISSUE #76, SPRING 2019

COLLECTOR

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First seen in the Jack Kirby Masterworks portfolio, this 1978 pencil drawing depicts both sibling rivalry, and détente between the dads of New Genesis and Apokolips. Thanks to Al Milgrom for inking it for our cover, and to Glenn Whitmore for his stellar coloring!

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# GROWING UP KIRBY

*The Marvel Memories of Jack Kirby's Son Neal Kirby  
Originally published on the Los Angeles Times' "Hero Complex" site on April 9, 2012*



In 1961, I was the luckiest damn kid on my block—or maybe any block. My father worked at home. Everyone else's dad had to drive into Queens or

Brooklyn or take the train into Manhattan. And it was not some boring, old desk job; my father was Jack Kirby, the King of Comics, and—though his humble personality would have him cringing to hear this—he is regarded as the greatest comic book artist and creator—ever. (Sorry, Dad).

Of course back in 1961, though well-regarded in his field, he wasn't yet crowned. He was just Jack Kirby—"Dad" to me, "Jack" to his wife, Roz; "Jakov" to his mother, Rose; and "Jankel" to his brother, Dave. Wanting a better life for his family (the overriding theme of his life), we were packed into the Studebaker and left

Brooklyn for the green suburbs of Long Island in 1949. Buying a house in East Williston, Nassau County, it was to be our home for the next 20 years.

Sixty-three years later, memories of that house are still vivid for me, but what I remember most is my father's studio. Buried in the basement, "The Dungeon" was tiny (just ten feet across) and the

walls that separated it from the rest of the cellar were covered in stained, tongue-and-groove knotty pine with a glossy varnish. Dad's drawing table faced a beautiful cherry wood cabinet that housed a 10" black-and-white television.

To the left of the cabinet was a beat-up, four-drawer file cabinet that was stuffed with Dad's vast archive of picture references to, well, everything. I could sit for hours and just mull through musty old folders with bayonets, battleships, medieval armor, cowboy hats, skyscrapers, satellites—countless files on countless subjects. And—much out of character for my father—that metal cabinet sat beneath a stuffed and mounted deer's head. I can't remember where he said he got that damned thing, but it was always there. The things you remember...

...my father finally got his first color television in 1963. The first color television program I ever saw at home? The Kennedy assassination in Dallas reached me, there in the Dungeon, and in more ways than one the world was no longer black-and-white. Dad handed me the old TV so I could take it apart and explore. I heard something bumping around inside the set when I dragged

it on the basement floor beyond the Dungeon's door. Screwdriver in hand, it didn't take long to find the loose object, but my jaw dropped when I studied the heavy disc. It was a 2000-year-old Roman coin. Dad, I knew the TV was old, but...!

My father couldn't stop laughing. There was a lot of super-hero history flying across his drawing board around that time—remember, September 1963 was the date on the first issue of *The Avengers* and *The X-Men*—but it all took a backseat that day to the mysterious return of Caesar Augustus. Dad had no idea how that coin got inside the television, but he did know how it first reached America. Back in 1944, he explained, he had been pulled from combat with a dangerous case of frozen feet and frostbite and then sent to a hospital in Britain. English farmers would plow ancient coins up by the dozen, and while they kept the gold ones, they gave the lumpy lead coins to "the boys in the ward" as souvenirs of Europe.

Ancient artifacts didn't seem out of place in the Dungeon, which felt like a time capsule—and, come to

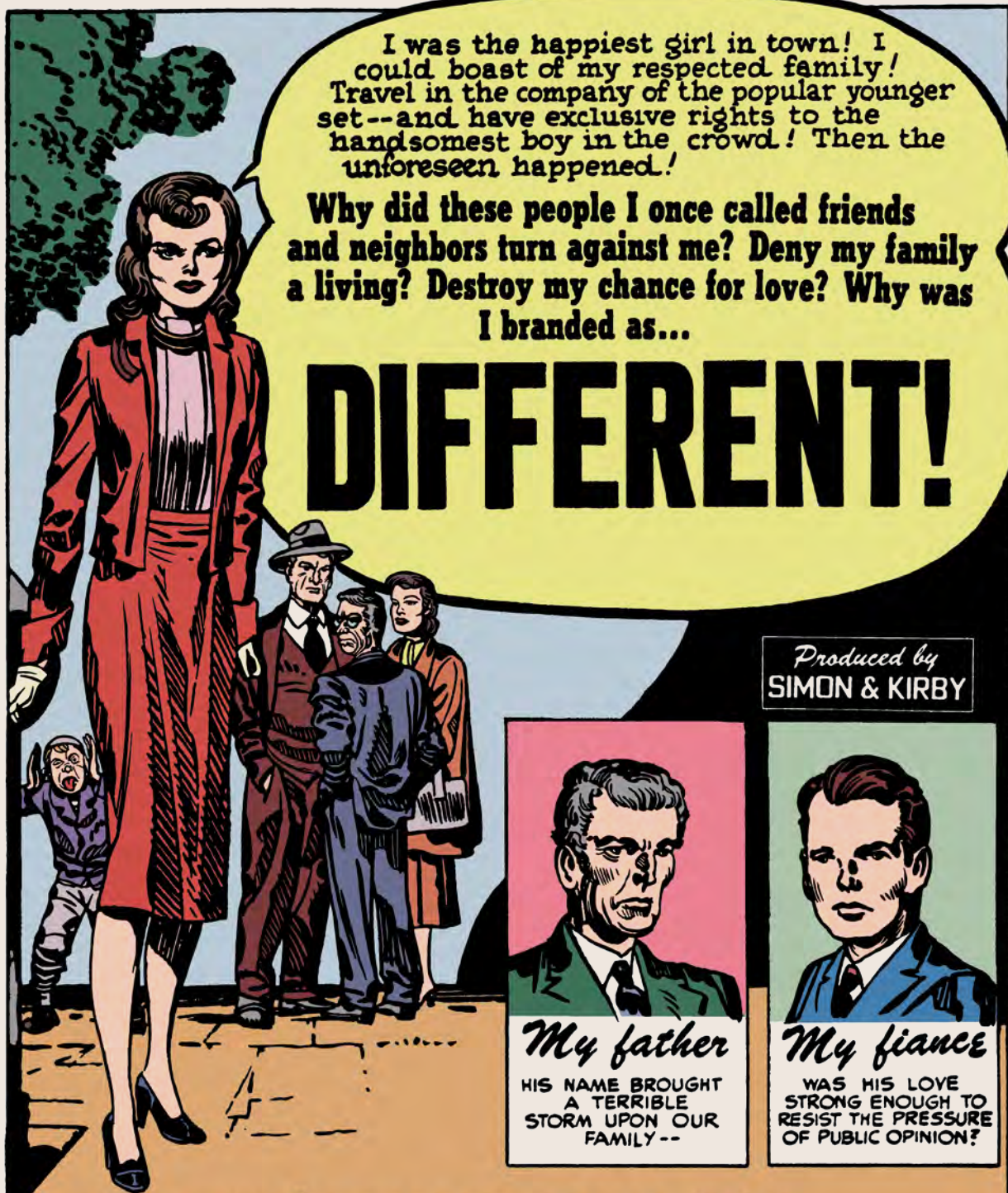


(above) Jack with Susan and Neal in March 1949.

(below) Fall 1950, at the playground with Roz and the kids.







"A TOUCHY SUBJECT"-- THAT IS THE TERM USED IN THE MAGAZINE FIELD TO DESCRIBE IRMA WILLIAMS' STORY! "DON'T PUBLISH IT," WE WERE WARNED BY OLD-TIMERS IN THE TRADE. "IT'S RISKY! IT WILL OFFEND TOO MANY READERS!" BUT WE HAVE A DEEP FAITH IN THE SENSE OF FAIR PLAY OF OUR READERS! IT IS THEY WHO WILL EVENTUALLY SOLVE THIS PROBLEM! BECAUSE THEY KNOW, THAT-- IN ANOTHER COUNTRY-- OR IN ANOTHER TOWN -- ANOTHER NEIGHBORHOOD THEY TOO MIGHT BE CALLED-- **DIFFERENT!**

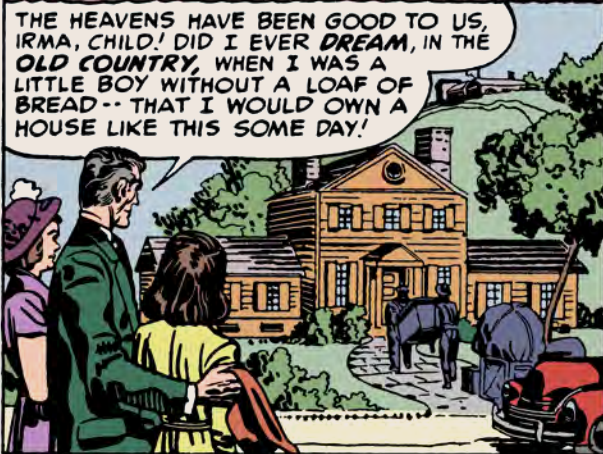


"I HAD SCARCELY REALIZED THAT THE SUMMER WAS OVER UNTIL I LOOKED OUT OF THE WINDOW TODAY-- LOOKED AT THE PINT-SIZED LITTLE TOWN WHICH I SHALL CALL JAYVILLE--ALTHOUGH THAT IS NOT ITS NAME.. THE SNOW COVERS THE TOWN LIKE FRESH, WHITE PAINT, BUT I CAN SEE THROUGH IT-- AND IT WILL NOT COVER THE FOULNESS WHICH I KNOW IS STILL THERE...



"I LIKE THE WINTER IN JAYVILLE..FOR THE SUMMER BRINGS BACK THE MEMORIES OF THE TIMES WHEN I WAS **ONE OF THEM**--AND, THAT IS WHEN THE SHAME AND THE HURT BURN DEEPEST...

THE HEAVENS HAVE BEEN GOOD TO US, IRMA, CHILD! DID I EVER DREAM, IN THE OLD COUNTRY, WHEN I WAS A LITTLE BOY WITHOUT A LOAF OF BREAD-- THAT I WOULD OWN A HOUSE LIKE THIS SOME DAY!



YES, JACOBY WILHEIM HAS COME A LONG WAY--A LONG WAY--

JACOBY WILHEIM IS A NAME YOU LEFT IN EUROPE, FATHER--ALONG WITH HUNGER AND POVERTY! YOU'RE JACK WILLIAMS NOW--AN AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN--A SUCCESS! YOU DESERVE EVERYTHING YOU HAVE!



LOOK, FATHER. WE CAN SEE THE TOWN FROM HERE.. HOW QUIET AND PEACEFUL IT IS!

QUIET AND PEACE ARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE-- LIKE YOUR MOTHER AND ME, IRMA! YOU AND YOUR BROTHER MUST FIND OTHER THINGS IN THE TOWN! I HOPE IT WILL BRING US LUCK!



"WE HAD CHOSEN JAYVILLE WHEN FATHER DECIDED TO MOVE HIS BUSINESS OUT OF THE BIG CITY.. THIS WAS OUR FIRST CONTACT WITH THE PEOPLE OF A SMALL TOWN. AND, THEIR FRIENDLINESS WAS A WELCOME CHANGE FROM THE CASUAL COLDNESS. OF THE CITY DWELLERS...

WE'VE COME TO WELCOME YOU INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD, MISTER WILLIAMS.. WE'RE THE BLANCHARD'S FROM ACROSS THE STREET.

SO YOU ALREADY KNOW MY NAME! THAT WILL SAVE US THE BOTHER OF STUFFY INTRODUCTIONS...



I KNOW HOW MUCH OF A STRAIN MOVING CAN BE, MRS. WILLIAMS, IF THERE'S ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO HELP--

YOU'VE ALREADY DONE MORE THAN WE CAN HOPE TO REPAY! YOU'VE MADE US FEEL THAT WE'RE **NOT STRANGERS!** COME INTO THE HOUSE?







Al Milgrom interviewed by John Morrow

(below) Al Milgrom back in the days of the 1970s.

(bottom) Kirby's pencils, and the published inked cover, to Justice Inc. #3.

(next page) 1972 Raam the Man Mountain concept art by Kirby, which he presented to Carmine Infantino at DC Comics as another possible 1970s series.



[Al Milgrom began working in comics in 1972 as an assistant to Murphy Anderson at DC Comics, and joined a wave of "young turks" who entered a comics industry built largely on what Kirby had developed in the previous decade. Al eventually moved to Marvel Comics, gaining prominence as a penciler on Captain Marvel from 1975-1977. He worked at DC Comics from 1977-1978, where he co-created Firestorm with writer Gerry Conway. Milgrom later served as editor at Marvel Comics, where he coined his nickname "Editori-Al" in cartoon-style editorial columns.]

Al has penciled, inked, written, and edited a wealth of popular characters and series during his illustrious career, and his path has crossed with Kirby at times, as you'll see in this phone interview conducted on February 19, 2019.]

**THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR:** What was your earliest exposure to Jack Kirby's work?

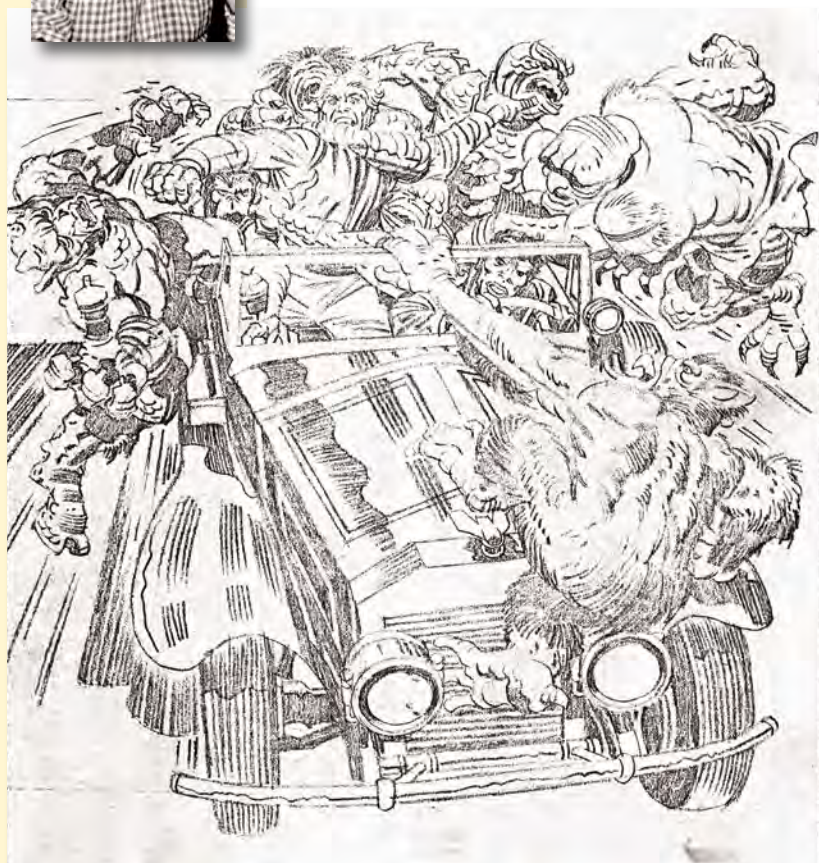
**AL MILGROM:** My first exposure, although I didn't know it was Kirby at the time, was probably *The Fly* #1 from Archie Comics, about 1959. I was already buying comics from the age of seven or so. I saw that one, and it was new and it was different, and I picked it up. I'm not sure how much of the first issue Jack actually drew; he's credited with the lead origin story, but there's a lot of swipes from his earlier stuff, from *Stuntman* and *Fighting American*. I'm wondering if that wasn't Joe Simon doing the job, and swiping Kirby when he felt like it. But even if it was Simon swiping Kirby, there was something about it that fascinated me, and I found it

really engrossing, and it sucked me in.

The other early exposure to his stuff I remember is, a friend of mine gave me *Fantastic Four* #1. He said, "You've gotta read this comic. It's the worst comic I've ever seen in my life." [laughs] I remember reading it and kind of agreeing with him, because it disturbed my sense of what was right in a super-hero comic. The characters were destroying public property, and Sue Storm was knocking over people in the street, and the Torch was burning up Air Force jets. Up to that point, I was only familiar with the goody-goody DC characters. Even Batman in those days was depicted as pretty squeaky-clean. So I didn't like the first issue of *FF*, but I never gave it back; I've still got it. [laughs] The next issue I saw was #3 where they got costumes and sort of a super-villain, and I thought, "Oooh, this is more interesting." It still wasn't quite good, I didn't think. #3 was a step in the right direction, and I thought, "Maybe I'll pick up one or two more of these, and see if it gets any better."

The one that really made an impression on me was #6, which was the next one I saw. That was the issue where Dr. Doom and Sub-Mariner teamed up to fight the Fantastic Four, and that one just blew my mind. It was the greatest comic I'd ever read. There was a sequence in there, where Doom had kidnapped the Baxter Building, he was pulling it into outer space, and he immediately broke his alliance with Sub-Mariner, and was going to kill him as well as the Fantastic Four. The only one who could reach his spaceship from the Baxter Building was the Sub-Mariner; he put on a watertight helmet and leaped from meteor to meteor. There was this three-panel sequence that really stuck in my head, where Sub-Mariner's leaping from one meteor to the next, yelling, "Go! Go! Go!", getting progressively closer with each panel. That was nothing that Curt Swan ever did. [laughs]

The other comic that attracted me early-on was the third issue of the *Incredible Hulk*. There was something about that *Hulk* #3 cover where he's leaping through the air and carrying Rick Jones. I really liked it; the whole





bit about where, in the early issues, he'd turn into the Hulk at night, and back to Bruce Banner during the day. They had a recap of the origin, so you knew what was going on. Then they developed that mental telepathy connection, so Rick could control him, but only as long as he could stay awake. So that added another interesting, dramatic element.

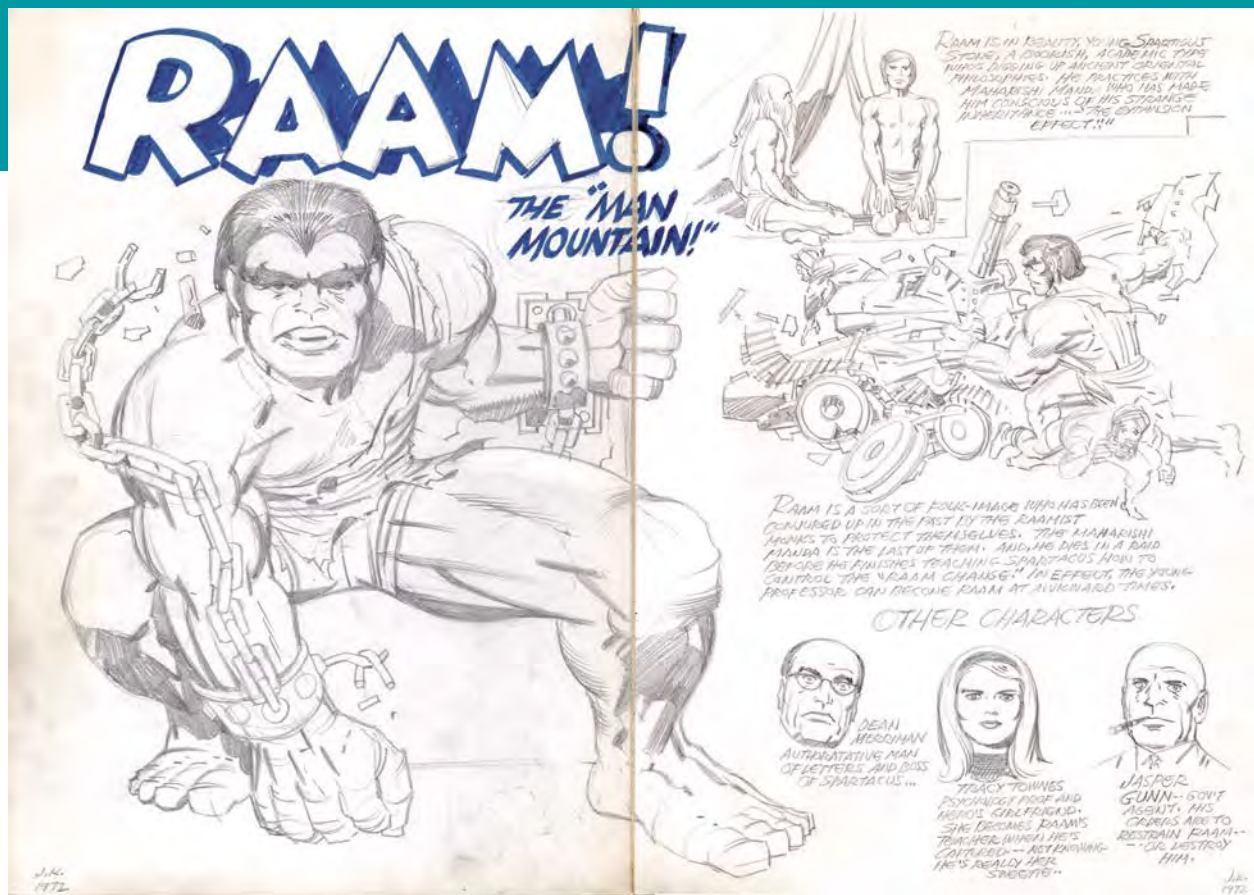
In one of the stories, the Hulk fought the Ringmaster and his Circus of Crime. There was one or two panels where the Hulk hits the human cannonball guy, barreling towards him, being shot out of a cannon. The Hulk is leaning way back, and again, it was a perspective that no regular draftsman could've possibly pulled off. That didn't occur to me at the time; I just remember thinking, "Whoa, look at the way he's leaning back," and then he punches the guy up through the circus tent, and he drags the whole tent with him. These were the kind of shots that Kirby just threw out. It blew my mind.



TJKC: When did you first encounter Jack professionally?

MILGROM: I inked a cover for Denny O'Neil at DC, *Justice Inc.* #3. Denny I'm sure was in some kind of desperate deadline situation, and he called me up and said, "Al, could you possibly ink a cover for me overnight?" And I said, "Yeah, sure, who's the penciler?" And he said "Kirby," and I went, "Oh my God!"

I remember being so nervous, my hands were almost shaking. I remember making one alteration in it. The hood ornament was too far over to one side; it didn't line up right on the center of the radiator grill. I was so nervous about changing anything, I actually traced



it off on a separate piece of paper, but placed more centered where it should've been. I tried to stay very true to it, but I did move it over a little bit. I was relatively happy with the way it turned out.

While I was working for Murphy up at DC, Carmine came in with some Kirby pencils for a proposed character. He wanted me to ink samples; I think he was seeing if I was good enough to ink Kirby for them. They were looking for some other inkers over Jack's stuff. The name of the character was Raam; it was some kind of guy that had Eastern mystical mental powers, and he could transform himself into this Hulk-like creature, only with pointier eyebrows. I started inking it on vellum; I got about halfway through it, and I was upset it wasn't turning out well. I started another one from scratch, and when I finally brought it in to show Carmine, he said, "Yeah, these look pretty good," but he didn't seem overly enthusiastic. He didn't criticize me or give me any hints. If there was an opportunity to ink Kirby there, I lost it.

TJKC: Do you recall the date you inked that Raam piece?

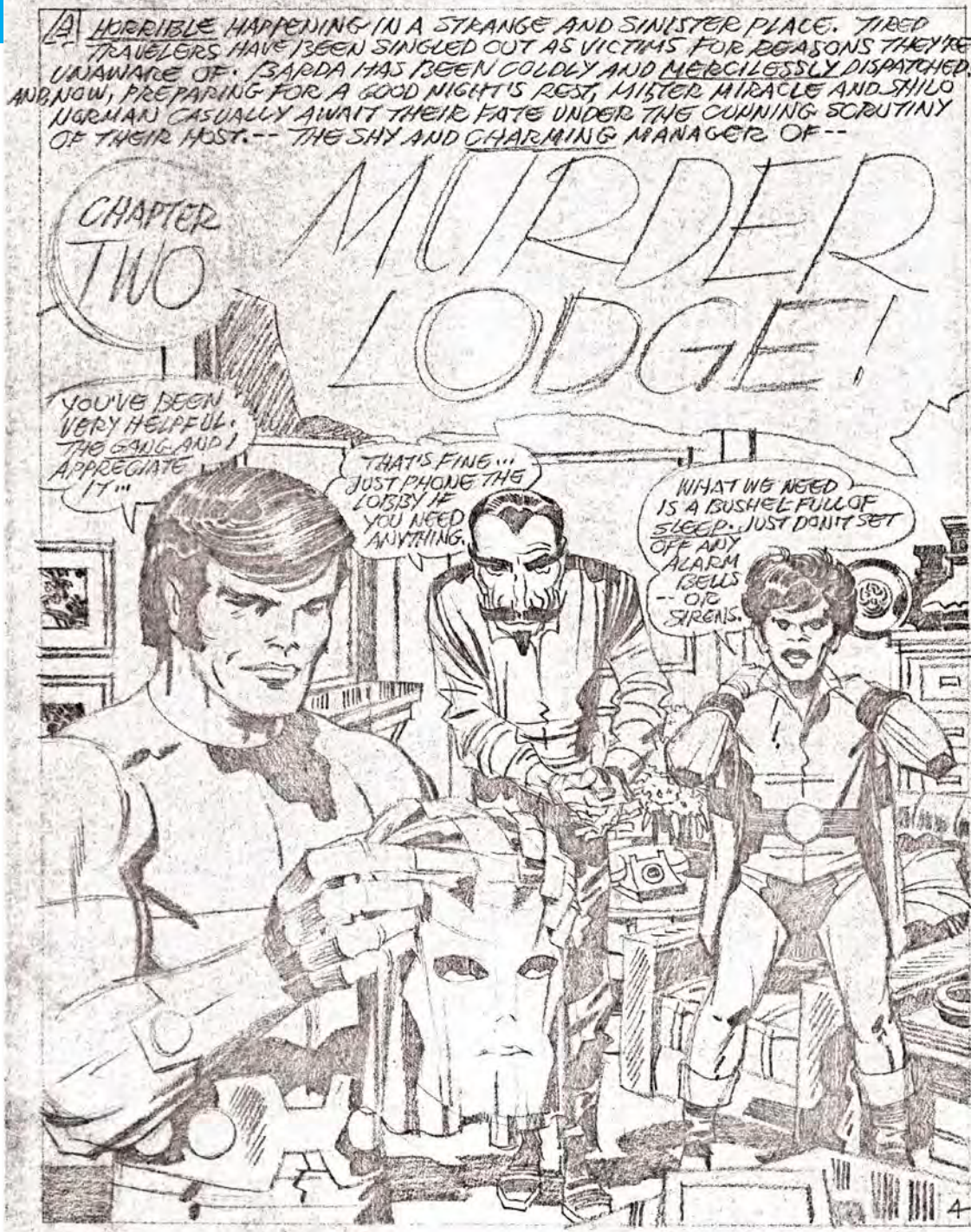
MILGROM: I moved to NY in 1972, and quit working for Murphy about a year later. I was up at DC between mid-1972 to mid-1973. [Editor's Note: D. Bruce Berry took over inking for Mike Royer on *Kamandi* #16, which would've been inked in late 1973. So I'm assuming this tryout for Al was to consider him for that spot, before Berry came on board. By mid-1973, Jack was also drawing his final issue of *The Demon*, so Raam may've been considered to replace it on Kirby's schedule.]

I met [Jim] Starlin in middle school, and we were in high school together. When I first moved to New York, I moved in with him; he had a place on Staten Island with Steve Skeates and Bill DuBay. I replaced Mike Friedrich, who moved back to California. When we all eventually moved out and went our separate ways, I ended up in an apartment with Elliot Maggin. In mid-1973, Dave Cockrum asked me to help him ink some pages of *Superboy and the Legion of Super-Heroes*. Then Starlin got me inking for *Sword of Sorcery*, "Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser." I inked that, and he took it over to Marvel to



# THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

Kirby's kids at DC Comics,  
by Shane Foley



(left) Mister Miracle #17,  
page 4

I never warmed to the character of Shilo Norman. Compared to MM's previous cohorts, the Female Furies, I thought he was uninspired—and his costume, seen in this issue for the first time, seems really generic, as though Jack had no real hope of a future for the strip. The revised story quality didn't help either. Looking at these pencils, I have to ask—was this originally page 1, rather than 4? Because there is space left at the bottom for the issue's indicia!

(right) Demon #7, page 11

This is another page that shows Kirby's unusual practice of occasionally photocopying his work before it's completed. Both panels 1 and 4 have foreground and/or background details missing, while panel 5 has a dialogue balloon absent at this stage.

Regarding panel 4 [below], we could ask ourselves: Why did Kirby decide a wavy shadow was best to add? Straight, angled shadows would be more "realistic"! But Kirby's unique gut-in-instinct dictated this shape was best to suggest tension, energy, and movement in the air! To create such an atmosphere on static paper, without the tools of music and controlled directing and cutting that movies have at their disposal, is always a challenge for a cartoonist—a challenge Kirby mastered in a different league than anyone else! "The Kids are Alright" says our heading? I don't know—that Klarion is one spooky guy!!

(page 30) Forever People #5 – Lonar back-up, page 2

In a mere 4 pages, Kirby creates a mini-epic bristling with promise! Following page 1 with the dynamic opening shot of the ruins the previously unknown hero has discovered, Kirby reinforces the extent of those ruins by showing a second panel with the hero dwarfed by the decaying structures. No ordinary ruins these, but such with evocative markings and shapes that hint of otherworldly mystery and power. (Of course, Kirby fans expected no less from him!) Panel 2 finally shows us the new hero—and here he is holding what many have seen as Thor's dilapidated helmet. Did Kirby mean it that way? It certainly fits his theme and his attitude to his old company! Then the page ends with the introduction of a new mystery, that forces us to page 3. Vinnie Colletta's inking took no shortcuts on the final product, occasionally with added textures and shading to give (what he felt was needed) a little more form to Kirby's images.





## THE "GOD"

*The All-Fathers of two eras  
joust with their sons*

(right) An ancient illustration of the world's end, as Immortals and evil ones collide in a final holocaust.

(bottom right) A 15th century depiction of Odin cradling his great spear and flanked by his two mystical ravens, which brought him news of the events that shaped his universe.

In the late 1960s, Odin was voted "Best Supporting Character" in comicdom by interested readers. It was a richly deserved award; Lord Odin was unlike any other supporting star of the realm of sequential art at the time. He was not only far more powerful than the titular hero, but he was the sovereign monarch of "a universe entire," all-knowing, all-wise, all-powerful, and ever just.

Balderdash!

Though Odin was the father (of sorts) to all the Norse gods, his family of three (what really happened to his wife and Thor's mother?) was constantly at odds with themselves, if not with other Asgardians.

Why? Why so many problems? Or, why wasn't the All-Father a better father?!



## MYTHS &amp; COMIC MYTHS

In myth, Lord Odin is the chief sky-god of a warrior people, the Aesir, conjured into legend by the Vikings of northern Europe, who roamed and plundered other lands from their great boats moored in their fjords.

I won't belabor the ancient origins (which differed even among the Vikings) as other contributors have gone into them already. But I will say that Odin's claim to omnipotence falls apart in the face of Ragnarok. In myths, Odin and his legion of Valkyries (as close to the Judeo-Christian angels as you can put it) chose the bravest of the Vikings killed in battle, installed their souls into the Odinian castle at

Valhalla, and pleasures and eternal happiness follow until the eventual Ragnarok, the Fall of the Gods (and the end of the Earth, for that matter).

But do omnipotent gods fear to face their own end, or even know an end is coming?

In Jack and Stan's take, Hela takes the slain to her dark realm (Valhalla) and Odin presides over the mighty Aesir to stave off Ragnarok. Still, Jack and Stan had to have Ragnarok, though they could've abandoned the concept as easily as they omitted Odin's lost eye and Thor's red hair. In either case, Odin is not all-powerful, and in the comics (set up by Gerry Conway in *Thor* #200), the King of the Eternal Realm even announces that he set the entire affair up! Why?





# FATHERS & SONS

Design by  
Lily Morrow

by Jerry Boyd

**T**hough Darkseid and Highfather were the chief father figures of the Fourth World tetralogy, their parenting skills didn't get much page time from the King.

Scott Free and Orion, their more famous offspring, got the most attention from editor/writer/artist Jack Kirby, but through their characterizations, the influence of their fathers' DNA and world-shaping comes to the foreground.

Scott is truly Izaya and Avia's son, possessing an inner tranquility which helps him overcome the horrors around him on Apokolips and Earth. Orion is truly Darkseid and Tigra's son, a ferocious monster, held ironically in check by Mother Box, an invention pioneered by one of the dread lord's greatest enemies, Himon.

Kirby would subtly move these two young heroes, raised on the rival god-worlds, briefly near and then far away from their powerful fathers, and then set up battles to come in their upbringing. It's a brilliant work, as I've said before, and the fathers-sons story is another piece of this multifaceted masterwork.... er, make that masterpiece. (*Marvel Masterworks* might not care for that...)

We feel the fathers' influences among many of their followers. They're not just parents, they're father figures. Izaya is the transformed pacifist, changed from the warrior of old. In many ways he's the late-in-life hippie who shares the way of "The New Left" that would follow. The New Left showed up on the cover of a late '60s magazine



cover—the long hair, the slang, the music; the counter-culture had arrived, and Kirby had to be impressed. His "super hippies" were the Forever People, adorned with cowboy hats, beads, a poncho, and buckskins—they were led the way by the older Highfather.

"Darkseid was all the bad people throughout history rolled into one," Jack told a crowd more than once, and the dread lord backs up those words with casual ease. He's an absentee father to his feral sons, and cares little for either, though Orion earns some grudging respect for his rebellion from the older god. Darkseid and

(left) Zeus had the power (as did Lord Odin) to stop a battle between lesser gods in *Journey Into Mystery* Annual #1. The King would not have an omnipotent power in his new age pantheon of immortals, outside of the Source.







# KIRBY KINETICS

by Norris Burroughs

An ongoing examination of Kirby's art and compositional skills



## SIMON & KIRBY INKERS

As someone who has been mildly obsessed with Kirby's work most of my life, over the years I find myself continually returning to a subject that has fascinated me since I was twelve. That was when I saw my first sample of Golden Age *Captain America* art, ostensibly written and drawn by the creative team of Joe Simon and Jack Kirby. The artwork had been used as a faded backdrop for a stark black-and-white photograph of the Captain America that had appeared in the 1944 Republic Pictures film serial. The photo-montage accompanied an article in a 1964 issue of *Screen Thrills Illustrated*, a magazine devoted to old action-adventure films and serials. This issue featured an article about the first on-screen Captain America.

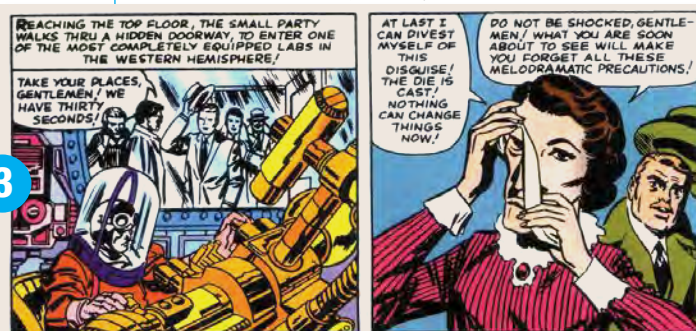
The star-spangled hero was suddenly hot again because Marvel Comics' Stan Lee and Cap's original co-creator/artist Jack Kirby had just revived him. I

was around twelve years old and had been looking at Kirby's work since 1960, although I'd not heard of Joe Simon until the day I read that issue of *Screen Thrills*. I learned that Kirby and Simon

had not only worked together since 1940, but also had a stable of artists to assist them. There was in particular a strange fascination with the first ten issues of *Captain America*, done for Timely Comics in 1941.

Creator/artist/magician Jim Steranko stated that he had developed much of his comic drawing style while obsessively poring over those ten issues. There is some sort of complex magic emanating from those pages that defies description. Looking at the artwork, it's instantly clear that the mix of artists is so jumbled across the pages, sometimes even from panel-to-panel, that identifying them has challenged and stumped many an expert art spotter.

Several of the hands that worked on those pages are unknown and probably never will be known. Several years ago, I decided to create a sort of blog dialog by corresponding with Atlas expert Michael Vassallo as well as general art connoisseur Jim Vadeboncoeur. We began with the consensus that essentially, the team of Simon and Kirby featured Jack as the primary artist/writer, while Simon did writing, layouts, some drawing and inking, but primarily functioned in an editorial capacity. It is fairly certain that Kirby always penciled and inked part of or the majority of the splash pages, which graduated to double-page spreads on some stories by issue #6. On *Captain America* #1, we can probably assume that Simon and





**BARGAIN  
RACK...**

**...TO HAUTE  
COUTURE!**



# INCIDENTAL ICONOGRAPHY

*An ongoing analysis of Kirby's visual shorthand,  
and how he inadvertently used it to develop his characters,  
by Sean Kleefeld*



For this “Fathers and Sons” issue, I thought it would be interesting to look at one of Jack’s more famous father/son pairings: Odin and Thor. I actually covered all of Jack’s versions of Thor back in *TJKC* #44; if you don’t have that issue, the short version is that Jack heavily relied on the basic design ideas put forth by turn-of-the-century illustrator Arthur Rackham and his paintings based on Richard Wagner’s *The Ring of the Nibelung*. (Yes, even including those circle designs on Thor’s chest in both his 1957 and 1962 iterations!) Jack’s biggest departure from Rackham’s general designs was that, at Marvel, he



(above) Joe Sinnott’s *Journey into Mystery* #92 swipe, based on Kirby’s *JIM* #88 panel (right).



drew Thor’s cape more in a traditional superhero style as opposed to a fur that was wrapped around the body for warmth.

Odin first appeared in *Journey into Mystery* #86, several months after Thor’s debut. Only his face is depicted,

however, so there is little design to discern. We do see that Jack has given him a full mustache and beard, and part of a helmet can be seen coming down over his eyes with a non-descript wing motif on the brow. Readers’ first glimpse of Odin in full is on the cover of *Journey into Mystery* #88; however, this was likely drawn after Jack finished the interior, which includes a seated Odin in one panel. Both depictions are small and, therefore, comparatively light on details, but there is enough there to see that the two designs are different. The boots, leggings, and belt are distinct in each drawing.

Odin’s appearance in #89 is, once again, just a face [above], though this time without a helmet. Issue #90 features another face-only appearance; however, this issue was drawn by Al Hartley and it appears he largely copied Odin’s visage from #86. Joe Sinnott handled the art duties in #91, showing a bare-chested Odin, wearing only a cape and somewhat stereotypical Viking helmet.

Joe took on the art duties for Odin’s next appearance, and here the character appears for seven panels, the most for any single story to date. In most of these panels, we only see a small portion of Odin and he looks much like how Joe drew him previously. What’s interesting is that the one full-body shot we have of him is copied almost exactly from Jack’s drawing of him in *JIM*

#88. There is one very noteworthy difference, though: The two large circle designs that Jack drew on Odin’s belt have become one and moved from the belt onto Odin’s torso—in almost exactly the same spot Thor’s are placed. It’s actually Joe, then, who begins to visually equate the father and son characters with similar features. Joe continues with the next several issues, drawing Odin fairly consistently, but still noticeably relying heavily on

Jack’s rendering from

#86. (Issue #95 in fact features Odin sitting in exactly the same manner Jack drew him in, but just from a different perspective.)

Jack doesn’t really return to drawing Odin until #97. There’s a quick facial appearance in the main story, but what’s more relevant now are the “Tales of Asgard”



Odin and young Thor in *Journey into Mystery* #101.



Unlocking Scott Free, in a pop-psychology session with columnist Adam McGovern and writer Tom King

Do not adjust your Mother Box: Mitch Gerads' existence-bending cover to the first issue (above, this page) and existence-ending first spread from Scott's journey to oblivion and back (below, this page).

#### Next page:

(top) Love at war, with the Miracle family (text: King/art: Gerads).

(center) Kirby speaks through Scott's father-figure (text: King & Kirby/art: Gerads).

(bottom) Cover artist Nick Derington fills in some fury.

The Fourth World was not your father's cosmic war—but fatherhood has played a defining role in every generation of it. Bad and absentee dads set the entire saga in motion, as the patriarchs of righteous, idyllic New Genesis and desolate, dystopian Apokolips swap sons to secure a ceasefire. The sins of these fathers cast shadows across the conflict which inevitably flares up again, and Kirby's epic was conceived in the shadow of a dishonorable war which consumed many young people (no doubt some of whom had grown up with his stories). Kirby himself had known war since his own childhood, in the turf battles between gangs of the ethnic ghettos he was born into, and later as a youth in WWII. His creations survive, and among his most recent spiritual heirs, perhaps none have done him prouder than writer, Iraq War veteran and father of three Tom King, and groundbreaking, uncompromising artist Mitch Gerads, who spent a year (and who each won an Eisner) newly making Mister Miracle. In this version King cuts to the heart of Scott Free and Barda's lifetime pain and hard-fought love in tribute to Kirby's most soul-bearing of series, while Gerads creates a labyrinth of possible realities for the protagonists to find their way through, with a quietly astounding style of layered



imagery and clashing moods and textures which fulfills Kirby's ambitions for the artform. As the series was about to meet even more admirers in its first collected edition, I spoke with this newest of comic "Kings" about the one he and Gerads were honoring.

#### THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR:

In both your professional loves and personal outlook, what connects you to Kirby?

TOM KING: Asking someone who spends their life loving comics what brought them to Jack Kirby is like asking someone who spent their life loving music what brought them to Mozart. [laughs] You dip into comics, and [then] you go deep enough and you start finding that every single arrow points in the same direction, they all lead back to Kirby at some point. It's hard to say what

brings me to Kirby, he's always been there; it's kind of like what brings fish to the water, it's where you're swimming.

TJKC: And how about to this particular character?

KING: I'd been scheduled to do a project with Mitch Gerads, the brilliant artist who brings it all to life, which got cancelled at the last minute. So the publisher of DC Comics, Dan DiDio, said he'd like us to do a literary series like I'd done at Marvel with *The Vision*, and said, "Is there a character you'd like to work on?" I said, "No, I want you to give me a character," so if it's bad the guilt would be on him, [laughs] and he offered Mister Miracle.

When somebody offers you the New Gods you don't say no!

I was at a con, so the next day I went straight to the TwoMorrows booth. [laughter] I just started reading every interview with Kirby I could find, and researching the deeper themes of this work. I talked with Frank Miller about his experiences with Kirby in his younger days; Mike Royer who of course inked the *[Fourth World]*—just to get some firsthand accounts of what it meant to everybody. And once I had that point of view on it, it became an idea of how can you personalize it, because nobody knew better than Kirby that nothing is literature





## THE HUMANITY OF X-51

by Shane Foley

I got a big surprise when I recently re-read 2001 #8—Jack's origin issue for Mr. Machine/Machine Man. Because Jack nailed it again in a way I hadn't really seen before.

The issue beautifully dramatizes the identity crises in the 'X' series of machine men as, to the horror of their creators, they are going quite mad.

The problem, in the creatures' own words, is, "I'm not a thing! But what am I? What am I?" "Why was I built? Why?" "Don't call me a 'thing'—I'm *not* a thing!"

They are having a severe identity crisis!

It's too much for their makers, and they have no answer except a heavy-handed one of destruction. So the 'X' series machine men are to be terminated.

The story, though, centers on the only survivor: X-51.

Why did he survive?

Because he'd been taken to another place and instead of being treated as an object, he was treated as a son.

He was given a name. He was given a face. His number was visibly removed. He was given respect and identity.

He was loved—something the other fifty 'X' machines did not have.

As the machine men are being destroyed, by the bombs built into them, discussion amongst two officials centers on the absent fifty-first robot.

*"X-51 is not just a number to (Dr. Stack)—he's almost*

*a son!"*

*"I warned you against allowing Stack to..."*

*"...to take that thinking computer into his home? To attempt to give him a human identity? Who's to say that isn't the right course to follow? It may yet be the solution to our problem..."*

But the bombs are already set to explode.

Jack's story: These thinking, feeling machine men have been made, body and soul, in a human image. Therefore, just like humans, they need respect, love and all the things well-loved people take as a given as they grow up and live—or they go crazy!

I was 19 or 20 when I first read this issue in 1977. I thought it a powerful story—well scripted, powerfully staged, terrific storytelling! That growing up and living with true love was essential for good mental well-being wasn't something I thought about much, because I was raised with it and took it for granted. But I knew others talked about it, and understood that Jack had dug into very real stuff.

Jump forward 42 years: Re-reading the issue the other day, I got that unexpected resonance of just how powerful Jack's understanding was—and how pitch-perfect that origin story is.

We all see many people in our lives—some seem to make life work no matter what it throws at them, while others seem lost and unable to cope.

We see how some can rise above adversity with a steady attitude, while others have their world crumble and their confidence goes with it.

We see some take all sorts of personal slurs with little lasting effect, while others wilt at the mere threat of it.

Is this just the way things are—with the type of strength you have embedded in your genes? Or are there other factors involved?

Yes—the old "nature or nurture" argument.

I would suggest Jack is saying in this story that he believes being parented and affirmed with dignity, respect and genuine love is a major factor in peoples' well-being. Indeed, that without them lies the way of madness.

Is he only talking about robots? Of course not. Jack's work often has a large symbolic element in it—that's one reason his stories have so much power.

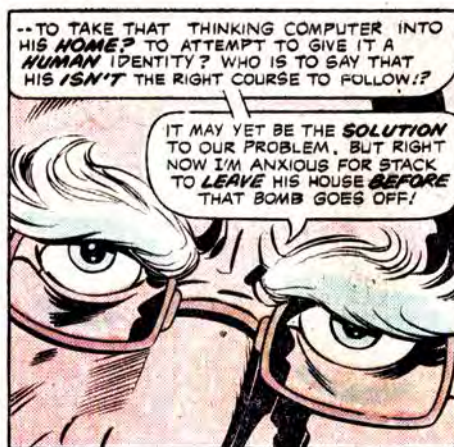
And it seems to be about genuine love.

Was John Lennon right when he chanted "love is all you need"? Many agree.

Others don't! "Don't talk to me of love—it's obvious—it's not enough!" cried Ian Gillan in Deep Purple's "The Battle Rages On!"

But of course, love is a word that's meaning is fuzzy.

It doesn't take us too many years of





Barry Forshaw is the author of *American Noir*, *British Gothic Cinema*, and *The Rough Guide to Crime Fiction* (available from Amazon) and the editor of *Crime Time* ([www.crimetime.co.uk](http://www.crimetime.co.uk)); he lives in London.



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

# KIRBY

# OBSCURA



## KIRBY ON A SMALLER SCALE

Those of us (such as you, dear reader) who worship at the Kirby altar are hopefully not blind to the fact that other artists—dare I say it?—did certain things better than The King. While he was a master of economically rendered human expression in his characters, a younger artist, the massively talented Neal Adams, was to take this particular skill to heights that, frankly, Kirby could not aspire to. Just take, for instance, Adams' nuanced use of facial expressions in his superb *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* stint, that sported such niceties as the heroes biting their lower lips in apprehension—along with many other subtleties; something the older artist really didn't attempt. But—before you remind me—I'm here to praise Kirby, not to bury him, so let's talk about one thing (among many) that he really did do better than anyone else: Grotesque monsters and creatures laying waste to cities on a gigantic scale. In terms of the sheer invention and dynamism of his work in Marvel's monster books, he simply had no equal. And that's not even to mention the amazingly fecund design of the creatures—Kirby very rarely repeated himself. All of which is a counterintuitive preamble to talking



about a tale which could not be further from such fantasy on a grand scale—an intimate, moody story of (possibly) supernatural revenge to be found in DC's *House of Secrets* #8 (January 1958), "The Cats Who Knew Too Much." This piece begins after a resentful butler has murdered his mistress, but finds that her will forces him to live in her palatial house with his deceased mistress' much-loathed cats. This is a character piece of modest proportions, but Kirby shows that in terms of generating supernatural atmosphere, he is just as accomplished as when showing Armageddon brought about by gigantic creatures.

The splash panel [left] shows the murderous protagonist shrinking away from the three felines surrounding him, and it is variations on this theme that pepper the entire story. Again and again, Kirby shows his reluctance to stay within DC's house style—one of the reasons, perhaps (along with the falling out with editor Jack Schiff) that led to his exile from the company. A typical example of his more dynamic approach in this story? Attempting to strike one of the menacing cats, the protagonist jumps after it as it dashes away from him [above]. But human being and his feline tormentor have a distorted, dynamic physicality which other DC artists in this issue, Bill Ely, George Papp and Ruben Moreira, make no attempt to emulate. Another pleasure of the story is Kirby's use of the large house's architecture, with the illustrator finding different ways of looking at the looming staircases, etc. in every panel. Don't get me wrong, this is a minor effort, but it's more of an enjoyable chamber music piece alongside Kirby's full-blooded symphonies. It's reprinted in the *Jack Kirby Omnibus* Volume 1.

## MEETING AT THE WATER COOLER: KIRBY AND DITKO

As an assiduous reader of this magazine, I'm sure you've gathered (as I have) one simple fact: Editor Stan Lee's twin titans at Marvel, Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko, didn't do a great deal of socializing (no doubt Mark Evanier could throw light on this issue). And given that, Lee's

WHY DID A CAT'S SHADOW UPON THE WALL STRIKE DEADLY FEAR INTO HIS HEART? WHY DID THE PAD OF LITTLE FEET MAKE HIM TREMBLE? WHAT, INDEED, DID HE HAVE TO FEAR FROM...

## THE CATS WHO KNEW TOO MUCH!





## REMEMBERING JACK

Top creators eulogize their mentor, on the February 12, 1994 Moondog's Pop Culture Hour radio program

(right) Jack sits at his drawing table in the late 1980s. Photo by Michael Zuccaro.

(below) USA Today ran this obituary the week of Jack's passing. It's the one sent to editor John Morrow that got him back into comics, and eventually starting this magazine in 1994.

(next page) An example of the animation concept work Gil Kane produced, alongside Kirby, at Ruby-Spears Productions in the 1980s.

Moondog's Comics was Chicago's largest chain of pop culture stores from 1978-1996, owned by Gary Colabuono, former CEO of the Chicago Comicon. Their radio program, Moondog's Pop Culture Radio Hour, was co-hosted by Gary and Kim "Howard" Johnson. Their weekly show ran live from September 1993–April 1994, every Saturday morning from 11:00 to noon on WCBR, a 5000 watt station in Arlington Heights, IL—a northwest suburb of Chicago. Although the show was live, there were some pre-recorded segments like this one from February 12, 1994. Our thanks to Gary and Howard for allowing us to present these tributes from the top names in comics of the time, originally airing the week of Jack's passing.

Howard recalls: "Gary always gave me a lot of freedom in putting the shows together, which was great. There was always a comics guest and a pop culture guest from TV or film. Most of the interviews were done by phone with folks like Bob Newhart, Steve Allen, and Bob Hope, but we did have in-studio guests like Jeff Garlin, Del Close, Mr. T, and Tiny Tim, along with comics in-studio guests like Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti, Jim Valentino, Don Simpson, and local artists like Hilary Barta, Barry Crain, and a pre-Marvels Alex Ross. We'd had so many big names on the show by that point (going back to Action Comics



#1 editor Vincent Sullivan!)—from Stan Lee to Todd McFarlane, Frank Miller, and Neil Gaiman—that I decided it was time to approach the King.

"So I phoned Roz, told her who I was, and asked about getting Jack on the show. She said certainly, but Jack hadn't been feeling too well, and asked if we could schedule something later that month. I was very happy and excited to pencil in a date, and I thanked her and hoped Jack would be feeling better soon.

"Just a few days later came the tragic news. Jack had passed away. All of us at Moondog's were stunned at such a huge loss, and I had the added pain of knowing that I'd never have the chance to interview Jack. I looked at my radio calendar with Jack's name scribbled in, and decided that since I couldn't interview Jack on that day, I would use that show to pay tribute to the man and his life. I began contacting his friends, co-workers, and fans, and put together a tribute show that I hoped would do him justice.

"One little footnote that young fans today may find surprising: The week that Jack passed away, I didn't see an obituary notice in the Chicago Tribune. This bothered me so much that I finally called them. I was more or less told, in a kind but belittling manner, that he wasn't significant enough or of interest to enough readers. Just goes to show how much things have changed for the better—just one more part of the Kirby legacy."

**HOWARD JOHNSON (host):** Jack Kirby, the King of Comics, co-created with Joe Simon, Captain America, the Boy Commandos, Fighting American; and with Stan Lee, Jack created the X-Men, the Fantastic Four, the Incredible Hulk, the Mighty Thor, The Avengers, the Silver Surfer, Galactus, too many characters to mention—founding blocks of the Marvel Universe we know today. Jack passed away last Sunday, and we asked a lot of the most prominent names in comics to describe their feelings.

**BILL MUMY:** Jack was the epitome of a mensch. He was giving, he was sincere, and very encouraging. He was noble, he was kind, he was funny, he was very bold. Luckily for us, he's left behind thousands and thousands of magical moments to savor forever that he created.

**NEAL ADAMS:** To know how important Jack Kirby is, you'd really have to know how important the comic book industry will become, not what it is today. In the daily work of a person, it's hard to see how important what they do will be, unless you step back and view it as a whole. Only then can its richness be seen in dim outline. His life's work has made him a place in the minds of people that will only increase with time, and never diminish. In some strange way, in some friendly way, Jack has become one of his own creations: A new god.

**STAN LEE:** Hi, this is Stan Lee, who just wants to say, with Jack Kirby gone, the comic book world has lost a great talent; a man who, for many years, provided

when I "Ge into w

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1994** nning

## Jack Kirby, a hero among superheroes

By David Landis  
USA TODAY

Jack Kirby, from whose fertile mind sprang such comic creations as the Fantastic Four and the Incredible Hulk, died Sunday of heart failure in Thousand Oaks, Calif. He was 76.

From Captain America in 1940 to a universe of superheroes for Marvel Comics in the 1960s, Kirby was "kind of a walking idea machine," says TV writer and former Kirby assistant Mark Evanier.

The prolific Kirby, whose career spanned more than 50 years, is credited with creating or co-creating more than 400 characters.

"For someone to have been around that long, and for every decade to have new titles and new characters come out—it's phenomenal," says Jim Salicrup, editor in chief of Topps Comics.

Kirby was best known for his work with writer and editor Stan Lee. They populated the Marvel universe with such superheroes as Silver Surfer, X-Men and the Hulk.

But his hits range back to the early days of comic books when, with Joe Simon, he created Captain America and Boy Commandos.

In a 1993 survey of comic

Marvel Entertainment

### APPRECIATION

book creators by Comics Buyers Guide, Kirby was voted the most influential creator by a wide margin.

Kirby was one of the artists credited with reinventing superheroes during the late 1950s and '60s by portraying them as more human, even vulnerable.

"Jack managed to do stories about monsters from outer space and people from other planets, but the people in his stories were always recognizable humans for whom he had compassion," says Evanier.





## 2018 KIRBY TRIBUTE PANEL

Held July 22, 2018 at Comic-Con International San Diego.

Featuring Arlen Schumer, Rand Hoppe, Paul S. Levine, and Larry Houston, and moderated by Mark Evanier.

Transcribed by Sean Dulaney, and copyedited by John Morrow and Mark Evanier.

(below) The panelists, left to right: Mark Evanier, Arlen Schumer, Rand Hoppe, Larry Houston, and Paul S. Levine. Photos by Chris Ng.

(right) OMAC, who was not on this Tribute Panel—but it's a great convention sketch by Kirby nonetheless.



(above) The Joye Murchison panel Mark moderated is presented in Alter Ego #157, on sale now at [twomorrow.com](http://twomorrow.com)!

MARK EVANIER: Good afternoon. We're going to start a little early. I want to talk about something unrelated to Jack for a second here. Three different people at this convention, so far this weekend, have come up to me to talk about Jack—they're always interested in Jack and they love Jack—so I'll say, "I'll see you at the Kirby panel on Sunday," and they say, "Oh, I'm not going to that. It's going to be in the Jack Kirby Collector. I'll read it there. I don't have to go to the panel."

Now, if you've been reading my blog, I'm on a little campaign against those people who say there's nothing about comics at this convention. How many of you people were in this room yesterday for the Joye Murchison Kelly ["Wonder Woman in the '40s"] panel? Wasn't that terrific? We filled this room, and didn't it remind you of what this convention was all about? [applause] We

simultaneously honored a person who was neglected by their industry, and we found out a lot of information and talked about Wonder Woman for an hour. That room was packed because, obviously, it was the one and only chance some people thought they'd ever have to be in the same room as that woman. If Jack were here today, we'd have a room four times the size of this one and it would still not be large enough.

But I'm getting annoyed, not so much with this convention, but at other conventions that are not programming panels about old comics because people don't show up for them. And if people aren't interested, fine. But some people who say they're interested in this stuff expect it to materialize without their participation. [applause] We have people who come to these panels who video them—at their own expense usually—and record them, transcribe them and such, and I'm going to start a policy, effective next year, that any convention I go to, if I'm not satisfied with the turnout for the panel, I'm

going to put a two-year embargo on posting transcripts of it. [applause] It'll still be around, still be available. Nothing will be lost. But if you want to experience that panel within two years, you've got to show up for it.





(below) Kirby does an easel drawing at the 1974 San Diego Comic-Con. Judge for yourself; is this some of Kirby's finest work? (Okay, here's a hint: No, it's not!) Color photo courtesy of Alex Jay. Black-and-white shot by Shel Dorf.

(next page, top) It's enticing to think that Kirby brainstormed the ideas for 1961's Jimmy Olsen #55 and 1959's Action Comics #252 for writer Robert Bernstein, and the similarities to Thor and Iron Man (published just a few years later) do further spark the imagination. But as Mark Evanier states, without documented proof of a connection, it's just in the realm of theory.

(next page, bottom) Sent to us by the late Julie Schwartz, here's a photo of he and Kirby sometime in the 1980s. We have no idea what they're doing, though!

This is not the turnout we should have for the Jack Kirby panel. I'm glad John is going to print it in... Where is John? There's John. That's John Morrow, folks. [applause] I'm glad John is going to print it so that the people who can't get to this convention can see it, but if I'm not happy with the turnout next year, I'm not going to let him print it for two years. This is how they do Major League Baseball. If they don't sell a certain amount of tickets, they don't televise the game, and that's how we're going to do this for a while here. That's the end of my speech about that. Thank you. [applause]

We do this Jack Kirby panel every year, and I will keep doing it at every convention that will let me do one, because, first of all, at any convention I go to, I spend an awful lot of time talking about Jack. I spend an awful lot of time talking about Jack when I'm *not* at conventions, too. [laughter] Every place I go, I end up talking about Jack with somebody and I love it because he was—in addition to being the great creator you can tell he was by work, he was a wonderful person. How many people in this room got to meet Jack? [pause

as hands

are raised]

All right.

Anybody disagree?

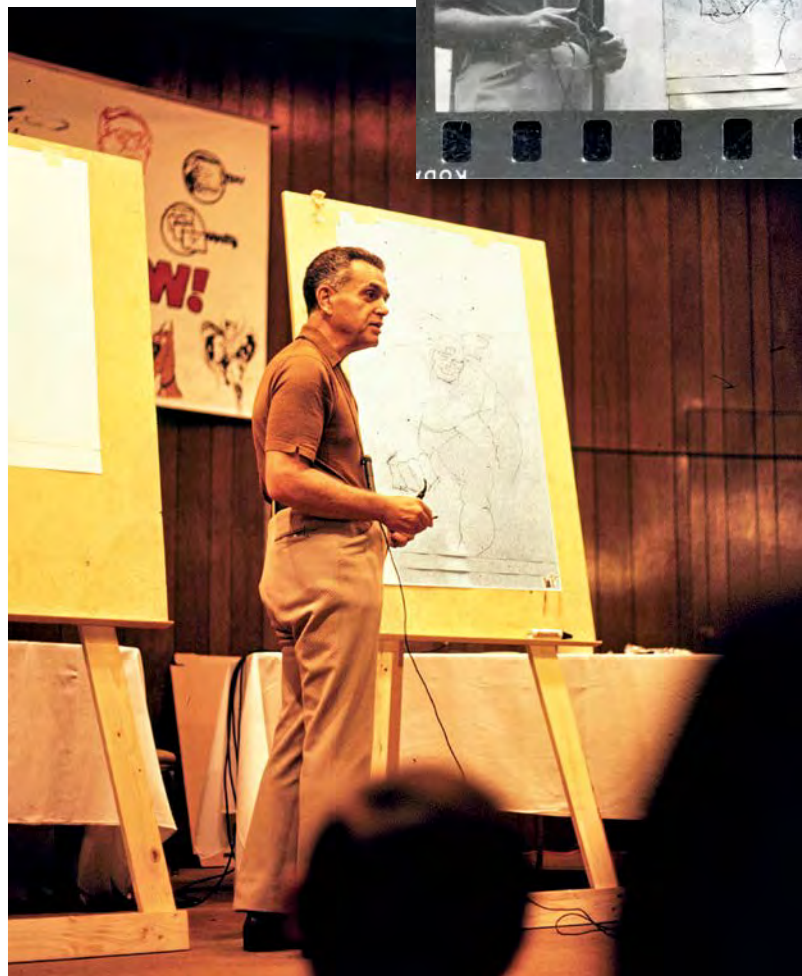
See? Nobody

disagrees. He

was generous,

he was kind,

he helped



people out. Next year is going to be the 50th one of these conventions. This is number 49 and I have been to 49 of them. [applause] No, that's just showing up. [laughter] You shouldn't get that much credit just for showing up for something you enjoy. There's only five of us who've been to every single one of them and we're going to make a fuss next year about that. They came to me and said, "What can we do to honor Jack, especially at the 50th?" Well, we just honored him last year for his 100th centennial, but we'll figure out something. Jack is one of the reasons this convention exists. He was the superstar at the very first San Diego convention where there were 300 people in the basement of the U.S. Grant Hotel, and he gave a talk—the first ever speech by anyone who did comics at one of these conventions. He gave it at around 2:00 on Saturday afternoon to about 100 people, maybe less than that, and it was monumental. People were so excited that they were meeting Jack Kirby and he drew on an easel in front of them. Jack was terrible at drawing in front of people. [laughter] The worst Kirby drawings ever—the

only Kirby drawings I ever looked at and thought, "Hm, I could do that," [laughter] were drawn in front of a crowd on an easel. He's just been an important force in this convention, as he's been, of course, an important force in comics for so long. So we do these panels because—and I said this at the *Pogo* panel the other day and it's true there too—I like being in a room with people who like Jack Kirby. [pause] Don't you like the people in this room right now? Don't you feel that we're all buddies? [applause]

The agenda for this panel today is very simple. I'm going to make a brief speech here about Kirby fandom and such. I'm going to then end by inviting anyone in the room, if they have a current Kirby project, to take two minutes to come up here and tell us about it. I'll run the clock on you if I have to. And then I'm going to do a

little show-and-tell with aids along with the seen—to show you seen, and then I'm Let me introduce Mr. Arlen Schum

Now, let me i

main people—the

are behind the Jac [applause]

I want to intr mine—a very imp the animation fiel projects and he ha about his interact Houston. [applaus

And the attor did I get the name

PAUL S. LEVINE:

EVANIER: This is number one: Yes, Jack. [laughter] It's with the publisher

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