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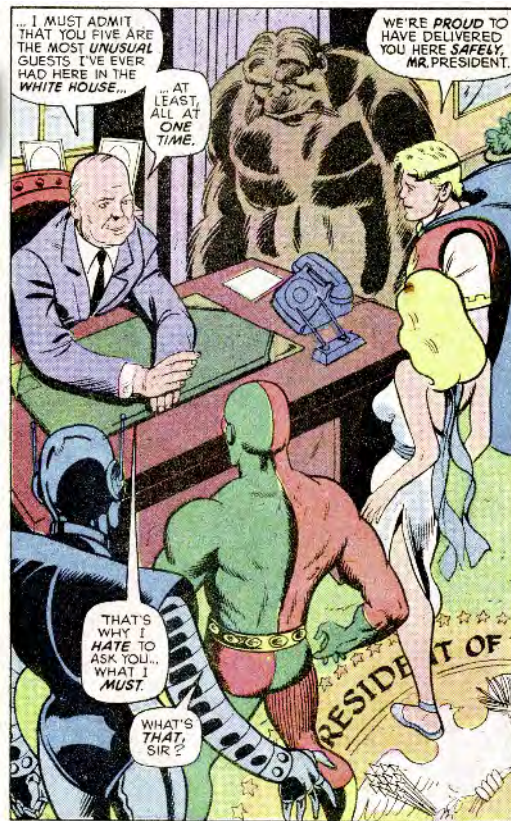
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**On Our Cover:** Sure, Don Glut (whose photo is seen in dead center of the page) wrote comics stories for Marvel, Warren, Charlton, Archie, Skywald—even a few for DC—but it was at Gold Key (Western Publishing's 1962-1984 comic book imprint) in Los Angeles that he made his signature contributions, a trio of fantasy/science-fiction titles (Dagar the Invincible, The Occult Files of Dr. Spektor, and Tragg and the Sky Gods, plus a tale or two for its authorized Twilight Zone comic). So we decided to frame his 1970s mug shot with covers from those four series. The names of the cover-painting artists are hard to come by, but some are probably the work of George Wilson, and the cover of Tragg #1 (June 1975) is by interior artist Jesse Santos. Thanks to Don for the photo, and to the Grand Comics Database for the cover images. [TM & © Random House, under license to Classic Media, Inc.]

**Above:** Perhaps the most influential Marvel issue *Dinosaur Don* ever scripted was What If? #9 (June 1978) in which four authentic 1950s characters and the retro 3-D Man formed The Avengers nearly a decade early—and saved the life of President Dwight D. Eisenhower! Pencils by Alan Kupperberg, inks by Bill Black, building on a concept by Roy Thomas. See p. 30 for details. Thanks to Barry Pearl for the scan. [TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.]

This issue is dedicated to the memory of  
**Jesse Santos & Mark Hanefeld**





# “[Gold Key] Didn’t Follow What Marvel Or DC Was Doing”

## An Interview with Dinosaur DON GLUT

Conducted & Transcribed by Richard J. Arndt

**D**on Glut [it’s pronounced “gloot”] entered the comics world in 1969, after an extensive period spent making amateur films. His breakthrough came writing horror stories for the Warren black-&-white magazines. He soon moved into color comics, first at Gold Key, and, later, Marvel, with a few stops along the way at Charlton and DC. In his career he created the characters Dagar and Dr.



Spektor and wrote for such series as Dagar the Invincible, The Occult Files of Doctor Spektor, Tragg and the Sky Gods, Kull the Destroyer, The Invaders, What If?, and Captain America, among many others. Today he continues to work in the film and television industries and has recently written his new first comics stories in nearly thirty years. This interview was conducted on Aug. 3, 2015.



### Three To Get Ready...

Don Glut (top center), framed by art from the three major comics companies for which he worked during his first decade in comics. (Left to right:) A Neal Adams-drawn horror story from Warren Publishing’s *Vampirella* #1 (Oct. 1969)—that’s what we call starting off at the top! The art was reproduced from the artist’s tight pencils. With thanks to Jim Kealy for this and the following scan. [TM & © DFI.]

Jesse Santos’ splash page for Gold Key’s *The Occult Files of Dr. Spektor* #18 (Dec. 1975). [TM & © Random House, Inc., under license to Classic Media, LLC.]

The Alan Kupperberg/Frank Springer splash of Don’s first scripting gig on Marvel’s *The Invaders* (#29, June 1978). Editor Roy Thomas came up with the concept of the Nazi flying saucer piloted by Komtur the Teutonic Knight—and left pretty much everything else in “Dinosaur Don’s” capable hands! Thanks to Barry Pearl. [TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.]





### Famous Monster-Lovers Of Filmland

Forrest J. Ackerman (on left, original editor of the influential Warren Publishing magazine *Famous Monsters of Filmland* that had debuted in 1957) and Don—with two of Don's Frankenstein paintings. "Forry" was Don's agent for a number of years. Photo courtesy of DG.

the Longbranch Saloon in the TV show *GunsMoke*. The Phantom of the Opera, The Green Hornet, The Shadow, Rocket Man, and the Wolf Man were all in it. It was a big monster/hero rally, I guess. It was a five-chapter serial that I shot out here.

**RA:** Wow! That's impressive! Did you make a Spider-Man film also?

**GLUT:** Yeah, supposedly I made the first amateur Spider-Man movie. I don't know of any made before mine. This would have been in 1969. I played Spider-Man. My mother made the costume again, of course. This was shot in a canyon in California, so it didn't have any of that New York feel to it. He was shooting his webs off rocks and trees!

All of that stuff, all 41 films from 1953-1969, are available on DVD via Amazon. It's a double disc set called *I was a Teenage Movie Maker*. All of it is on there, plus a feature-length documentary about the making of those films. I interviewed the people who were in them, those still alive. I went back to the original locations where I shot footage. I really explain in the documentary what it took to make those movies, over all those years. There were a lot of things I couldn't get into the documentary because they were more cerebral—not visual enough, so I wrote a book with the same title, which McFarland published. It covers a lot of the other bases that the DVD documentary couldn't.

There were a whole series of my teenage monster movies from the 1950s and 1960s that I needed music for, since they were originally shot silent. I used to play bass in a band called the Penny Arkade; and a friend, David Price, who played rhythm guitar in that band's

**RA:** Now, when you say *The Adventures of The Spirit*, was that Will Eisner's *Spirit*?

**GLUT:** That was Will Eisner's *Spirit*. Captain America's in that movie, and the Frankenstein Monster... In fact, I might add that Frankenstein's Monster was played by Glenn Strange, who played the Monster in three Universal films during the original cycle and was the bartender at

successor, *The Armadillo*, now has a recording studio. We wrote and recorded twelve 1950s-style rock 'n' roll songs that we used for music on those movies. We put out the songs on a soundtrack CD. So there's three different items, all with the same title—*I Was a Teenage Movie Maker*.

**RA:** How did Forrest Ackerman, the editor of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, get involved in your amateur films?

**GLUT:** He really wasn't in any of my amateur films! That's the funny thing! Forry remembered being in one or two of my amateur films, but those were films made by friends of mine. Forry didn't actually appear in any of my personal films, but he did publish pictures from them—still photos—in *Famous Monsters [of Filmland magazine]*. That may have been where his confusion came from.

**RA:** So that was the first magazine coverage that you got?

**GLUT:** On the amateur films, yes. The first time I ever saw my name in print in a magazine—other than things like newspaper clippings announcing my birth which my mother saved—was a *Superman* comic, which was a real thrill at the time.



**Jerry Grandenetti**

A caricature from a Warren magazine. [© New Comic Company, LLC.]



**Don Glut**  
before he sported a 'stashe. Thanks to DG.



### The Devil Is In the Details—And In The Marsh!

The splash page of Don's first story sale to Warren Publishing: *Creepy* #29 (Sept. 1969), with art by Jerry Grandenetti. With thanks to Nate Hawthorne.

[© New Comic Company, LLC.]





### I Want My "Mummy"!

This first comics story scripted by Don Glut for Gold Key/Western was also the first time the writer was teamed up with Filipino-born artist Jesse Santos, with whom he would do a mountain of work over the next few years. This tale first appeared in *Mystery Comics Digest* #1 (March 1972), but is repro'd here from its reprinting in a 1975 issue of *Dr. Spektor Presents Spine-Tingling Tales* #2 (1975). Thanks to DG. © the respective copyright holders.]

Gold Key had a policy back then, an unwritten policy, that they treated their contributors like a family. They wanted to make sure that every writer and artist that they had could make a living and support their wives and kids. They wouldn't just open up a new slot for someone, because it would be taking away from somebody else that they were already committed to. About a year after I'd done the article for Forry on the Karloff book, I got a call from Chase Craig, who said, "Look, we finally have an opening, if you'd like to come in and pitch some stories." So I went in there and met with Del Connell, who had just become the editor.

My first Gold Key assignment was a one-page text story about robots that, although I was paid for it, never saw print. Instead, Gold Key was just beginning a new digest-sized magazine called *Mystery Comics Digest*. It was going to be mostly reprints, but they were going to include three new stories per issue. They wanted to know if I'd try my hand at writing those stories. They showed me the format that they were going to use; Gold Key had a specific format on how to do a script. You took a piece of paper and drew in with a ruler where all the panels were going to go. Then, inside of each of those rectangles or squares you wrote your text. [A/E EDITOR'S NOTE: See A/E #92 for a sample of Don Glut's Gold Key scripting style.] So I did my first story for them—"Mask of the



**Jesse Santos**  
as a young man. (See Mark Evanier's tribute to the late artist on p. 65 of this issue.)

Mummy"—and submitted it. They told me that they really liked it. They thought I had a real handle on the mystery stories—they didn't like the word "horror"—and they hired Jesse Santos for the art for the story. He did a great job on it, too.

It wasn't like the usual watered-down type of story that they'd been publishing. It was really something they hadn't done before. Another story I did for the digest was called "Wizard of the Crimson Castle." It was a revamped story that I'd originally submitted to the Warren magazines but they [Warren] rejected it. I later wrote another script for Gold Key with the same character.

So I wrote a lot of those stories in the *Mystery Comics Digest*, usually without credit. We wouldn't get credit until years later. I kept pestering them and pestering them until they finally acquiesced and started giving us credit. In the early days we didn't get those credits, so I would put little in-jokes in each of my stories so that I could identify, twenty years later, that that was one of my stories. I could prove it to others—"Look, there's my friend's name on that billboard!" Something like that. That's how I gave myself unofficial credit in those stories.

**RA:** Jesse Santos was really a pretty good artist. I think he was quite underrated, maybe simply because he didn't get credit or perhaps because he did most of his work solely for Gold Key.

**GLUT:** He did some stuff later on for the big companies—particularly for Gray Morrow at Red Circle [an imprint of Archie Comics]. Gold Key was very protective of their talent, but they also didn't want the artists and writers to really know each other, contact each other, go to conventions, do interviews—that kind of thing. They were afraid that one of two things would happen, and what happened with Carl Barks during the Dell days was a good example of why. One—that the artist or writer would ask for more money and, two—that they would go to the other companies for a better deal. Gold Key was very cautious and didn't want the artists or writers to become well-known. Now, me, I've always been a shameless self-promoter. I've gone to unbelievable lengths to get people to know who I am. They couldn't stop that. That was just part of my nature.

[continued on p. 15]



**Chase Craig**  
Longtime Gold Key editor.  
Photo taken circa 1959.



**Del Connell**  
A later photo taken of the Gold Key editor under whom Don directly worked.





Guest Who!

Double-Feature Don exulted in sneaking guest stars into *The Occult Files of Dr. Spektor*, as witness these appearances of Dr. Solar, Man of the Atom, in #14 (June 1975)... Durak in #16 (Sept. '75—the Frankenstein Monster was in this one, too)... and the revived Golden Age super-hero The Owl in #22 (Oct. '76)—plus there was an actual were-owl in the latter! Art by Jesse Santos, of course. Thanks to Stephan Friedt and Don Glut for the scans. [TM & © Random House, under license to Classic Media, Inc.]

with issue #2 we do a 17-page lead story with a story in the back which Spektor just narrates, like in the old days." I said OK. I didn't really want to do that. I needed the extra pages to give the characters more depth than you'd be able to do in a 17-page story. I could also make the plots more intricate in a longer story.

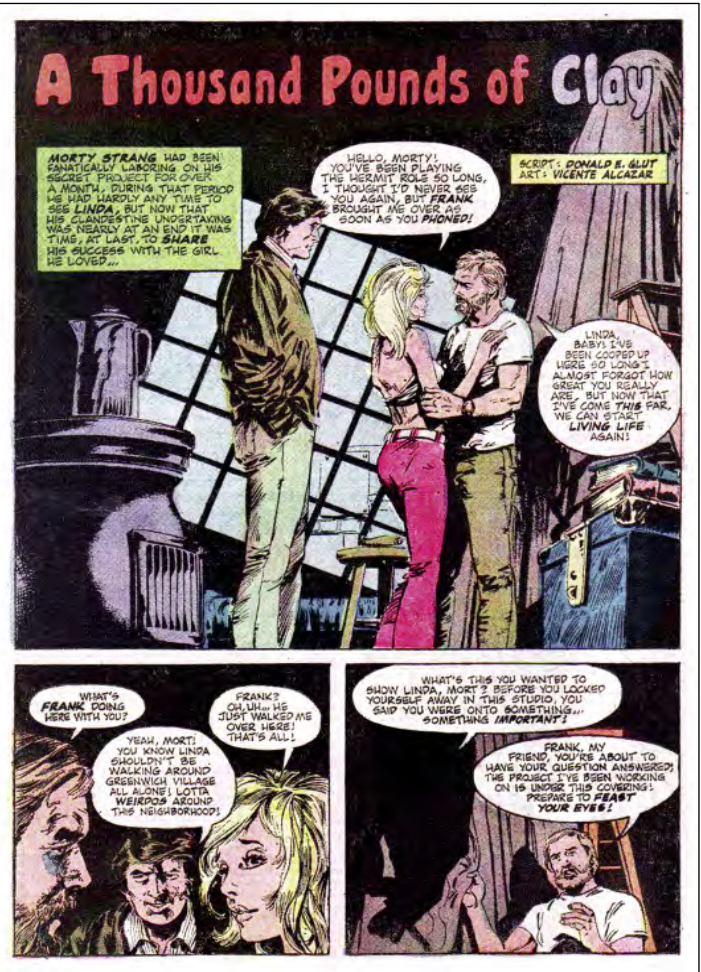
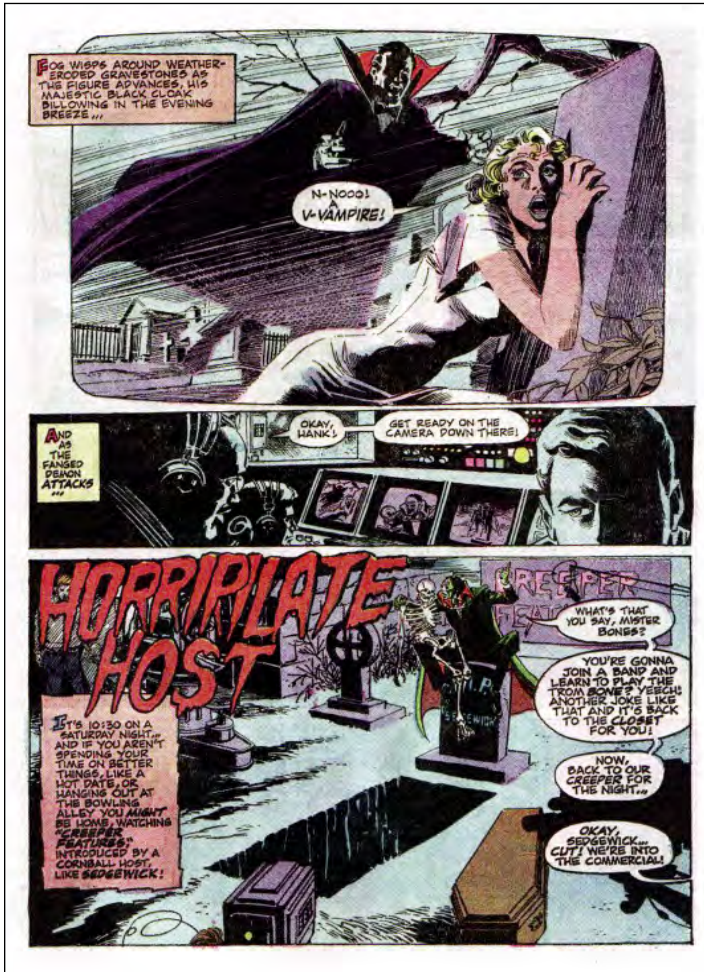
So I wrote the stories up to where Spektor becomes the werewolf, and Del Connell decides that "Hey! We can't have Spektor being a werewolf in the front of the book while he's narrating stories in the back!" I guess he thought that was too strange. So for the four issues of the werewolf story arc the stories were again full 25-page stories. Then we just never went back to the old format. We never mentioned it again. We ran 25-or-so-page stories until the book was cancelled.

RA: I guess it's nice when the character dictates the length of the story.

GLUT: I guess you could say that. I was always doing subversive things like that. My trick, at the time, was to go in and pitch the story to get the go-ahead, then try to come up with a story that was so compelling that Del couldn't turn it down. If I did that right, he would say, "OK, go with it." That's how I got to do the crossovers with Dr. Solar, The Owl, and what have you. I just wore him down. He would be physically exhausted by the end of the pitch. [laughs] He liked the pitch and couldn't say it was a bad story! So he went







Two For The Price Of Two!

Don Glut scripted two stories for *Chilling Adventures in Sorcery* #4 (Dec. 1973), an entry in the Archie group's Red Circle line, edited by Gray Morrow. He wrote one tale drawn by Dick Giordano (no bylines for either man) and one drawn by Vicente Alcazar. [TM & © Archie Comic Publications, Inc.]

with it. That's how I was able to do things that you normally wouldn't have seen in a Gold Key comic.

I even did a Rutland, Vermont, story like those that DC and Marvel were doing at the time. I did a story set in Rutland in *Doctor Spektor* where all these early characters appeared in costume from what would become Gold Key, like the Purple Zombie, and Del agreed with the idea. He took it! There were a lot of things I couldn't get away with, but some of the other things that I did get away with amaze me to this day.

RA: Do you remember the issue that Rutland story was in?

GLUT: It was called "Masque Macabre" and appeared in *The Occult Files of Doctor Spektor* #18. Jesse Santos drew the issue. There was a big parade with all of the past *Spektor* characters appearing in it. The Owl and Dr. Solar were both in it. Everybody was in that story. A lot of the monster characters in *Doctor Spektor* started out as one-shot stories in *Mystery Comics Digest*. I then brought those characters into the *Doctor Spektor* universe.

I even did unofficial company crossovers at Gold Key. I don't know if anyone's even aware of them. I had Steve Rogers, aka Captain America, in *Doctor Spektor* for a while. You never saw his first and last name spoken together. He was always called either Steve or Rogers. This was in the early 1970s, when Captain America was going through his cop phase. He was a good-looking blond-haired cop, and I used him in *Doctor Spektor*.

"I Found Out That Gray Morrow Was Doing This [Red Circle] Line Of Comics"

RA: You've already mentioned Jesse Santos working for Red Circle, but you worked for them, as well.

GLUT: Yes, I did. When I found out that Gray Morrow was doing this line of comics, I got hold of his home phone number and called him to introduce myself. Gray Morrow was a wonderful guy. I



**Gray Morrow**  
The noted artist took a fling at editing in the early '70s.



**Dick Giordano**  
The respected artist and longtime managing editor of DC Comics, in a portrait drawn by Michael Netzer. [© Michael Netzer.]



**Vicente Alcazar**  
The Spanish artist entered the U.S. comic book field in the early 1970s (see p. 45). This is a more recent pic.





**Sal Buscema**  
From the 1975 Marvel Con program book.



**Captains Courageous**

(Clockwise from above left:)

Dick Purcell starred as Captain America in the 1944 Republic movie serial of that name—but minus Bucky, shield, and certain other aspects of his distinctive wardrobe—and with an alter ego of Grant Gardner, district attorney, rather than Steve Rogers! Oh—and with a pistol, something he didn't employ in comics of the 1970s (although he had used rifles and machine-guns against enemy troops during WWII and Korea). Sadly, Purcell died only a short time after filming was completed.

Writer Don Glut, penciler Sal Buscema, and inker Joe Sinnott caught the spirit of that old cliffhanger in *Captain America* #219 (March 1978).

[TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.]

Don's costume for a 1964 comics convention was far closer to the real McCap of the 1940s than was the serial—or, for that matter, the late-'70s TV movie made by Universal. (P.S.: He took first place.) Courtesy of DG.

**GLUT:** With the *What If?* stories, I always felt I could take the "bible" history of a character and tinker around with it. I'd base characters on stories I'd really loved when I was younger.

One of my all-time favorite stories for Marvel, though, was one I did for *Captain America*. Captain America goes to Hollywood to supervise the filming of the *Captain America* serial that Republic Pictures actually made in 1944. Roy didn't actually know what Marvel still owned regarding that chapterplay, so, just in case, I made some changes. The original movie serial was fifteen chapters long, so I made the comic book version twelve chapters. Republic Pictures became Democracy Pictures, and so forth. The secret identity of the serial version of Captain America was a district attorney, so I made mine another higher-up figure in law enforcement, a police commissioner—perhaps with an unconscious nod to Gotham City's Jim Gordon. But it was close enough that

anybody reading it would know what it was all about. That had a lot of joy going into it. That one was probably my single favorite story from Marvel.

Two things happened that led to my no longer writing comics. Gold Key stopped publishing original comics because they said they weren't selling, and then Jim Shooter came into Marvel [as editor-in-chief] and a lot of us West Coast contributors suddenly were out of a job. A lot of us West Coast people who'd been working for Marvel—writers and artists alike—took the next logical step. We went into television animation. So my writing career went from making most of my living writing comic book scripts to writing TV cartoon scripts.

That petered out after a while. There's a thing in Hollywood called age bias. Once you reach a certain age, you'd better start









### Stan Lee & Carmine Infantino

Circa-1973 photo of Stan Lee, by then the publisher of Marvel Comics—and a 1972 pic of Carmine Infantino, who in the early '70s was promoted from DC Comics' editorial director to its publisher. In 1970, Lee persuaded Infantino to lend his name to the cause of founding the Academy of Comic Book Arts.

Thanks to Ger Apeldoorn for the Lee image, and to Vince Davis for the Infantino photo taken at the '72 San Diego Comic-Con.

Roy Thomas adds: "Carmine wasn't the only pro who felt that anyone who was 'management'—which included being an editor of any kind—shouldn't be eligible to be a member of ACBA. I distinctly remember how, at the group's first big general meeting (probably still in 1970), artist/writer Joe Kubert, then a DC editor, forcefully voiced that same opinion to the assemblage. Though Joe was/is one of my artistic idols, I took the floor after him, to strenuously disagree: the way the comics industry was set up, I argued, anyone who was a writer or artist *today* was likely to become an editor *tomorrow* (as witness Joe himself)—and of course vice versa. That would mean that people would constantly be first eligible, then ineligible, then perhaps eligible again, to be in ACBA. In the end, Stan's view—which was also mine, though the two of us hadn't coordinated our opinions—prevailed. When Stan became Marvel's publisher in 1972, he stepped away from playing an active part in ACBA. I did much the same after becoming Marvel's editor-in-chief. By the way, though Sal states that Carmine wasn't doing any 'creator'-type work in 1972, I'm relatively certain that, as DC's editorial director and perhaps even as publisher, he was still doing some cover roughs."

It probably seemed a natural thing to both Stan and Carmine, "management" though they may have been, that they should have considered conceiving such an organization, since both had been (and Stan continued even then to be) comic book creators.

Carmine decided to drop out of the proposed organization once it had gotten underway—supposedly because, as top executive at one of the top comic book publishers, he thought it inappropriate, perhaps unseemly, to have any dealings with it at all. My belief is that, in principle, Carmine was right.

Stan saw no conflict in his dual position, and accepted being voted the Academy's first president.

The ACBA ad hoc meeting and the first year or so of board meetings were held in Stan's office.

Was Neal [Adams] the second president and Dick [Giordano] the third, or was it

the other way 'round? I believe Ralph Reese was fourth and final president.

All meetings after Stan turned over the presidency to his successor were held at Dick's and Neal's Continuity Associates "studios," including under Ralph's presidency.

After several years, I tried to get the Academy's dormant bank account, which by then had been transferred to the State, transferred to the National Cartoonists Society's account. We can make an easy argument that just the existence of the Academy, at least to some degree, was what had gotten the artists the return of our artwork, the writers and artists some reprint money (paltry though it may have been and as easily rescinded as Archie Comics found it to be), and all our other "rights" and "benefits."

At Archie [Comics] once, [John] Goldwater actually put in an appearance in their production room. There was an ACBA meeting coming up. He said to all of us something like, "You don't want to go to their meetings, do you?" There was an awkward silence, and he walked out. I then scribbled onto a background billboard in an "Archie" story that I did, "ACBA meeting, 4th," the day of a subsequent meeting.

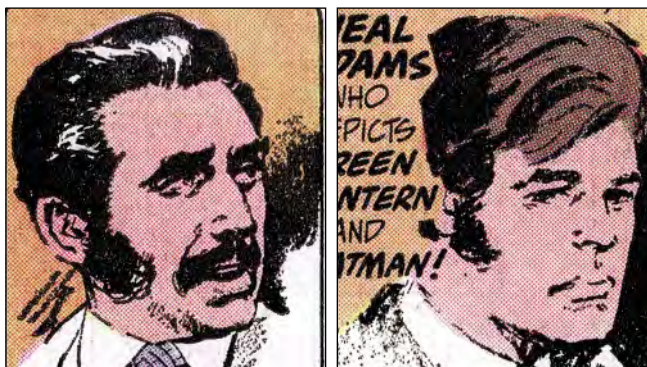
Goldwater was a guest at one of the meetings. I asked him what he'd like to drink. He asked for tea. He never touched it.

The Academy had a yearly awards banquet.

Its regular membership meetings tried to feature some special guest or deal with all manner of technical, financial, creative issues, and other issues relevant to the membership.

ACBA tried, too, to get the membership and the industry in general involved in charitable and other community works.

Stan is now credited historically as the guy who "broke the Code," when in fact it was an effort that had long been in process by the Academy, DC Comics (in an effort to get out their *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* "drug books"—good ol' Marv Wolfman made us conscious that they should be called "anti-drug books"), and even by Leonard Darvin himself, the director of "the Code." As then-secretary of the Academy, I was with Neal and Dick up at Darvin's offices, and at a lunch with them, as they had some of their discussions.



### Setting A President

(Left to right:) Artists Dick Giordano, Neal Adams, and Ralph Reese were apparently the second, third, and fourth presidents of ACBA. Reese holds a certificate which represents an ACBA/Shazam Award; thanks to Ralph for the photo. Thanks to Bob Bailey for sending the Adams-drawn heads of himself and Giordano from a 1971 DC page announcing the company's quasi-sweep of the first ACBA Awards. [© DC Comics.]





THE  
Academy of Comic Book Arts  
NEWSLETTER

VOL. I NO. 21

June, 1973

## MEMBERS of the BOARD

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Flo Steinberg

PREPARING FOR AN EVENT such as the Academy's Awards Banquet is very much like swimming, in that it calls upon the use of all of ACBA's muscles in order to overcome the intrinsic adversities of such an undertaking.

It is a time when our financial expenditures are at its highest and the activity of The Board is most frenetic. It is a time when, out of necessity, comparisons are made between the past and present, and a time when our future viability is evaluated.

A GENERAL DOUBLING and re-doubling of enthusiasm was manifest most dramatically on May 29 in the overwhelming increase of advanced reservations for the Academy's Third Annual Shazam Awards Banquet. As if that were not sufficient, the number of last-minute arrivals necessitated the setting of additional tables.

Among the first to arrive at Patricia Murphy's Candlelight Restaurant for the Awards Presentation Ceremony: Dick Giordano, Cory Adams, Jean and Roy Thomas, and Karen and Joe Orlando.

## THE BANQUET'S OPENING SPEECH...

as delivered by Academy President, Neal Adams:

As you all know, our field is experiencing a surge of new growth. According to the publishers' official periodical, more titles have been published in the past fiscal year than in any year since 1955, and projections show continued growth for the future. New concepts in packaging and volumes of favorable publicity, plus a new, higher price, have combined to make our product more attractive to the wholesaler, the retailer and the consumer.

Equally encouraging is our present membership, which is growing this year at a greater rate than we've come to expect.

This increase in membership, and, subsequently, in participation can be interpreted as the catalyst in the "sudden" successes we've begun to enjoy.

SWIMMING IS A FUN SPORT...

but you just don't stop in the middle of the pool.

This tact is what backs this personal appeal from our president and the board. If you've been holding off sending in your dues for any reason, now is the time. Send in that check! Join! Now! Make your membership count! Back your board! Support our Academy for our future benefit!



Continued, page 2

The use of "Shazam" as the name of the ACBA Award, with a lightning bolt as its visual equivalent, had been proposed by Roy Thomas. His impeccable 1970 logic was that the original Captain Marvel's "magic word" was known even to the general public (through its use in newspaper headlines, etc.). In addition, the fact that Fawcett's 1953 legal settlement with DC prohibited it from ever again publishing (or allowing to be published) stories of Captain Marvel meant that the word "Shazam" would never again be associated with any individual publisher. Only two years later, of course, DC made arrangements with Fawcett to publish a *Shazam!* comic book. (P.S.: Cory Adams, seen above, was Neal's then wife.)



This growth has affected the creative arm of our business in many ways. Publishers have gone to foreign ports to acquire artists. All available writers and artists are working full time and at total capacity, and still do not produce enough work to fill the need, so that publishers are forced to make use of reprints to an alarming degree. One company has even instituted a training program to bring more young artists into the field.

Three years ago, as a fledgling organization, the Academy instituted the Job Pool, the function of which was to help creative types find work or better positions than they had previously held. And believe me, that was a time when we really had to scratch to get an editor to try a new man, or use an older pro on a new feature, or bring a man from one of the lesser paying companies to a better paying position.

Now, three years later, we have been able to disband the Job Pool. For whatever reason, it has been such a total success that it has outlived its usefulness.

This is not to say that full employment is the only goal of the Academy...so we will be around for a long time.

In the midst of all this booming production, we perhaps sometimes forget that our function is that of creators, and our form is an almost totally creative one. And in spite of overbearing deadlines, the cost of living, and our poor page rates, we, as a group, strive for quality.

With this in mind, the Academy has devised a method for those who have excelled in our field to receive the plaudits of their peers.

As President of the Academy and as past Vice-President, I have heard criticisms of our criteria for giving our awards and objections to the whole awards concept. In answer, I can only point out how painstaking was the process with which we first designated the awards, and how we continue to strive for improvement. (You will note that two new awards have been added this year.)

And as a past award winner, I'd like to add how personally gratifying it is to find that your fellow professionals care enough, and so approve your efforts in a given year to say (even for that limited time) that you did the best. I mean to tell you, that feels good.

It also feels good to know that you, as an Academy member, have the opportunity not only to tell a fellow you like his work, but to tell the world at large how proud you are that he is a member of that creative tribe to which you belong.

And so it is with great pleasure that I introduce the Third Annual Academy of Comic Book Arts Awards--otherwise known as the Shazams!

*NEAL ADAMS*

THOSE WHO HONORED THE ACADEMY...

as presenters of the Awards included: former President Dick Giordano; Comics Code Administrator Leonard Darvin; ACBA Secretary E. Nelson Bridwell; artist Mike Kaluta; Gerda Gattel of National Publications(DC Comics); MAD Publisher William Gaines; artist Will Eisner; and artist Vicente Alcazar-Serrano.

continued, page 4

below:  
Neal Adams  
and Gerda  
Gattel.



The fact that artist Neal Adams was the president of ACBA at this time (probably completing a term that had begun in 1972) would seem to indicate that he was the Academy's *third* president, which suggests that artist Dick Giordano was its second (after Stan Lee). If so, this answers a question posed by Sal Amendola in the main text. Gerda Gattel, incidentally, had originally been a well-respected proofreader for Timely Comics, moving to DC during one of the former company's down periods.





GREAT GUARDIANS! A SECOND GREEN LANTERN? COULD THIS BE SOME EVIL PLOT BY SINESTRO? OR SOMETHING WORSE?



WORSE! YOU'RE AN OLD DRAWING MICHAEL T. DID IN 1970 WHEN HE WAS JUST A COLLEGE FRESHMAN!

AND I'M A PHOTO OF HIM WHEN HE COMPETED IN A COSTUME CONTEST AT THE 1971 N.Y. COMICON! AND IF YOU THINK THIS IS BAD, WAIT'LL YOU SEE WHAT OTHER EMBARRASSING THINGS WE'VE DUG UP IN PART TWO OF ...

**MICHAEL T.: THE FANZINE YEARS!**



# Michael T.: The Fanzine Years! (Part 2)

**M**y first comicon almost killed me.

As a young teen, my comic trading buddies had regaled me with tales of a fabled gathering in New York called a “comic convention”—a magical place where fans could find old Golden Age comics and meet actual cartoonists. But in 1966 I was a broke 14-year-old, stuck in the Levittown suburbs. Traveling alone on the Long Island Railroad to the big city was way too intimidating for this scaredy cat. But, a couple of years later, I finally managed to save enough to attend the 1968 SCARP-Con, run by Phil Seuling, Maurice Horn, and others in Manhattan.

During the four-day convention, I kept costs down by crashing at Grandma Nurock’s apartment in the Bronx, a subway ride away from the con. It was fitting punishment, since she was the one who’d got me hooked on comics as a kid. Besides, the upscale Hilton charged a princely \$11 a night. Who could afford that?

I rarely get too excited by cons nowadays, but at 16 this was a BIG! DEAL! On the big day, heart tripping, I exited the subway and entered the Statler Hilton. Almost fifty years later, the details are hazy. Will Eisner and Burne Hogarth were listed as guests for the con’s Special Luncheon, but who had money for that when there were stacks and stacks of old comics everywhere?

I was particularly eager to pick up EC comics, including less popular “New Direction” titles like *Impact* and *Aces High*, which were the cheapest. Maybe they weren’t as sexy as *Tales from the Crypt*, but they still had superb work by Reed Crandall, Johnny Craig, George Evans, and other EC stalwarts. Condition? I didn’t care. Even coverless copies were acceptable if I could get them cheap enough. The more the merrier!

I spent days at the con, dragging myself, exhausted, on the subway each night to Gram’s Grand Concourse apartment. Food?



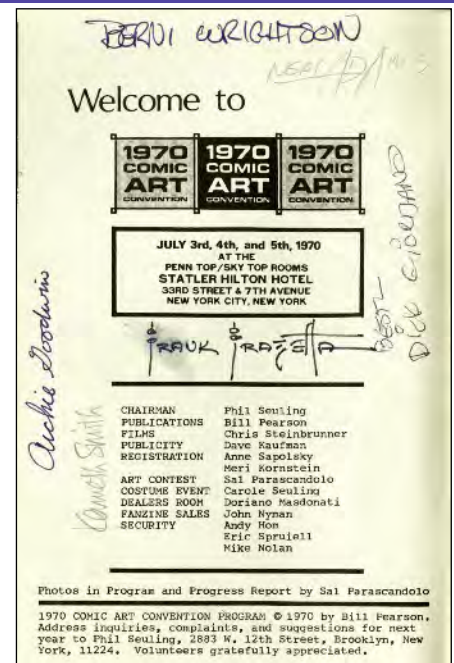
## Zippy!

Michael was 15 when he drew the above illo for his high school literary magazine. The budding cartoonist had just discovered a hidden stash of Zip-a-tone in the art department and really went to town! From *Perceptions* 1967 (June 1967), Island Trees Senior High. [© 2016 Michael T. Gilbert]



## Positively Ditko-esque!

Michael, age 19, displayed his art at an amateur art contest at the 1970 New York Comics Convention. This included his Ditko-inspired Spider-Man montage (above) and his *The Adventures of God* cover (seen on next page). [Spider-Man TM & © Marvel Characters, Inc.]



## Pen Pals!

Michael’s 1970 comic booklet, signed by Bernie Wrightson, Neal Adams, Kenneth Smith, Dick Giordano, Archie Goodwin, and Frank Frazetta. What... no Roy Thomas?!



# We Called Ourselves TISOS

## "The Illegitimate Sons Of Superman"

by Richard Rubinfeld & Andy Yanchus

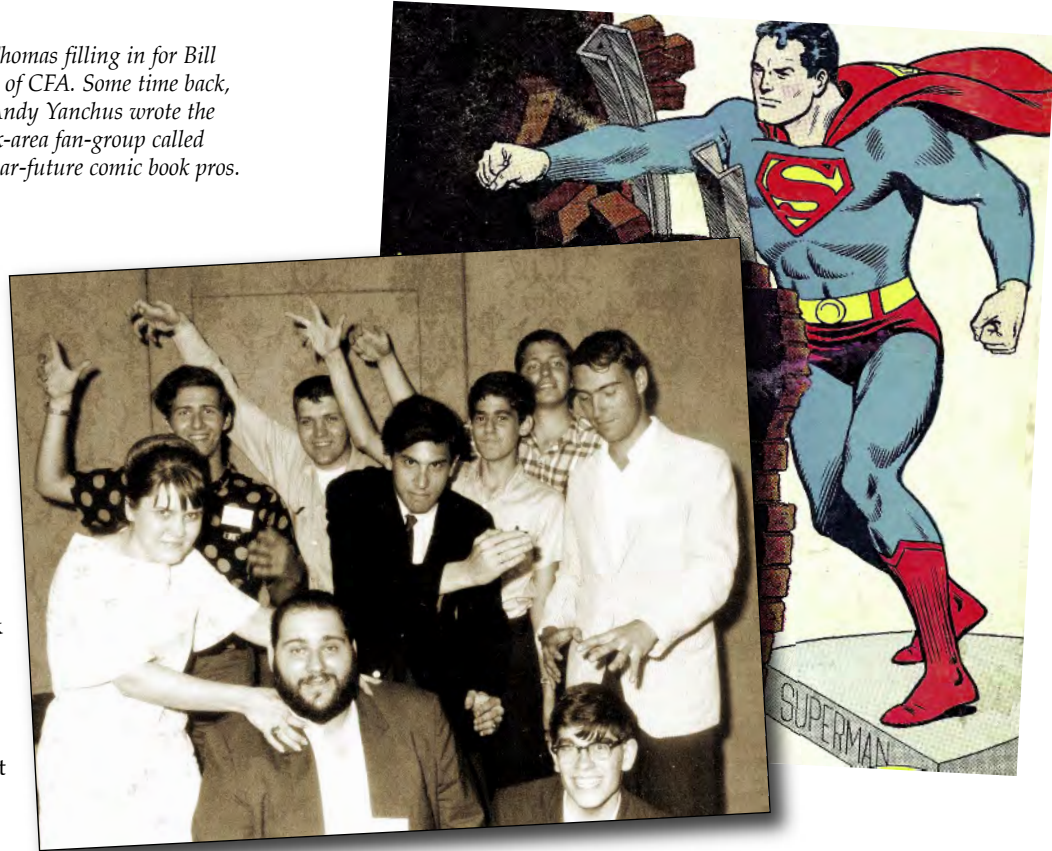
**A/E EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION:** Roy Thomas filling in for Bill Schelly this go-round, with an interim edition of CFA. Some time back, longtime fans/collectors Rich Rubinfeld and Andy Yanchus wrote the following account of the 1960s-born New York-area fan-group called TISOS, which included in its ranks several near-future comic book pros. We're proud to present it here.

**T**ISOS. Chances are you have never heard the name, or to be more accurate, you do not know us as a group; but for those who were a part of it, TISOS was a wonderful experience and the basis for personal and professional friendships that have endured for over four decades.

There is general agreement that Mark Hanerfeld came up with the name in late 1966 or early 1967 to identify a group of mostly New York-based comic fans and soon-to-be professionals in the field. Mark claimed that TISOS stood for "The Illegitimate Sons of Superman." Emulating the abbreviated identifications commonly used for government agencies, popular culture was awash in acronyms at the time and TISOS therefore was an opportune reference to the lexicon of fictional organizations that included such "official" monikers as SPECTRE, UNCLE THUNDER, and SHIELD. (Undoubtedly most readers of *Alter Ego* are still able to recite what these abbreviations signify!) For a long time, the meaning of our acronym was a closely guarded secret, known only to the members; then, very slowly, close friends were let in on the joke.

Rankled by the identification of TISOS as a club that appeared recently in Marv Wolfman's blog, Stan Landman initiated a spate of e-mail responses from members that attempted to define just what TISOS was. Stan opined that TISOS "was a group of friends for whom Mark chose an admittedly apropos name," while, according to Eliot Wagner, the attorney in the group, TISOS was an "unincorporated association." Marv maintained that TISOS was "an unholy cabal," indicating that "was its main appeal." Leave it to Len Wein to add a wry coda to his response: "I always thought of TISOS as a top-secret organization that had the potential to be a powerful force for good in this sad, sorry world. And look what we've done with all that power. [sigh]"

Besides those mentioned above and the authors of this article, Ron Fradkin and Dave Kaler were part of the group. Pat Yanchus, Andy's sister, and out-of-towners Irene and Ellen Vartanoff were also members and welcome female presences in our gatherings. Meeting regularly in our homes and at comic conventions until 1970, and less frequently during the early 1970s, TISOS was essen-



### Hey, Kids—Daddy's Home!

(Above left:) The official 1967 photo of TISOS—"The Illegitimate Sons of Superman"—taken at the Academy Con in New York City. (L. to r. standing:) Pat Yanchus, Len Wein, Andy Yanchus, Ron Fradkin, Eliot Wagner, Marv Wolfman, Rich Rubinfeld. (Crouching in front, l. to r.): Mark Hanerfeld, Stan Landman. Photo courtesy of Andy Yanchus and Richard Rubinfeld.

(Above right:) The Man of Steel himself, from an Aurora model ad that ran, among many other places, on the back cover of *Mystery in Space* #96 (Dec. 1964). Art probably by Murphy Anderson. [Superman art TM & © DC Comics.]

tially a closed group, but not an elitist one. Guests were sometimes invited to TISOS gatherings. During their prolonged residences in New York City, Mike Friedrich (of California) and Shel Dorf (of California by way of Detroit) regularly participated in TISOS activities, as did Tom Fagan whenever he came into town from Vermont. Girlfriends (and later wives) attended TISOS gatherings, particularly in the later years.

The history of TISOS is inextricably tied to that of comic fandom. Building upon preexisting friendships, most of us were around from the start and met at the earliest comic conventions in New York. Ron and Len were two of the organizers of the very first New York Con, held on July 27, 1964, in the Workman's Circle Building in Manhattan. Len claims to have coined the term "comicon" for this gathering. [A/E EDITOR'S NOTE: In issue #135, Bill Schelly showed that Ronn Foss, if no one else, had used the term in



## Addendum: Mark Hanerfeld

by Rich Rubinfeld

**T**here are people you like the first time you meet them, and Mark Hanerfeld was such a person. Generous to a fault, he was an excellent conversationalist with strong convictions about just about everything. He was an incredibly kind man, someone who would do anything for his friends. Irene Vartanoff recently recalled how Mark piloted his old VW bus: “[H]e fearlessly drove it everywhere at top speed and it shivered at 65 mph.... When I think of him driving into Manhattan to meet us at the train, going to the expense and effort of parking, bridge tolls, and dealing with all the traffic, just so we wouldn’t flounder at Penn Station with our heavy luggage, I am reminded again of what a gentleman he was.”

No one loved comics more than Mark. TISOS meetings could get pretty raucous and silly; in fact, at some point, they usually did. Some of us might have been louder or more vocal, but no one generated more enthusiasm for comics and their creators than Mark. Even though he had strong opinions and was more than willing to share them, at the same time, he didn’t take himself too seriously. There was nothing authoritarian about him at all. Because he was usually well-informed, Mark’s views carried some weight with the rest of us, even when we didn’t agree with him. In the course of a heated conversation, Mark could always be counted on to say something that would keep us going. His kind of logic was often difficult to follow, however. Having worked with Mark on projects for Aurora Plastics and displays at the Cartoon Museum, Andy Yanchus reminisced: “It never ceased to amaze me that he could, in the blink of an eye, come up with the most complicated, convoluted solution to any problem posed!”

Mark had a very droll sense of humor, and it was often very low-key. Len Wein remembered one conversation with him in particular:

He was absolutely confident in his opinions of the business and everything else. I remember him once making a suggestion about how the comics industry should completely change its pricing structure.... I told him he was crazy. I said, “What happens if the industry takes your advice and your plan fails and the whole comics business collapses overnight and there are no more comic books?”

Mark looked at me, smiled, and shrugged his shoulders as he replied, “Well, then I was wrong.”

And that, in a nutshell, was our dear departed friend. Andy still laughs when remembering another incident:

Mark Hanerfeld had the misfortune of bearing a strong resemblance to trumpeter Al Hirt.... The unfortunate aspect was the constant ribbing Mark had to endure, even from his friends in TISOS.

I recall this one day when the guys went to Penn Station to meet



### In Reunions There Is Strength!

Recent photos of some of the TISOS gang, together again... all photos courtesy of Richard Rubinfeld. (From above):

(Left to right:) Jesse & Richard Rubinfeld, Irene and Ellen Vartanoff, Marv Wolfman and his daughter Jessie.

Len (on left) and Richard R., March 2014.

(Left to right, in back:) Richard Rubinfeld, Eliot Wagner, Andy Yanchus, Stan Landman. (L. to r., in front:) Fran Shlesinger (Eliot’s wife), Pat Yanchus, Ruth Pietrykowski (Stan’s wife) — June 2015.



P.C. HAMERLINCK'S

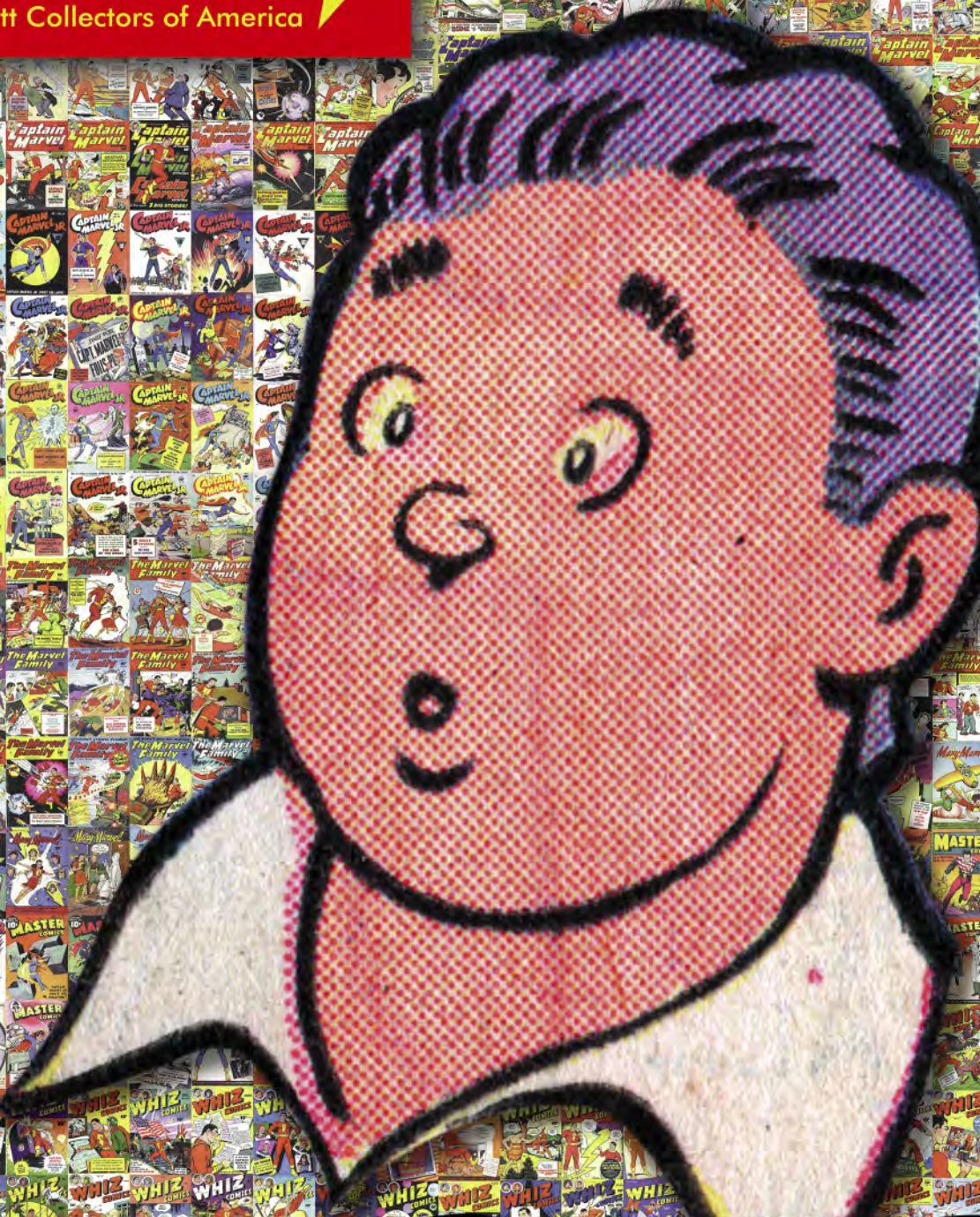
# FCA



Fawcett Collectors of America

#202  
Nov. 2016

Otto Binder caricature by C.C. Beck (Shazam! #1).  
Shazam heroes™ & © DC Comics; other characters are © their respective copyright holders.



# OTTO BINDER!



# OTTO BINDER: The Life & Work Of A Comic Book & Science-Fiction Visionary

An Interview With Biographer BILL SCHELLY

by P.C. Hamerlinck



Bill Schelly

Photo by Adam Haney.

**B**ill Schelly's acclaimed 2003 biography of Otto Binder — a personal portrait of



Otto Binder

experimenting with an 8mm camera in his backyard during the late 1940s. Despite the lack of any rare Binder film footage from those days, Bill Schelly's biography of the writer, available again in a new edition, offers a close-up view of Otto's life.

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



**ALTER EGO #143**

DON GLUT discusses his early years as comic book writer for Marvel, Warren, and Gold Key, with art by SANTOS, MAROTO, CHAN, NEBRES, KUPPERBERG, TUSKA, TRIMPE, SAL BUSCEMA, and others! Also, SAL AMENDOLA and ROY THOMAS on the 1970s professional Academy of Comic Book Arts, founded by STAN LEE and CARMINE INFANTINO! Plus Mr. Monster, FCA, BILL SCHELLY, and more!

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**Once Bitten, Twice Told**

...reat "Captain Marvel" splash, from a story written by Otto Binder and ...ted by C.C. Beck (pencils) and Pete Costanza (inks) for Fawcett's *Captain of Adventures* #80 (Jan. 1948). [Shazam hero & Sivana TM & © DC Comics.]

nder: The Life and Work of a ...ary is available wherever books ...rth Atlantic Books.

—P.C. Hamerlinck

**PCH:** Why did you originally want to write a book about Otto Binder?

**SCHELLY:** I had done a string of books about the history of comics fandom between 1995 to 2000, and had taken it about as far as it would go. That was a fascinating journey, but the time had come for me to branch out as a writer. Roy Thomas suggested the idea of a biography of Otto Binder. The idea resonated with me, because the "Captain Marvel" stories are my favorite comics from the

1940s and Binder wrote the majority of them. I also loved his "Superman" family stories of the late 1950s. I felt a connection to the man because he touched my life when I was a young comic book reader. And I appreciated the way he participated in fandom in the 1960s. So I started researching his career, and that's how it began. This was in 2000 or early 2001.