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### **INFORMATION**

INFINITY TWO — Art by Frazetta, Krenkel, Wrightson, Jeff Jones, Kaluta, Hickman, Smith, Morrow, Steranko, Berg, Fantucchio, Emsh, Kline, Finlay, Brunner and Schenkman. Talks with Frank Frazetta, the first and only talk with America's finest science fiction-fantasy artist, and Berni Wrightson. 48 offset pages, only \$1.50.

This volume dedicated to Frank Brunner, Jeff Jones, and Bruce Jones, for their tremendous assistance in the contents of Infinity 3.

No part of this magazine may be reprinted without approval of one of Infinity's editors.





#### HERE WE ARE

Finally, after six long months of hard work, Infinity 3 is here. Fortunately, we made it just in time for the New York Comicon, which means that we ought to see some of you at our table there this year. As you no doubt notice, Infinity's format has been drastically changed, due mostly to overwhelming reader response in its favor. The two volume idea was done simply as a way to devote one of the issues exclusively to Web Of Horror, as we have. To all of you generous people who sent in the extra 50¢ after we advertised for 1.50, thank you very much and it is appreciated.

Of course, we want reader opinion on this issue. Has our considerable change in format upgraded the magazine? Is it worth the money? And what of our new "no sketch policy?" An idea we came up with is to create an enormous Infinity 4 with black and white covers, but with, say, 100 some odd pages. There would be no price increase and would allow a great deal more room for strips and other material.

Once again, we would like to ask all of our readers to contribute to this publication. We are especially in need of good, solid, well-researched articles. We, of course, will leave the topic up to you, as long as it pertains to the general outline of Infinity. Anyone having original unpublished professional artwork please get in contact with us. We would like to print your artwork in Infinity, and will pay for the rights to the printing of the piece. This only applies to professional artwork. We are willing to look at fan artwork, but to be truthful, it is doubtful that we will print it unless it is extremely good and we feel comes up to the standards we have laid done in our publications. Please enclose sufficient return postage on all items sent to us.

Subscriptions to this magazine will be slightly different than those of others. Subscriptions to our next three issues are for \$5.50. Please take advantage of this offer, as it saves you money and gets you a free gift, and speeds production and lets us estimate our future circulation. We hope you realize that you can help support this magazine by ordering our back issues. Both issues one and two are still available, see details elsewhere.

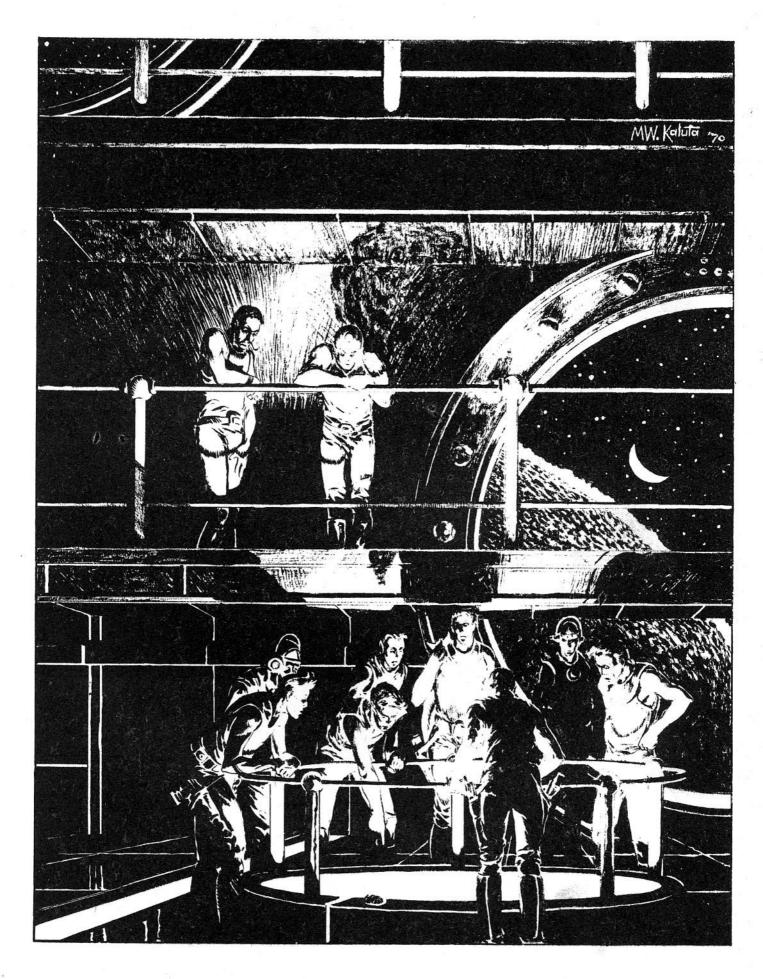
We extend our sincere gratitude in this issue to all of the fine people who helped us in the creation of what you now are reading. Special thanks to Henry Harris, our printer, and Charley Miller, our typographer, for their advice and assistance in the layout of Infinity Three. Thanks to all of the artists who have allowed us to publish or contributed art to this magazine, and especially to Frank Brunner, Jeff Jones, and Bruce Jones for taking time to grant the interviews you will soon read. And final thanks to the entire staff and all our readers without whom this effort would not have been possible.

To those of you who wrote to us concerning the all fan art—INFINITY SPECIAL that was proposed in last issue's Notes—we have decided to give up this idea because of the knowledge of all the time which would have been spent on such a project. As it is, INFINITY encompasses so much time that another new magazine would be an impossibility. For those who contributed, thanks for trying. While we are on the subject of contributions, we are desperately in need of articles. Many feel the one thing INFINITY has lacked in the past are good solid written materials. This of course excludes the interviews, and we are looking for people who have both the ability and knowledge to write an interesting and original article. Anyone that feels they can do such an article please write us so we can decide a suitable topic. Suggestions are of course, welcomed.

Most important thanks must needs be given to none other than Adam's father, Mr. Moe Malin, for being the technical advisor on this issue, as well as getting us millions of dollars worth of prestype for free. He got us the type set, he brought us from our original status (Infinity I-II) and has been the right hand man to us the whole time. To him we owe the most.

Artists—since much of the art for this issue was made especially for us, we would like to collectively thank all of them for their superb renderings. Needless to say, Frank B.'s color cover (originally to be This Is Legend 2's cover) is his greatest piece to date... of artwork. Naturally, he'll have topped it by the time this sees print and we'll look like asses. Ah well, you can't fight city hall.

COMING ATTRACTIONS—Adam is planning a comic con in NY this Thanksgiving, and too many artists to mention here are coming, with art on display. He invites all of



you to it, and for more info, see the Con ad this issue.

Some of the pieces of art presented in this issue of Infinity are available for purchase to our readers on a bid basis. If you see anything you like, write. Who knows? Write for an exact description as well, as many of our pieces are in color and have been either reduced or enlarged in size. Also, we are willing to take ready sheets for distribution with INFINITY. We will do this free of charge. Send *one* ready sheet to us, and if we feel what you are advertising is worthwhile, we will be happy to send them out. To all magazine editors—perhaps we can work out an exchange in carrying our ready sheets.

In answer to the question we asked last time in our Notes concerning strips versus spot illos, our readers agreed that a compromise would be the most favorable approach. This is what we have attempted. I'm sure the Bruce Jones' strip in the second volume will be enjoyed by all, and in the future we hope to have a Jones' strip as a regular installment.

By the way, what do you think of the two column type set this issue, with 2 distinctive styles, to boot? Our typesetter, Charley Miller, has done a splendid job this issue. Don't you agree?

Well, folks, that about does it. We hope you will enjoy this issue of Infinity as we feel it is one step closer to our dream of being the best of all. Thanks to all again, and write your opinions to us. Be seeing you.

Peace.
Adam Malin
Gary Berman



Fan Artists Of The Issue

Our fan artists of the issue are Randy Yeates and Rick Rydell. These two guys have been constantly considerate by submitting their artwork for Infinity. What we need are more contributors like these two guys. CREATION isn't going to be a turkey by any means. It'll be a two day extravaganza featuring a collection of great attractions, and you won't want to miss out!

Admission is payable at the door or by mail. Advance, by mail orders are 1.50 per day or 2.25 for both. Door price is 1.50 a day or 2.50 for both days.

Creation will be hosted at the world famous NEW YORKER HOTEL in downtown New York City on 34th Street and 8th Avenue. The hotel is well known for its spacious accommodations, and for all you out of towners, *hotel rooms* are as follows—

Single room—16 dollars. Double or Twins—21 dollars.

A wide assortment of activities will be hosted at the convention. There will be a filmshow, conducted by Web Of Horror artist Bruce Jones, featuring METROPOLIS and KING KONG, including KONG'S censored scenes! There will be an interesting selection of panels, also. There will be an EC panel, with the EC pros, a fan editors panel with the editors of several fan and prozines, a WEB panel, plus more. Also will be a large AUCTION, in which hundreds of dollars worth of rare comics, pulps, magazines, and original art will be sold. All proceeds will go to Cancer Care. And finally, there will be an enormous display of ORIGINAL ART-WORK, assembled in the display room. Originals, including oils by Frank Frazetta and Jeff Jones, as well as hundreds of black and whites, will be on display. You can't afford to miss this display!

Dealers should take advantage of the 60 table *dealers* room. This room is quite large and tables will be provided. The cost is \$20. for both days. There will also be a fanzine table, in which one pile will be devoted to each zine that wants it, and the cost is \$5.00. Both are well worth the money.

Plan to attend now. The date, November 27 and 28, 1971, is on the Thanksgiving holiday, and you'll want to come down for this event.

GUESTS OF HONOR— Frank Frazetta Al Williamson Jeff Jones Roy G. Krenkel Gary Morrow Mike Kaluta Frank Brunner Bruce Jones

For more information, send letters to

CHAIRMAN

Adam Malin

16 E. 2nd St.

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A program booklet, featuring unpublished art by Frazetta, Wrightson, Jones, Kaluta, Krenkel, Brunner, and a humorous strip by Randy Yeates and Rick Rydell, written by ye olde chairman, is in the works and will be out in mid-July. There will be ads in it, and if you care to advertise, the rates are \$20.00 for one full page ad. This is to be submitted CAM-ERA READY and will cost extra for halftoning, so try and use only linework, otherwise there will be an additional cost.

# WRIGHTSON PORTFOLIO







# JEFF JONES

INFINITY is proud to present the third installment of our interviews with professional artists—a talk with Jeff Jones. Jeff is a brilliant and gifted artist, and INFINITY is happy to have this discussion with him. Read and enjoy!

How did you decide to become an artist in the first place? Well, it's always been kind of a hobby. I would often draw in school instead of work. I was interested in two things—science and art. When I was growing up I was more interested in science; nearly blew myself up several times launching rockets. And I always had an interest in geology. When I went to college, I majored in geology for two years and during this time I was becoming more and more interested in art, and less interested in geology. When I went into school I thought geology was gonna be my vocation and art my hobby, but after a couple of years I found it was the other way around. It was just a complete switch-over.

Have you had any formal art training?

Yes, I had about two or three years of painting; no commercial art or anything. I took a Fine Arts Course in College.

What do you enjoy painting most? Women.

Which do you like to work in most—ink, oil or acrylic? Well, I con't like acrylics. I did a piece once in it and I didn't like how it came out. I like oil very much. It's hard to compare oils to penwork.



The only person I've seen who likes working in acrylics is Gary Morrow.

Well, I don't know. Actually most commercial artists work in it.

And watercolor?

I've done some stuff in watercolor. I prefer oil wash that looks like watercolor.

What do you think were the paintings that started your rise in popularity?

Must have been the Red Shadows ones.

I imagine you must have been influenced to some extent by the old comics.

Yeah. And radio too. I can remember Captain Video! Rocket Ship X-M! I don't remember buying the old comics like EC, but I must have, 'cause I recall the stories as I read them today. I get a strange feeling I've seen it all before. I know they influenced me sub-consciously. Especially the science fiction ones.

EC's are funny that way. They kinda stick with 'ya. I can remember buying Superman, but not the EC Science Fiction stuff. But they have stayed with me.

Do you read comics at all now? No, I don't.

When did you first become a fan?

Well, I got some stuff printed in some fanzines and I said: "Wow! What a great place to get my art printed!" Then I came to New York and entered the professional field. So, until then I wasn't really involved in fandom at all.

Who are your favorite authors?

Howard is very good. He's the only fantasy author I like to read; somehow he makes it believable. In Science Fiction, I like Arthur Clarke, Bradbury, Heinlein; that's some of them.

What do you think of the writing of Edgar Rice Burroughs? Well, I never read any of the Burroughs books until the big comeback in 1962. I read them for the first time then and got very enthralled with ERB and read every one of his books. But, I don't think you can reread them.

Who are your favorite artists? Living or dead?

Both.

N. C. Wyeth, Hal Foster . . . Wow! You hit me kind of suddenly with that! Let's see . . . Frazetta, Albert Dorne . . . I guess that is about it. Oh, Gustav Klimt, J. W. Waterhouse, Howard Pyle, Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema.

What do you think of Foster's Prince Valiant? I think it's ... (gestures with hands)!

... do you think it's the best comic strip?

No, it's not the best comic strip, because it's not really a comic strip. It's an illustrated story. It is probably the best thing of its kind. I think that's because it has a kind of timelessness to it. The comics that were done in the thirties kinda look as if they were done in the thirties. They just look like the thirties comics and nothing else. But take Prince Valiant from the thirties and it looks like they could have been done yesterday; or last year, or five years ago. You can't tell when it was done, because it's unique; it doesn't seem to age. It isn't affected by time at all. Fifty years from now, it will all probably look just as fresh as it always did.

People always seem to match you with Frank Frazetta. Were you influenced by him greatly, or not?

Really, it was mostly at the beginning. His work was so powerful that it was hard to look at anything else. I looked at his work and said: "Jeez, it's so convincing! It's the only way to do it!" But then, I started to learn and I saw that there were many other ways to paint.

Frazetta decided, for one reason or another, not to do the last Conan book cover. Would you like to do it? Is there a possibility of you doing it?

I doubt it. I wouldn't particularly want to. Also, I haven't done any work for Lancer in about a year and a half. So, it's not likely that they would call me out of the blue.

What do you think of Frank's job on Princess of Mars? I like it very much. I though that . . . it captured the flavor of ERB very well. It's hard to get the book, though. You have to be a member of a book club, and even then, there's a limit to the number of books you can buy. He's supposed to have done another one for them. Then, I also like his new Jongor cover.

Krenkel took one look at that and said; "That's it! A true Krenkelian concept! That is what I would do if I were good!" It's very nice.

What do you think of Hannes Bok? You've seen some of his illustrations.

Yeah, yeah. He's . . . well, his is a style I personally don't like. I just don't care for it. I will admit he is very, very good; it's just that that type of stuff doesn't appeal to me.

And Roy Krenkel? We have a good deal of his artwork in INFINITY.

He's very good. Everybody likes his stuff except Roy Krenkel! You'll never hear him say a good word about himself. He loves to complain.

Especially about his house!

You mean the little green men there who steal his erasers?!!

Speaking of artists, what do you think of Jim Steranko? I like Jim's art very much. He has a nice style. A very personable style.

And what do you think of James Bama?

It's hard to say what you think of another artist. He's . . . the very best person doing that type of thing. He is . . . well, it's more than realism. When other people do it, it comes out realistic; it comes out looking like a photograph. But his stuff transcends that. He somehow gets a more emotional feeling into the painting, it's almost like you know the char-



acter. It's more than just that; his work gives the appearance that it is all there so precisely, yet nothing is sharpened. It's like reality is. Nothing has a sharp edge; everything moves with everything else. It's sorta difficult to explain.

What of Ken Kelley as an artist?

Well, I think that his work looks a little too much like Frazetta's. But I think he'll emerge as an artist in his own right soon, with his own style. That's the danger of studying under an artist; your art looks like your teacher's in the end. That doesn't always have to happen. Usually it does, though. It is a shame really; the biggest disadvantage of having a teacher. You always seem to look like your teacher in your artwork.

What TV shows do you like, to change the subject?

TV shows? I like TV shows that don't have a message! I like the adventure stuff. The kind that has escapes and that type of stuff. MISSION IMPOSSIBLE was good for awhile. THE PRISONER was very good. I'm still watching the reruns.

How about the AVENGERS?

I liked that show. I like all the spy stuff. I also like the BARON.

And STAR TREK?

That was another one that was good the first season. After that, it seemed to go down hill . . . So many shows do.

And this season, on NBC, Rod Serling has another show called NIGHT GALLERY.

Right. It isn't anything like TWILIGHT ZONE. Charles Beaumont wrote most of the Twilight stuff; he is dead now. I imagine Serling writes some of the material and has other writers too.

And what about movies? What about them?

Did you like "2001, A Space Odyssey:"; "Beneath the Planet of the Apes"?

"2001"; I loved it! I didn't like "Beneath" very much, though. I don't have a chance to see many movies generally. I usually like westerns. Butch Cassidy was good. Even the old westerns were good.

Any hobbies besides art? Astronomy.

Those reptiles over there, how about them? I like lizards.

What's his name? Gronk.

Gronk???? Yep.

Do you have any work coming out in any fanzines? In I'LL BE DAMNED, for instance?

Yes, I have one drawing in that. I've done a lot of stuff for other people, but I never find out the names of their fanzines. I don't know what fanzines the art is coming out in. David Jablin has a fanzine coming out that has a three page story. (Imagination.) He's got a lot of work by Berni, too. I have the cover to THIS IS LEGEND for the second issue. It's a painting; I have it in the back of the studio; I'll show it to you later.

Virgil Finlay thinks that pro artists shouldn't work for fanzines, but that fanzines should have art by the up-coming pros and amateurs.

That's true, that's the main purpose of fanzines. I agree. It's somewhere that the amateur artist has never had before to have his work published. There is nothing more valuable than seeing your work in print. I remember that when I was doing fan art and I was a fan, I wasn't very good. I used to make these big comic pages and I'd look at them and say. "Well, it's not too good, but once it's reduced it'll look great." And when it came out, it didn't look great at all; it looked just as bad, only smaller! There was nothing like seeing my work in print, to make me improve. Competing with other people in print, I could see the difference immediately. No matter how bad it is, there is something quite appealing about an original piece of art. But when it's printed, it's objective, just like anything else that is printed, it is somehow judged from a different view. Fanzines having profession artwork in them, will sell more, so, more people will contribute to those, so, their stuff does sell.

You told me earlier about several strips you're doing. ABYSS, I take it has the eight page strip. Is that pen and ink? Yes, it is the ABYSS strip; it's ink.

And magic marker; I know that in stories like your recent VAMPIRELLA story you used magic marker. Well, actually that's what I mean.

How about the cover to ABYSS? Are you doing it?

We have a rotation system where whoever does the cover, their story will be last in the magazine. The other three people will make spot illos for the inside front and back covers. It's hard to say how soon it will be out. We're supposed to give it to the printer this month and now we're waiting for Mike to finish his story. (This interview was taped prior to Abyss I's publication.)

How did you get involved with Fantastic and Amazing? Well, I've been doing stuff for Fantastic and Amazing for about three years. A guy named Jerry Page was the art editor and I knew him when I came to New York. He mentioned me to the publisher and I worked for a while there. Jerry is not the editor anymore and they have had a couple of new editors in-between. And then Ted White became editor. Ted sort of sparked some interest in the magazine. He knew a lot of people and he talked to a lot of people.

Do you plan to do anything for comic books?

Well, I've been doing stories for Warren, and I have one story coming out at National. It's a Science Fiction story, and it will be in WITCHING HOUR. It'll be an all Science Fiction issue, with things by Al Williamson and Stanley Pitt. Should be coming out this fall.

Speaking of Warren, is he still paying you low, or what? Well, he gives me a lot of freedom; that's why I work for him. He doesn't pay well, but I like Warren; He does seem to care about what he is doing. He's very personally involved with his magazine, whereas some publishers are not.

Is there any chance we will see any more Bode' | Jones collaborations?

Yeah, there's a good possibility. Warren has two or three things now to give me in collaboration with Vaughn.

How about Witzend? Any work coming out?

Not right now. The future of Witzend doesn't look too good. It looks like issue eight might be the last issue. It may go on, but only as just a regular fanzine. Articles and fanart in it, maybe. Number eight may be it.

What of WEB OF HORROR? Berni told me that he's trying to get back the artwork.

Well, since it folded, Berni and some other people are trying to get their work back. The artists haven't been paid for some of the jobs, so, that art isn't legally the magazines'.

What did you think of CONAN #1; the comic book, that is. Ha! Ha! No comment.

I think that Marvel is going to get Liv. Carter as an advisor. Yes, that may be to their advantage.

If Berni had gotten the job, it would have been a whole different ballgame, though.

Right. He's doing King Kull for them, though. Very good.

You seem to have so many paintings on books. Are you faster than the average artist?

No, I work slower than the average artist. I take about four or five days to do a painting. Some paintings take as long as two weeks, but I've done them in one day. On the average, about four days.

That's slow?!!
Yep!

I was admiring this painting here, (pointing to wall). What is it and how long did it take to do?

It's the cover for a Ballantine book called "Tiberius" and it took me about a month.



JUNGLE JIM



When you say that it takes you about a month to do a painting, how many hours do you work on that specific painting each day?

Usually about four hours. I work on it over a period of a month.

How long does a pencilled and inked page take?

It's pretty hard to say. I pencil the whole thing and then come back and ink it. The pencilling takes about a day, I guess, for one page. And I guess I can ink about two pages a day. About two weeks for the whole strip. It takes that long because you're not gonna sit there and draw it all day long! The VAMPIRELLA story was in felt tip, though.

Do you use zippatone?

Not as much as I used to. In the VAMPIRELLA story I used it.

I was wondering; what type of paint do you use; is it oil, watered down, or what?

It's oil, with a copal painting medium. I use it for all my paintings.

How many covers would you say you have had published so far?

Well, I guess about 115. I don't know how many of them are out yet; I'd guess about ninety or eighty-five.

We printed a 1-page drawing by you last issue; was it the study for Wolfing or what (\*)?

Yes, though it didn't fit the book. It's one of those curious circumstances where the artist gets blamed for not reading the book, but it's rarely his fault. You either don't get a book to read, or they give you a paragraph to read. It says: "Set on alien world; hero comes against many perils!" It really doesn't tell you too much about the book, ya' know? That happens quite often. Or, I'll get the book, read it, and I'll make a few preliminary sketches. I'll show it to the art director and he will say; "I don't know; could you make it a little more sword-and-sorcery? That's what's selling." And I'll say: "Yeah, but it isn't a sword-and-sorcery book." To him it doesn't matter. "Just take a few clothes off and give the hero a sword!"

Have you seen the cover that Kelly Freas did for the ANA-LOG serialization of Wolfling?
Nope.

It shows a guy in a khaki clothes and a kilt. And then a girl... I know; that is what they looked like! That's how they looked in my original sketches. They didn't want that; they said that wouldn't sell their book.

Your Guardian book covers are very nice.

Oh, yes. Well, those are books that I never got to read. They told me what type of books they were and I came out with a cover idea from that.

On the second cover, the girl on it is exactly as described in the book!

Oh, really? That's a coincidence, then.

This painting (holding up the Pathless Trail Study), is being used for the cover of INFINITY Three. Is there any story behind it?

Well, I started that for the book *Pathless Trail*. I liked the way the figures were coming out, but somehow it started to look like Australian natives, instead of South American natives. So, I started it over again and redid it. The figures aren't exactly like the cover published, but they are similar types.

Taking Pathless Trail we were talking about, as an example, do you always make painted roughs or do you use pen and ink?

Most of my roughs are in pencil.

This may sound ridiculous, but one of my favorite covers by you is that Kothar one.

Which one?

The first.

Really? I didn't like that at all. I didn't sign it!

One of my original paintings by you, The Wizard of Storms, was only signed "J.J.". Have you changed your style in signing?

(\*) Wolfling by Gordon Dickson. Serialization by Analog: Jan. through March 1969. Published in book by Dell; May 1969. No, I don't ever remember signing it that way. It's probably the only one that is signed that way.

On one of the covers you did for Fantastic, you had a space man in yellow and blue, and you signed your name in a completely different way.

I forged it.

Concerning the Snow Woman job for Fantastic: how did they come to use it?

That was the first time Ted White was trying to use new art for the cover. He asked if I had any old sketches laying around that wasn't used, that he could print and I did. It almost fit the story.

I saw a picture by you in the L.I. Press. It accompanied Isaac Asimov's article on pollution. How many did you do? I did three for Hall Syndicate. They published the article and they wanted three illustrations for it. They sent them out to the newspaper to do with them as they wanted, so, I guess each paper did it differently. Some papers were going to print a separate magazine; ya' know, with the articles on the inside and a photo of the Earth on the cover and my illustrations inside. I haven't seen any of them since the printing, so, I don't know. Somebody in Baltimore told me that it came out in the Baltimore paper. They had printed all three on a very small scale.

Do you have any plans for making any more statuettes?(\*) Yeah, I'm experimențing. I'm trying to make them out of materials a little sturdier than plaster. I've tried cement and that seemed to work pretty well. I want to try fiberglass. There are different kinds of things to do. It's the first statuette I've done and I am looking for better kinds of castings. I know a few materials now that I'm going to try. Berni wants one in transparent plastic and I think it might look good. But somehow, I think it would lose its form.

That painting on the wall over there; where was it published? I don't know. I guess in some pulp in the twenties. It's by Frank Schoonover; he's a contemporary of N. C. Wyeth. They had a studio together and both were students of Howard Pyle.

So you're familiar with N. C. Wyeth? Yes, I am.

Did you enjoy the '70 Comic Convention in New York? Very much, even though I had to stay downstairs most of the time at my exhibit.

Were you on any of the panels?
Yes, I was on the Sword and Sorcery panel.

You've never been honored by a Hugo, have you?

No one has ever been honored by a Hugo, though I would enjoy winning.

Do you have any feelings about this?

Well, I have a feeling there is a lot of politics involved. It's not given to the best artist; it's given to the artist who is most popular as a person. Unfortunately, there's no way it can be given to the best artist, because there are so few artists in

(\*) Statuettes are 17" high and of a pretty little gal, for which Jeff is famous for. It was limited to 50 castings in plaster and sold out at the N.Y. Convention.

Science Fiction. If they looked at it objectively and said: "Who is the best artist?", two or three people would get it every year. And they would be the only ones who would ever get it, and that wouldn't be right.

We're quite close to the Museum of Natural History. Do you go down there often?

Yeah, all the time.

Did you see the display of astronomical paintings by Chesley Bonstell there yet?

No. I missed it.

It's still there.

Oh, really?! Somebody said it was closed. I'll have to go there and look at it.

We've only got about two minutes left on the tape! Quick!

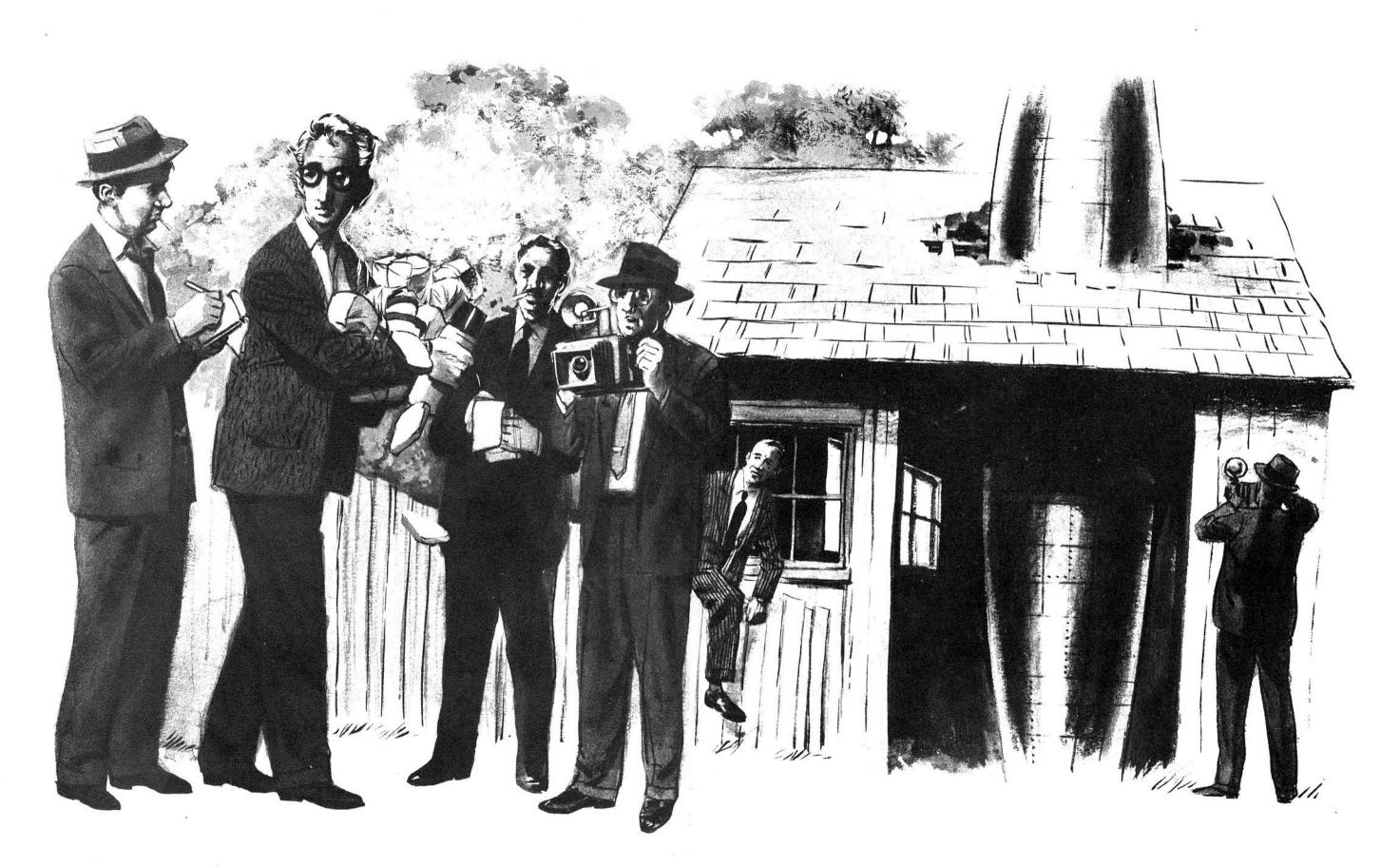
Are you going to stay in the Science Fiction field, or are you going to branch out?

Oh, I don't know. Not necessarily. I like Science Fiction; I'll stay with it for awhile.

Well, there's no time left on the tape, so, that's it. Thanks. Okay, let's go to my studio and see...

**Finis** 





#### VIRGIL FINLAY

In early 1971 the science-fantasy illustration field lost its elder statesman; Virgil Finlay had died.

His career was a long and distinguished one; ranging over three decades from WEIRD TALES in the early thirties to WORLDS OF IF in the middle sixties. Yet, despite general recognition as the greatest penman in the business, Finlay never received the accolades he so richly deserved. He won a HUGO (the science-fantasy world's achievement award) in 1953, the first year of the presentations, but never won again. Why? Although never a fannish personality, he was always cordial, easy to talk to, knowledgeable, and very hospitable; perhaps his reluctance to go to fans at cons and meetings counted against him. This reluctance to be involved in the s-f world was, however, quite natural; after thirty years in the field Virgil Finlay had grown quite disenchanted with the whole business. He often remarked that he couldn't read s-f because he could anticipate the whole story after reading a few lines. Added to this, the fact that the magazines never paid well, and the fact that many of the better markets were closed to him because of petty animosities and feuds, it is surprising that his feelings toward the field were as friendly as they were. He still cared enough in his later years to make his last major project a series of illustrations for an encyclopedia article on s-f, and was working, up to his death, on a collection of his best illustrations and an index of all his work.

Finlay's last months were unhappy. The continuing pain resulting from his bout with cancer prevented him from working and he was forced by monetary difficulties to sell many of his originals. One bright spot in this period, however, was an award presented to him by FIRST FANDOM for his achievements in the field, an award he was to cherish those last months.

Now, with his death, it is too late for fandom to show its appreciation of Virgil Finlay's years of work. Always it seems, a man must dies before he is truly appreciated by all.

Doug Murray





# F. BRUNNER

#### INTERVIEW-FRANK BRUNNER

PROLOGUE: This speaks for itself, so let's get right into it.

Inf. Have you been living in New York City all your life? Frank. No, I just rented this place for the interview!

Inf. OK, we'll take it from there. Have you had any art training?

Frank. School of Art and Design.

Inf. How long did you take the course?

Frank. About four years; of course, they don't train you for work in comics.

Inf. Did you every try any of those art correspondence courses?

Frank. No.

Inf. How did you get into the comic-fantasy field in the first place?

Frank. How did I get into it? Well, I was always drawing and reading comics; sometimes I didn't like the way they did it. So, I thought perhaps I could improve on what they were doing on certain strips. Then started drawing my own cartoons and strips. And that led from ball point pens and lined paper to more professional things, like when I got to do a comic strip on the High School newspaper. I did it for about five issues. It was a satire on the Batman TV show sort of like Mad Magazine. It was called Blotman.

Inf. What artists would you say have influenced you the most? Frank. Frazetta, Williamson, Krenkel, Hal Foster, I could name dozens, actually.

Inf. How about N. C. Wyeth?

Frank. More of an inspiration than influence. I wouldn't want to pinpoint myself. Wyeth was a technician... a super technician and my subject matter could never come close to his. The technical skill is what impresses me and I'd like to achieve some of that in my own work.

Inf. How about E. C. comics?

Frank. (Wryly) I don't know anything about those!

Inf. Were they your biggest influence?

Frank. Inspiration-The Golden Age of artwork and stories.

Inf. You don't think they will come close to it again?

Frank. Not in the same form—the color comic format. Unless something surprising happens. I don't think color comics will ever approach that level again. What E. C.'s were talking about 15-20 years ago is still true today. Like some of the Shock Suspenstories, the social oriented stories or some of the science fiction concepts. Nowadays comics—color comics—just seem to follow. If people with long hair happen to be around... five years later they notice and start to draw people with long hair. They are not innovating right now.

Inf. What type of fiction do you enjoy more, Science Fiction, Sword and Sorcery or what?

Frank. I love 'em all about equally. Sword and Sorcery, horror sci-fi.

Inf. I've noticed that you've done a number of Flash Gordon type strips (Smash Gordon). Are you a Flash Gordon fan? Frank. Oh, yeah! I was introduced to Flash Gordon through Williamson. All I'd ever seen was the real early strips then

I saw the EC stuff done by Al Williamson and Krenkel.

Inf. How about the movies, "2001", "Planet of the Apes" etc? Frank. I consider "2001" to be the best movie ever made. That's a very strong statement I suppose.

Inf. What about "Citizen Kane"?

Frank. Citizen Kane follows very closely. It has a more down to earth subject however, 2001 is my preference if only because its subject is closer to my heart.

Inf. Who are your favorite writers?

Frank. Arthur C. Clarke, perhaps Bradbury, Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and particularly H. P. Lovecraft.

Inf. What about Robert Howard?

Frank. Howard rates high, but he's not one of my very favorite writers.

Inf. How about young writers?

Frank. Well, I don't know how old some of those guys are. Let me see, one of my favorite books is "Stranger in a Strange Lard" by Heinlein.

Inf. He's got a new one out on the same line. Frank. What's it called?

Inf. "Fear No Evil".

Frank. He's a very conservative writer, actually, and Stranger certainly was different.

Inf. He's been experimenting in the last three or four books. Frank. I look back on his old books and they are very conservative, like he's hung up on the military service in outer space for example.

Inf. When you were in high school did you read science fiction and fantasy a lot or did you stay away from them like almost everyone else?

Frank. I wasn't away! I guess it was sicence fiction E. C's which got me into the books. I had about a thousand books in my collection and I didn't really read any of them until I discovered E. C.

Inf. How did you get into the whole fandom bit?

Frank. Well, I got in in a strange way. I did some work a long time ago. Back in the days when the fan mags were in mimeograph. And it really discouraged me the way my artwork came out. Then I dropped out of the field for a while and then I tried to make it into the pro field, strictly.

1 broke in sort of...then the fan magazines improved greatly in format so I wanted to get back into that.

Inf. Which would you rather work for—the fans or the pros? Frank. Probably the fans. Not as far as monetary rewards go but there is no cranky editor to tell me what or what not to do.

Inf. Adam's a cranky editor. Frank. (Hysterical laughter)

Inf. What fanzines do you like?

Frank. Like? All the fanzines I work for! I haven't seen too many of them. I like Spa Fon and Squa Tront. And I like ...let's see.

Inf. Witzend?

Frank. Well, Witzend is hard to consider as a fanzine. I think it's more of a professional mag. Actually, it's hard to define any as fan magazines with most containing pro art

Inf. How'd you manage to get into Castle of Frankenstein: Is Cal Beck a friend?

Frank. I met him at a convention and I had a Smash Gordon strip with me (my first). I was still in high school at the time and a friend of mine grabbed it and showed it to him because he heard he was a publisher. He immediately wanted it. So we arranged a deal there, and then he wanted more work so I pencilled the first chapter of Carnak and eventually I got up to the second chapter and then I got into Web of Horror in between a lot of other things... underground work and a newspaper called "Changes". The first seven issues I did a serialization of a science fiction strip in the future. It was about the world being divided into two cultures, the surface world and the underground world. The underground world was literally underground where people lived the life styles they wanted to and the surface was all programmed and ruled by a computer. The plot was that the surface decided they wanted to bring their glorious life style down to the underground and force it on them because these poor people were ignorant and needed their help. The main character was a black woman with blond hair and that was about it. The whole strip was called "Justice and the Observer". Justice was the girl's name.

Inf. What are your favorite newspaper strips?

Frank. Flash Gordon, Prince Valiant; oh, there must be a couple more . . . Secret Agent X-9 I like . . . I know there used to be a heck of a lot more!

Inf. Do you like Buck Rogers?

Frank. Buck Rogers . . . I sort of like and Little Nemo is one of the all time best I think.

Inf. How about Johnny Comet?

Frank. Johnny Comet was very good, but the story never interested me, it was just the Frazetta art.

Inf. There is a lot of Frazetta influence in your work. Are you trying to get away from it or imitate it or what? Frank. Well, I'm trying to get away from it.

Inf. It seems that most of the young artists seem to come up with a strong Frazetta influence.

Frank. (Pointing at wall) I had some nice comments on that

painting. They said it didn't resemble Frazetta at all.

Inf. I see a little Wrightson in that actually. (Cover of Castle of Frankenstein #15).

Frank. Wrightson? Actually that was painted before Wrightson did his Web of Horror cover, which is more or less his first painting.

Inf. Well, in the figure of the man especially.

Frank. Yeah, other people have mentioned that too...it just happened.

Inf. A topic we always seem to get into in all of our interviews is Foster's Prince Valiant. It's considered one of the top strip classics of our time or any other time. Would you classify it as a comic strip or an illustrated story?

Frank. I would classify it as an illustrated epic which has been going on for about thirty years now. It's come to be a watered down version today. Originally it was a highly fantasized strip with a lot of magic and monsters.

Inf. They've been putting in magic lately if you've been keeping up with the strip. Prince Valiant is trying to find some sorceress.

Frank. Foster changed the concept of his strip midway, from a fantasy-mythological thing to a very historical type thing, although the characters never existed. Foster got hung up about midpoint on being a historian rather than a story teller.

Inf. He might have read some of the legends and got caught up that way.

Frank. Yeah, he's of Nordic background anyway.

Inf. His son Las been doing work on the strip.

Frank. I've heard that refuted by people who are good authorities; his son is not working on it anymore, if ever.

Inf. Do you plan on breaking into the paperback market or will you stay with the magazines?

Frank. Oh, definitely I'll break into the paperback market. As a matter of fact all I'm waiting for is the right moment and to get a few things done. It does seem like they're looking for people. Ken Smith just broke in recently.

Inf. We talked with him the other day on the phone and he's real busy now. Everybody's going for his style. He says his illustrations are going like wildfire. Of course, he's got that funny little style of getting such tremendous detail in his illos.

Frank. Oh yeah, that's not funny, that's hard work.

Inf. How about the two new magazines Warren is coming out with? Do you know anything about those?

Frank. I don't know what the titles are. I've been told the subjects are going to be teen oriented, young oriented let's say, and one may be completely drawn by Wally Wood and I don't know what the other is, it might be romance, it might be... who knows what.

Inf. I know you're familiar with Frazetta. What do you think of Ken Kelly his apparent protege or whatever you want to call it?

Frank. Well, Ken has got a good future, he's got Frank Frazetta on his side. Incidently, Ken will be doing the in between cover of Castle of Frankenstein that I won't be doing. I was scheduled to do the next two covers but I couldn't meet the deadline so Ken's filling in. So we'll see what order they will come out in, maybe he'll be first, then mine, I don't know.

Inf. It depends on when Castle of Frankenstein comes out.
Frank. Oh, it will be coming out more regularly now I've been assured.

Inf. I've heard that said for the last two years.

Frank. It has to be now because the distributor is going to drop it if it doesn't come out faster.

Inf. It's by far the best monster magazine.

Frank. I don't think its a monster magazine anymore—it's becoming what I'd like to see; a multi-media magazine... which deals with all forms of fantasy...movies, comics, written articles.

Inf. Cal Beck seems to have adapted better than let's say Ackerman.

Frank. Yeah, well it's his only magazine. He's got to adapt or go under

Inf. You live right by the apartment house where Berni, Jeff and Mike all live (recorded before Mike Kaluta moved). Do you help one another with deadlines?

Frank. Well, I don't wanna' spread any rumors. I do all my own work, nobody helped me out yet. Sometimes I wish they'd come over here and help me! Mike and Berni and Jeff have assisted each other out from time to time. It's a common fact that Jeff penciled a good portion of Nightmaster because that was Berni's first entire book which is quite a heavy job. I wouldn't want to get stuck with a deadline like he had.

Inf. Are you going to be doing anything for Marvel as far as color comics?

Frank. No, not for Marvel. Possibly DC though.

Inf. Have any idea of what book it would appear in? Frank. Probably in one of their mystery mags.

Inf. DC's quality level has seemed to increase quite a bit.
Frank. Yeah, that's one of the reasons why I won't work for Marvel right now. I think Marvel is in a period of panic, they're going into a reprint phase and all that, and I just don't see much future there.

Inf. DC has revised Batman and Green Lantern. It's 500% better than it was two years ago.

Frank. Yes, but I don't think the hope of the field lies in super hero books right now. But there's gonna be more mystery, science fiction and westerns coming up to fill the void.

Inf. Science Fiction never seems to sell well in comic books though, for some reason.

Frank. Well, if you don't devote the entire book to science fiction you can always get a story in. They can always put it in a mystery-Horror book.

Inf. Even the EC science fiction books never were really popular.

Frank. They published them out of love. It seems to me that everybody's more receptive to science fiction in all fields, in the illustrative fields, in fan art and professional art.





Inf. Which do you prefer to work in; black and white or color? Frank. Black and white. Oh, you mean as opposed to painting? I prefer painting.

Inf. That oil for Legend is quite stunning. (That oil is now one of our covers!)

Frank. Thank you. Because basically you've got one panel, more or less, and you can devote a helluva lot more time to that one panel instead of dividing your energies to many panels and layouts.

Inf. Which do you prefer, black and white or color comics? Frank. I think black and white comics are better, though I'd like to get some work in color comics.

Int. Black and white comics can be more experimental than the color ones.

Frank. Oh definitely, there's a lot more going on in them. I don't know if you've seen the foreign black and white comics like Legionaires of Space. There is a lot of innovation going on there. In Europe also.

Inf. How about the pulp magazine field, do you plan to do any work for them?

Frank. Pulps? Not really. Maybe a cover but no interiors at this point.

Inf. Well, Amazing and Fantastic have upgraded their artwork tremendously with Mike and Jeff doing work for them. And yet it doesn't seem to be doing them any good.

Frank. No, it wouldn't pay any bills. It's seldom you get a full page. You mostly get a strip or a little box or something; they throw you something like 5-10 bucks a shot.

Inf. What of the old pulps Doc Savage, The Shadow...Do you collect those, read them or what?

Frank. Well, I have a collection of those somewhere around here. Most of them are being reprinted in paperbacks now though and I read them more often than the old pulps because they tend to fall apart.

Inf. Which do you like better, The Shadow or the Doc Savage pulps?

Frank. Well, again I reflect on the writers rather than the characters because it was a written medium rather than a visual one. I tend to like Doc Savage writing a little better. It has more of a flair than the Shadow. I really like both characters though.

Inf. Do you like The Spider?

Frank. Not as much as The Shadow or Doc Savage.

Inf. Do you think the comics industry would be better off without the comics code? Or with a less strenuous code?

Frank. It wouldn't be better off without it, however, now that it has it, it would be better off if they paid less attention to it. Just to keep it on as a label for some people's security.

Inf. Well, there's virtually no violence now. You can't kill characters unless they get killed in their own traps.

Frank. I don't think killing characters is essential. I don't think it would make or break a story.

Inf. Well the old EC horror comics could never be published now with the code.

Frank. There was a purpose in that. They always had this



poetic justice thing. Naturally it was essential that somebody died because he killed someone else. But in a superhero oriented type comic book I don't think it's essential that people die. I mean... sometimes it helps it, makes it more dramatic but if everyone died every issue it would get to be a drag also.

Inf. You'd run out of characters after awhile too.

Frank. Many times I've often felt that a *certain* villain should've died but he didn't, but it makes for a great comeback issue if he doesn't die.

Inf. What do you think of the work of Virgil Finlay?
Frank. He is the greatest living pen man around. He does
the astrology magazines now I think.

Inf. Most of them are all reprints now, as he hasn't done anything for about the past year.

Frank. That's too bad. He's worked for the pulps most of his life and he doesn't have very much to show for it because they never really paid much I suspect.

Inf. Right now he's not doing anything for them.

Frank. Yeah, just by talking to Virgil I was turned off by the pulp medium. (This interview was taped prior to Mr. Finlay's death.) Finlay's the only one in the field that I know of that has done actual work for galleries.

Inf. Well, Frazetta approached the gallery one time with some of his paintings and they looked at his paintings and said, "Gee, that's really fine, why don't you try some abstracts". Have you seen his new paintings on the hardcover books, like Princess of Mars and Downward to Earth? What do you think of them?

Frank. Well, he seems to be experimenting a little with that. Whereas his average paperback covers while they are great are barbarians and the typical jungle stuff.

Inf. He's very pleased with the Downward to Earth cover. That's totally unlike anything he's ever done. There's no buman figures in it at all.

Frank. He's experimenting and that's good to see. I think that he might've been stiffled for a while. Even though the quality was there it was more or less the same subject, the same style.

Inf. That may not be his fault.

Frank. True, but there are variations you can play even on a sword and sorcery cover. You don't have to do a literal interpretation of everything.

Inf. As Jeff told us, a lot of the time, he was told to do such and such no matter what he may be working on, because that sells. Case in point was the Wolfling cover. And the cover was totally unlike the book, but he was told to do a barbarian cover even though the story is not about a barbarian. But those kind of covers seem to sell; so he did a barbarian cover!

Frank. It was a beautiful cover though; it was really nice. Sword and Sorcery isn't going to sell forever though. And if Frank is experimenting that could be because he'll be able to settle into something else. By the way, Jack Kirby is starting up a company of his own on the West Coast.

Inf. For what purpose?

Frank. To bring out innovative type comics. In other words, people who are not already in the field or perhaps some may be in the field. And I may get in touch with him. I may even move out to the West Coast if it looks like he may do something out there. Cause he's gotten out from under the influence of Mr. Lee. But Jack has always wanted to do something like that. I used to see him quite often when I was working up at Marvel and he used to pop up there and he was always talking about getting something together with young artists and guys like that and starting something completely different. And a man like Jack at the helm would be a good person to work with.

Inf. What do you think of Jim Steranko?

Frank. Steranko is coming along quite nicely. I didn't particularly like his former work. I felt his Shield work was good as an impact type art, but I felt he was just relying on special effects. He was not bothering to learn anatomy a lot of times, just using Jack Kirby's anatomy as a basic and distorting from there which is a bad point to proceed from...it's like starting to paint and taking Frazetta's style of anatomy and considering that as the realistic figure, then starting to draw from that. You're gonna get really way out. He won't even look human. Frank distorts it the way he wants to and makes it look right. Steranko's paintings are very good; his western covers are probably the best in the way of covers.

Inf. What have you heard of Talon?

Frank. I've heard it's still in the making. Jim said he was tied up with a big contract for Lancer Western covers.

Inf. How about conventions. Do you enjoy them?
Frank. I can take them once in a while. As long as they don't come every month.

In: If nothing else, it's a good place to meet people.
Frank. Just recently I went to the Detroit convention and got to meet Rich Buckler and a few other people.

Inf. How did the Detroit convention come off? Was it a

success?

Frank. I'd say it was a very good convention. It had the right combination of things going for it. It had a great amount of entertainment and movies every night. Good flicks—like the whole Edgar Allen Poe thing, all of them with Vincent Price. There were quite a few artists there and a lot of dealers. A lot of new items were brought there. Dealers with Frazetta posters and stuff like that. Paperbacks too.

Inf. It seems to me especially in the field of paperbacks, that people are becoming more art oriented. You see a lot of people buying paperbacks because of the covers rather than the interiors. Do you think that is a healthy trend?

Frank. Well, perhaps they'll read them. At least they're buying them.

Inf. Now when a new book comes out they put it on a list instead of such and such by so and so they say cover by so and so.

Frank. I talked to a couple of paperback dealers, a guy who specializes in science fiction publications, Stephen's Book Service, and I asked "Do people actually come in here and buy a book for Steranko's cover?" He said "That's right, it doesn't matter what the story is." I'm guilty of the same thing. I've probably bought every one of Frazetta's covers and read only half of them... because half of them aren't worth reading and I know it! Case in point—The Secret People, that really was a terrible story, I read it just to prove it to myself.

Inf. The cover was a watercolor.

Frank. Frank has an odd way of utilizing his watercolors. He uses them as if they were oils. He uses his oils as if they were watercolors.

Inf. He's only done one watercolor that was published, or maybe 2.

Frank. Yeah, that's about the only one. I don't know what he used on his cartoon covers, it might have been sort of a watercolor.

Inf. Oh, he did a cover to Spa Fon 5 that was a watercolor. Frank. Was that a watercolor???

Inf. What about "Web of Horror" and the "Santa Claus" strip?

Frank. I wrote that incidentally.

Inf. It's an interesting story.

Frank. Yeah, I thought it was. Sort of a satire, tongue-incheek. It's not a serious horror story.

Inf. Kind of reminiscent of one EC published some years back.

Frank. In some respects. It utilized the Santa Claus villain type theme. But, it had a different ending, completely. It had a happy ending.

Inf. What ever happened to "Web of Horror"?

Frank. Well, it's a case of a publisher who didn't know where his head should of been. He just decided he didn't want to publish it any more.

Inf. Was he losing or making money?

Frank. Well, he didn't make a million and he wasn't happy. Let's put it that way. He probably did make money, at



least he broke even.

Inf. I know Krenkel had a cover ready for next issue and you had at least one story.

Frank. Yeah, it's a tragic thing that happened. It could of been the best magazine of its type.

Inf. "This Is Legend" started out as a fanzine and for a while sounded like it might turn into something like "Web". They've gotten strips by Berni, Jeff and Mike.

Frank. In the first issue they've got a two page centerfold by me. In the second issue I've got a witch portfolio, and possibly a strip entitled "The Gorgon's Head".

Inf. It sounds kind of like "Abyss". They both have professional strips. I'd like to see some of the people do some work on the lesser known Greek myths and Norse myths.

Frank. "This Is Legend" is going to have this Witch thing ... full page drawings, about ten including the whole process—like the accusation is a whole panel, then the trial, the burning at the stake and so on.

Inf. Gray Morrow did something like that in the last issue of "Witzend".

Frank. I'm going to be doing 4 panels, I think he's gonna do the other six.

Inf. It seems like fanzines are trying to become very slick these days.

Frank, I like the trend.

Inf. How about "I'll Be Damned"?

Frank. It also might be a very big fanzine if it keeps going like it is. The first printer they went to messed up the whole deal and somehow the second issue got printed up by another printer before the first issue. So the second came out before number one. I have some drawings coming up in issue three.

Inf. The trouble with fanzines nowadays is that all the artists who used to be fan artists have now become professional, and the fans don't have that much money. This coupled with the fact that the artists have such busy schedules, makes it very rare that the artists can afford to give contributions. Nobody has the time to do anything anymore. As much as we'd like to get stuff for free, you have to realize that everyone works for the buck.

Frank. Well, you have to consider how much time an artist puts into his artwork. He has to pay the rent, meanwhile. I gave you the oil (cover for issue number 2 of Infinity—ed. note) because it was already finished and it wasn't promised to anyone. I couldn't afford to do a painting for nothing at this point.

Inf. Well, that's the case with just about everyone. Sooner or later we'll have to get some strips by professionals to round out the magazine. Of course, we have the Bruce Jones strip for issue three. We also kinda like to get first interviews. You're a first, Bruce Jones, Jim Warren, Doug's Frazetta; I think the tapes running out, so before it goes, how old are you?

Frank. Twenty-one.





