



infinity three - volume two



Editors of this magazine are: Adam Malin, 16 E. Second St., Freeport, Long Island, 11520 and Gary Berman, 197-50 F Peck Avenue, Flushing, New York, 11365.



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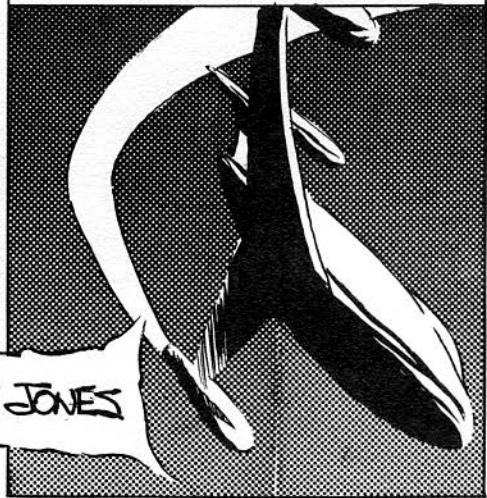
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Fenneth Smith
10 AUGUST '70

THE MATING

I ONLY WANTED TO SCAN THE DAMN PLANET, NOT LAND THERE... UNFORTUNETLY THERE WAS A LOT MORE TO HANDLING RONALD'S CRAFT THAN I THOUGHT...

BRUCE JONES
© 1971





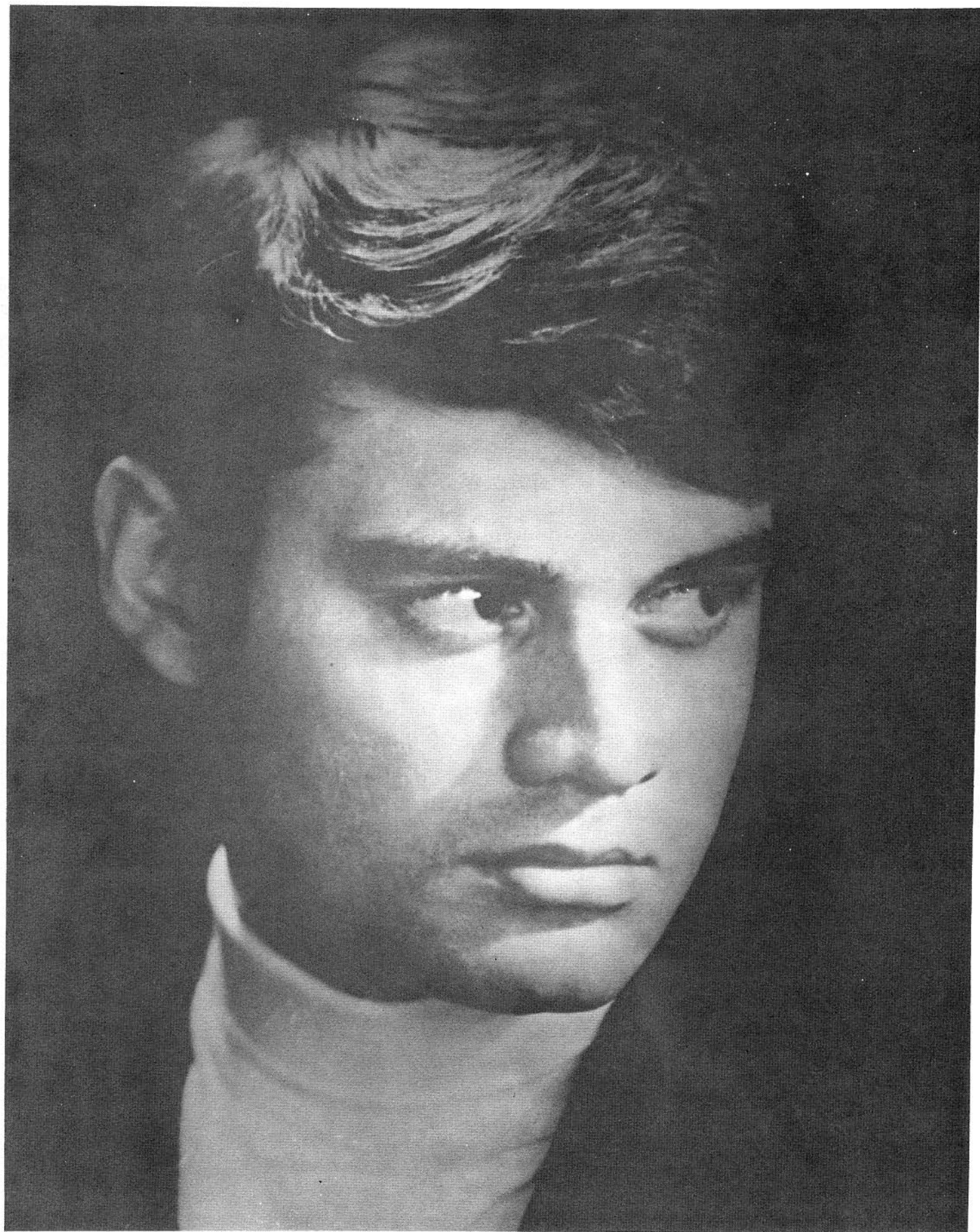
...SO THERE I WAS,
FUMBLING WITH THE
CONTROLS ONE MINUTE,
UP TO MY TUSHY IN
SWAMP WATER THE NEXT
...END OF JOURNEY...



...BUT WHAT AN END!
EVERYWHERE I LOOKED
IT WAS ONE BIG GREEN
HOUSE! REAL GRASS...
LIKE EARTH USED TO
HAVE. ANYWAY, FIRST
THINGS FIRST; IF ANYONE
WAS GOING TO FIND ME
I WAS GOING TO HAVE
TO HELP...



TO BE CONTINUED



BRUCE JONES

In January of 1971, we had the pleasure of interviewing Bruce Jones, Web of Horror artist and member of the Abyss staff. Bruce has a pleasant apartment situated directly below the Palisades Amusement Park in New Jersey.

INFINITY: How exactly did you begin in the business?

JONES: My first work appeared in Amazing and Fantastic magazines in 1968. It was pretty awful stuff . . . which may have something to do with why I'm no longer working for them.

INFINITY: Did you have any formal art training prior to your coming to New York?

JONES: I attended the University of Kansas for three years where I majored in Drawing and Painting and minored in Theatre.

INFINITY: Do you feel your time there had any direct influence on your work as a cartoonist?

JONES: Inadvertently maybe, but at that particular time the school was involved with abstract art which was sweeping the country back then. As a result I learned a lot about something I wasn't too much interested in. What I wanted and needed was what everyone was rebelling against; a formal art training based on classical theory and application. I think the only faculty member I left an impression on was a man named Raymond Eastwood, the noted sand dune painter. He taught me, among other things, to look at my subject instead of my paper. Other than that it was a confusing three years. I finally quit.

INFINITY: Any other training . . . Famous Artists Course?

JONES: No. I was always a little skeptical of an art education through the mail.

INFINITY: What prompted you to choose the comics field over say, commercial art?

JONES: It's all commercial art if you're getting paid for it . . . unless you mean comics should be singled out for its infamous lousy pay. I don't know . . . I read and enjoyed a lot of comics when I was a kid, when they were still good, and I always felt then it would be neat to grow up and be a cartoonist or an actor. I was tremendously influenced by the movies, especially the serials.

INFINITY: You must have read the E.C.'s . . .

JONES: Yes, though not avidly until the early sixties when I rediscovered them in an old used book store. I was a little too young during the years before the crash in '55 to understand their quality though even then I was impressed. Now I consider them the finest ever in the field. I think it was Al Williamson's science-fiction work that started me thinking seriously about comics as an occupation. Thanks a lot, Al, now how do I pay the rent?

INFINITY: What comic company do you feel is the best today?

JONES: I don't know . . . they're all pretty bad. National seems to be searching for something at least . . . we'll see. Marvel's in a rut.

INFINITY: What about artists? Whom do you admire?

JONES: Too many to list in both commercial and Fine Art. Recently I've been looking at a lot of Hal Foster for some reason. All Williamson was probably my single biggest influence.

INFINITY: Frazetta?

JONES: His name inevitably comes up doesn't it? I think I enjoyed looking at his work more before he became a household word. I've lost that feeling of privacy I shared with it. It's disenchanting to know that thousands of pimply fans are drooling over his stuff. Maybe I'm imagining it but I think it's affected what he does.

INFINITY: How do you feel about what Gil Kane and others are doing in the paperback field?

JONES: I never cared for Kane's style or interpretation of dramatics but I admire his individualism. He knows what he wants and he's going after it. He's also an intelligent writer . . . a rare bird these days. Or any days for that matter.

INFINITY: How about Wallace Wood?

JONES: I always loved his work, everybody does. I'm going to be doing some work for his new adult humor magazine. If someone had told me that five years ago I wouldn't have believed them. I consider it an honor.

INFINITY: Your lettering in Abyss number one seems unique. How did you do it?

JONES: It was Leroy lettered, a patented process involving stylus and templates. E. C. used it a lot. That and my inability to letter decently prompted me.

INFINITY: Do you do much reading, and what kind?

JONES: I never read anymore it seems. It's the one thing I feel really guilty about. I love to write however.

INFINITY: Any favorite authors?

JONES: I think Richard Matheson is brilliant. I was a big Frederick Brown fan before his untimely death.

INFINITY: What are your tastes in movies?

JONES: Anything that's well done. Of late Midnight Cowboy, Five Easy Pieces, and Bonnie and Clyde managed to leave impressions. Arthur Penn deserves all the credit he's getting. I'm partial to the "stumble and mumble" dept. of acting; Brando, Beatty . . . George C. Scott is superb, and



Robert Culp should be getting more attention. In the fantasy field I await with anticipation the Bond films and everything Ray Harryhausen does.

INFINITY: Have you tried painting?

JONES: Not in earnest . . . not yet.

INFINITY: Have you done anything for the color comics yet?

JONES: No. I helped Berni Wrightson pencil a job once but I don't think it was ever published.

INFINITY: How do you feel about super heroes?

JONES: I have to appreciate what they've done to help keep comics alive over the years, but I can't generate too much enthusiasm for them. They're difficult for me to relate to and there are far too many of them. I enjoyed the Capt. Marvel Family and some of the earlier Spiderman stories when Ditko was doing them. I also felt Neal Adam's Deadman had strong potential . . . but I basically enjoy the short story type comics, the kind of stories E.C. did. I want a comic writer to take his work seriously, and it's pretty hard to be serious about a guy in long underwear.

INFINITY: Are you writing any of your own comic stories?

JONES: I'm trying to write all of them. I feel I do a better job on something that's my own creation from beginning to end. From what I've heard, that's pretty hard to do with the color comics.

INFINITY: Would you care to elaborate?

JONES: I understand editorial policy is pretty rigid at Na-

tional and Marvel . . . they have a certain look they want to their books and they expect their staff to comply. I think I would feel a little restricted.

INFINITY: Which brings us to the Comics Code Authority.

JONES: I believe the comic format is capable of relating the kind of relatively mature, progressive stories I'm trying to write and draw. But in order to do those kind of stories an artist (writer or illustrator) has to have free reign over what he's doing. If a good story calls for a man to have his head split open with an axe then you've got to show it. There can be no room for compromise or censorship . . . and that's what the Comics Code is, a board of censors.

INFINITY: You don't believe in editors, then?

JONES: I do believe in editors, but a good editor doesn't use censorship, he uses good taste, something that varies from editor to editor. The Code, however, has a whole list of do's and don'ts they use to screen every story they permit the companies who cater to them to use. I fail to see how an artist can call himself an artist and work under that kind of harness. Who is the Comics Code to dictate what kind of art and literature people should be exposed to, whether kids or adults? It seems unconstitutional.

INFINITY: But wasn't the Code initially established in the interest of young children?

JONES: It was established in the interest of publishers who were afraid that horror and crime comics were putting an end to the media. Instead of standing up and demanding



their rights, instead of suggesting that censorship is a matter of choice not law, they backed away and promised to clean up their books. The industry had no one to blame but itself. They've made it a children's media by catering to children so what do they expect?

INFINITY: Are you saying you're against children's comics?

JONES: Not at all. They have their place just as a juvenile section has its place in a public library. But right next to it is the adult section. I'm for putting adult comics on the stands next to children's comics and distinguishing each from the other on the cover so the parents can make the choice not the Code.

INFINITY: What's to prevent the child from buying the adult book?

JONES: What's to prevent him from reading in the adult section of the library? You don't simply eliminate something out of fear the wrong people will see it. The government complied with this in 1959 with the publication of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and other long suppressed novels. Why deny the comic format the same right? They're a form of American literature aren't they?

INFINITY: What about James Warren's books and the other black and white magazines? Aren't they less restrictive?

JONES: They are, perhaps, the last chance we have to do something mature in comics. Here again Warren has chosen to make it a children's field but that at least was his choice . . . I don't think he was pressured into it by the P.T.A., etc. Unfortunately I think he's underestimated the intelligence of most children.

INFINITY: What are your feelings about the underground comics?

JONES: Again I see tremendous potential . . . I'd like to see more straight fiction though and less social comment. They seem too timely now, too caught up in current issues. I enjoy artists who think of themselves as purely entertainers not prophets or environmentalists, unless those things are vital to a good work of fiction.

INFINITY: Would you care to comment on our current social status?

JONES: It's simple arithmetic really. The more we grow and the longer we live the more we destroy. As a result we're tipping the balance of nature, a balance that's taken millions of years to make itself work. Apparently we think we know a better way to make the world go 'round . . . I doubt the whales agree. We're searching for a cure for cancer at this very moment, a physical condition nature intended to keep the animal population in control with. If we find that cure and fail to compensate for it with a radical program on birth control then we'll have defeated our purpose.

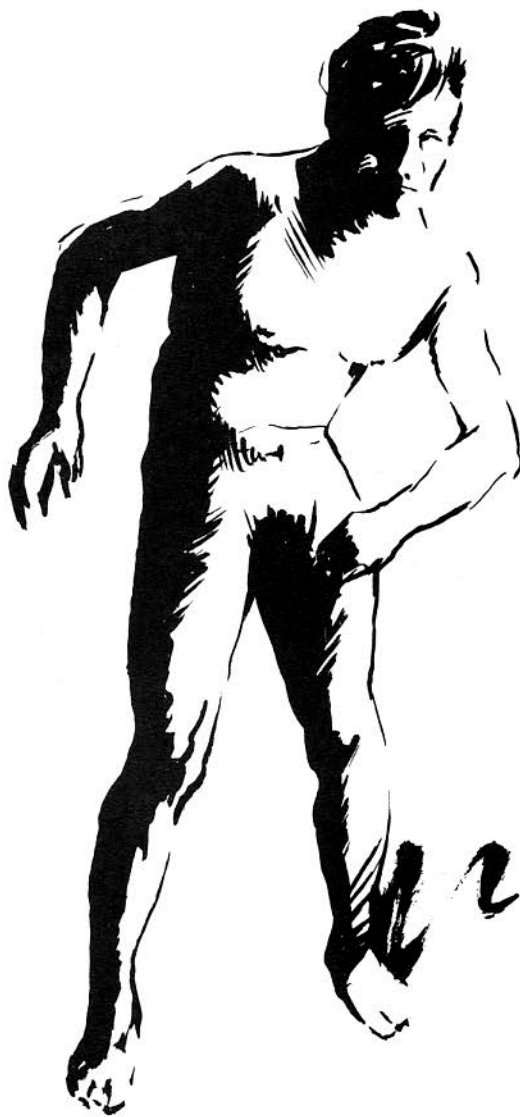
INFINITY: Are you generally optimistic or pessimistic about the future?

JONES: I'm not an expert but I've read some pretty frightening statistics. Most of the people who are experts seem pessimistic. It seems that every time we reach a solution to a problem, forty-thousand more babies are born creating more problems to be solved. It's an endless battle that we're

slowly losing. Air pollution scares the absolute hell out of me . . . gradually being consumed by something you can't see . . . talk about horror comics.

INFINITY: Getting back to comics, tell us about your plans for Abyss.

JONES: Abyss was founded for the reasons concerning editorial policy we talked about earlier. With Abyss there is no policy. The artist is only as limited as his imagination. If he wants to do a story about a necrophiliac centipede, he can do it. We are: Berni Wrightson, Jeff Jones, Mike Kaluta, and myself.



INFINITY: Is the group enthusiastic?

JONES: I think so, considering professional commitments.

INFINITY: How often do you publish?

JONES: How often do you get pregnant?

INFINITY: One final question; what do you think of Infinity?

JONES: Let me read it first!

INFINITY: Fair enough.

"A PORTFOLIO BY ROY G. KRENKEL"



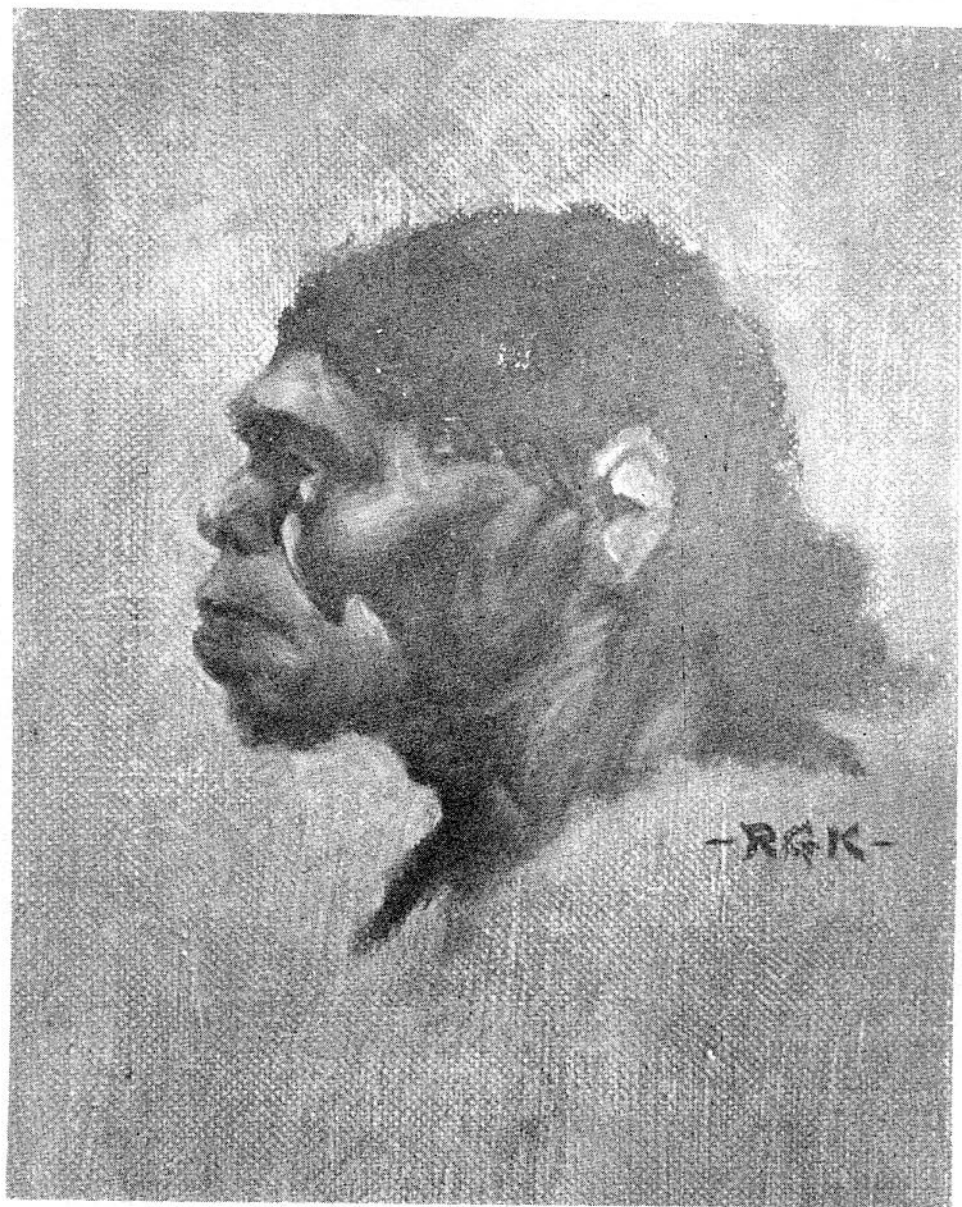






THE BANKS OF THE TIBER
IN THE DAYS OF
THE EMPIRE —













by Mort Walker

I'm sure everyone's tired of the story of the poor boy born on a dirt road in Kansas 46 years ago who began drawing on shirt cardboards, worked his way to New York, lived in a condemned building with no furniture till he cracked the big time, and ended up with tax problems in Greenwich, Connecticut.

So I won't tell it.

But, since I was asked to do a biography of some kind, I'll tell you about yesterday.

Monday was a gray, drizzly day. I grabbed my mail and Sunday comic clippings from the top of the refrigerator in the kitchen and ran the 100 feet out to my barn studio without getting anything too wet. It was 8:30 and Bob Gustafson was already there at the typewriter puffing on a pipe and answering fan mail. We had received 32 letters last week asking for complete copies of the graffiti writing Plato had done on the latrine wall in Beetle Bailey. (Not one person had said anything about us drawing a toilet seat in that strip . . . which we had considered a "First.")

Bob said, "Mornin . . ." like he always does the two days a week he comes to the studio. He got up and went into the dark room to run off more copies of the graffiti script on the photo copier.

I said, "Mornin," put the coffee pot on the stove and went to the old roll top desk in the room where I work. I always feel a little tense on Monday morning. I only have about an hour and a half to pencil a Beetle Sunday page before everyone starts to arrive for the gag conference. I get out the fireproof box with the 3 inch stack of Beetle Bailey gags stored in it and select a gag to work on. A gag about General Halftrack is chosen because I had been heavy on gags using Sarge's dog recently. This would balance them out.

The intercom buzzes. Jean wants me to bring some stamps when I come home.

I pencil fast with a single definite line. A lot of sketchy penciling only takes more time and confuses the inking. I decide to change the last panel with a new ending from the original gag sketch. But I don't trust myself. I check with Bob for his opinion. Bob liked the original version so I change it back. Sometimes your first reaction is the best.

Bud Jones arrives in his Volkswagen camper bus. Dik Browne is with him. Dik isn't a regular member of our Monday conferences but he comes if we are going to play golf afterwards. Bob and I wait to see what kind of an entrance Dik will make. He never just comes in and says, "Mornin." Sometimes the door will creak open as though the wind had pushed it and his hat will come sailing through the room. Or he will march in ignoring all of us and lie down on the couch with a book. Or he will come in talking as though in the middle of a sentence about some obscure historical event relating it to the state of unrest in the world today and how it has affected his putting. The soliloquy may last five minutes, but we go on working as though he's not there. Today he rolls golf balls in the door. Not one of his Greater Entrances, but better than, "Mornin."

Here comes Jerry Dumas. My driveway looks like a used car lot now. Jerry always brings in news clippings, or drawings his kids have made, or pages from the latest book he is

writing, or things he thinks will interest us. We always have a "show and tell" session about movies, books, tv or whatever. Everyone brings comics sent to them by their families and friends around the country, or jokes heard at parties over the weekend. It's fun and it keeps us abreast of things, but you can see why I have to get my work done before they arrive.

Everyone pulls out his week's production of gags and we trade them around for the "reading period." Each guy does about 15 gags a week sketching them up on typing paper in a fairly finished fashion. Now we read each others work and grade them on the back. The rule is never to laugh out loud and never refer to a specific gag in any way that might influence anyone else's vote.

We're ready for the conference which takes place on the high counter in the kitchen area. Bar stools are pulled up and the stack of 66 gags are placed upside down so that we can see the votes on the back before we turn the gag over for discussion. (The three strips we do use up 21 gags a week.)

Bob says, "I didn't get that one." Jerry says, "I guess I didn't do it right. Gail didn't get it either." We discuss it for a few minutes to see if it's worth saving and decide it isn't. It goes into the reject trunk along with about 10,000 other non-winners which I save in case we ever get desperate.

Another gag gets us into a discussion about what kind of a sound a banana makes when it hits the floor. "It doesn't *thud*," Bud complains. "How about *plop*?" asks Jerry. Bob offers "Thunk". Everyone begins making weird noises like bananas falling on floors. *Pum* was the winner.

The phone rings as it always does several times interrupting the conference. It's a writer from Cleveland doing a piece on Milton Caniff for Atlantic. She wants any anecdotes I have on him. I say I'll write her some.

The conference resumes. Much time is taken worrying about the new Negro character we're introducing in Beetle in November. How to make him funny without offending anyone and yet have him fit into the goofed up world of Camp Swampy. It's touchy but everyone wants to try it.

About a fifth of the gags are rejected, but I know only half of them will ever be used eventually. The guys are professionals and know the only way to make the strips good is to criticize openly and frankly, but they still can't bring themselves to throwing out a whole week of a man's work if he's had a bad week. They're a soft-hearted bunch. It's up to me to make the final selection when I sit down by myself to do the penciling on Beetle and Boner's Ark and to choose the ones to mail to Dik Browne for Hi and Lois. That's when I get ruthless. When it comes down to actually using the gag, I remember the lack of enthusiasm for it during the confer-



ence as well as the compliments . . . no matter what high scores it has on the back.

The conference is over and there's a scramble to the cars and the golf course. Tomorrow I can pencil Boner's Ark and work on more ideas for next week. We've earned an afternoon off. Right Dik? Good God! We forgot Dik. He's asleep on the couch.

(There's always such confusion about who's who and who does what around here, let me give you the cast of characters.)

Bob Gustafson: Writes gags, answers mail, does special projects, does ads, and the Beetle comic book. Used to do *Tillie the Toiler*.

Jerry Dumas: Writes gags, inks the Beetle Sunday page. Has been my assistant for 16 years. Used to do *Sam's Strip*. Has written best selling children's novel, "Rabbits Rafferty,"

and has an adult book coming out in the Spring called, "An Afternoon in Waterloo Park."

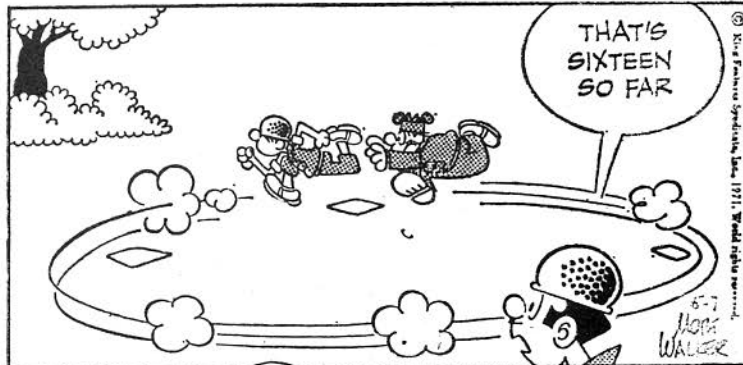
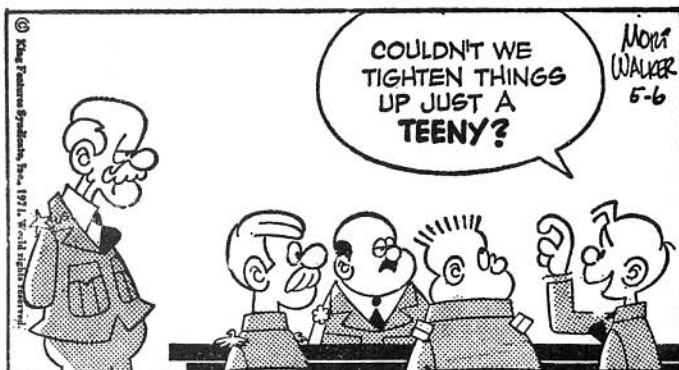
Ralston (Bud) Jones: Writes gags, does Boner's Ark for the comic books and still does *Mr. Abernathy* in collaboration with Frank Ridgeway.

Dik Browne: Draws Hi and Lois . . . and makes grand entrances among other things.

Frank Johnson: (Not mentioned in this article) Inks the Beetle dailies, inks Boner's Ark, assists Dik Browne, does the Hi and Lois comic books, as well as four or five other titles, and does *Beanie* for the New York News.

Mort Walker: Writes gags, pencils Beetle and Boner's Ark and tries to coordinate the activities of this bunch on three strips, books, comic books, ads, tv, lectures . . . and golf.

BEETLE BAILEY



Mr. Wizzy...

Now, Johnny, when I pour this calcium into the carbonate solution, what will happen?

You'll get calcium carbonate, or chalk.....



Someone must have changed the label

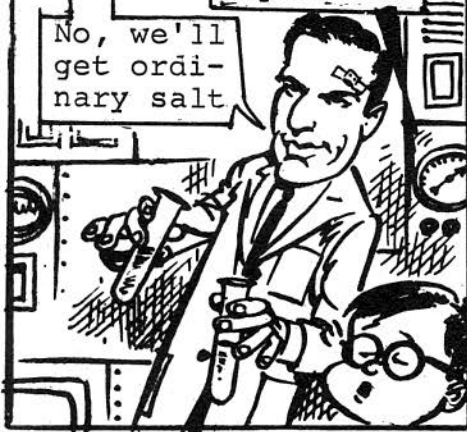
Yeah!



Now Johnny, If I pour this Sodium into this chloride, what will happen?

Another explosion?

No, we'll get ordinary salt



Here it is, plain salt-solution, want to taste it?



GLUG!
GLUG!
GLUG!

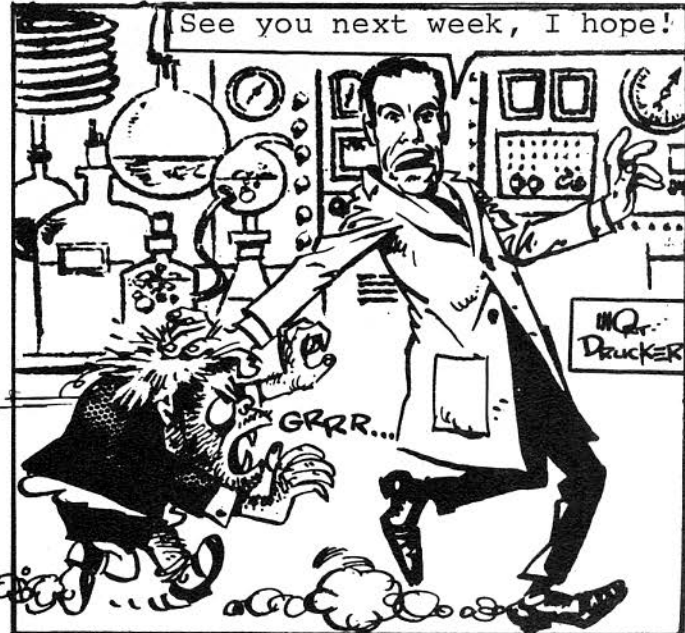


Eh, Heh, Heh, Heh...

Ooops!



See you next week, I hope!



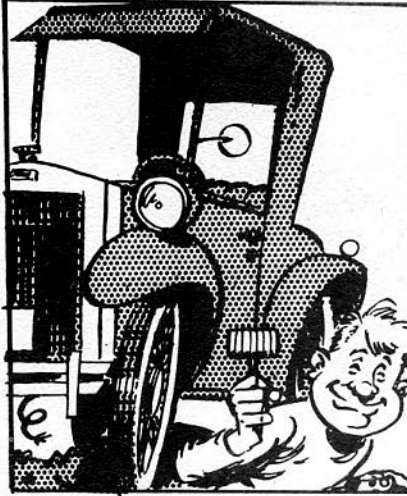
Mr. Drucker

Candy Camera...

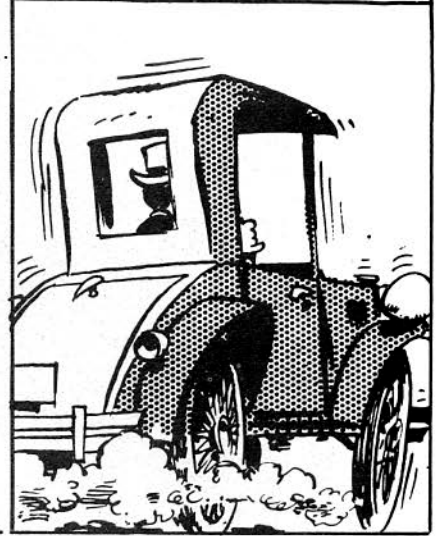
We wanted to see a man's reaction when the brakes on his car didn't work..



So we had a mechanic, disconnect the brakes on someone's car.....



He didn't know a thing.....



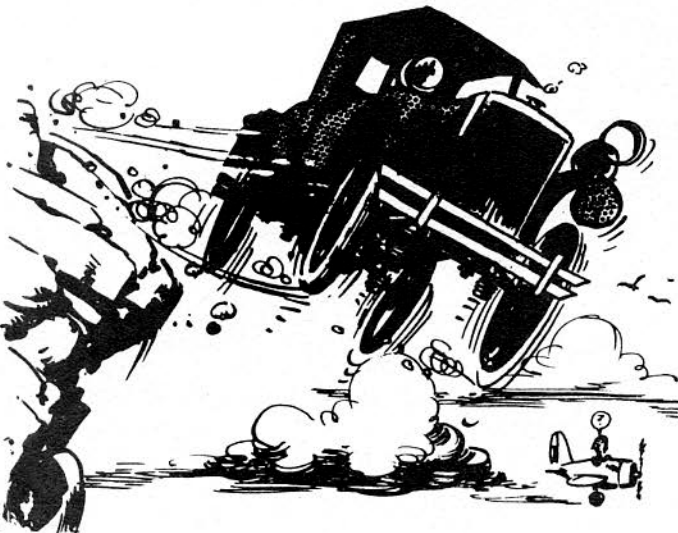
Now here's the funny part he tries to slow down....



Ha, Ha, look at that funny expression...

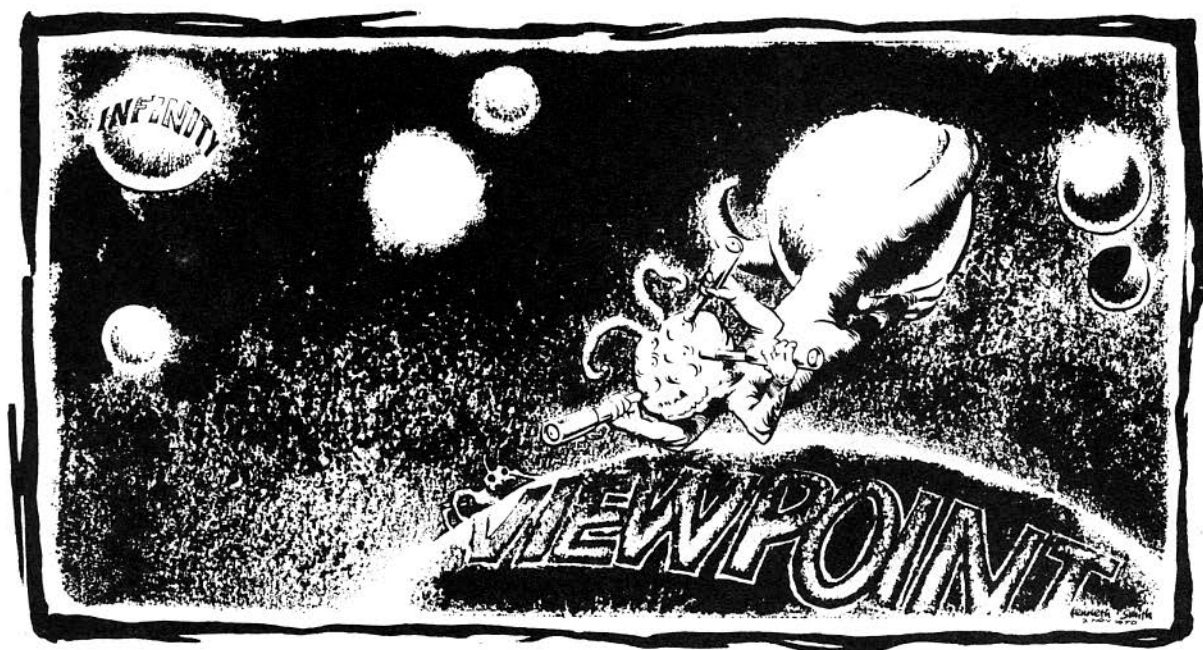


For added humor, we removed the guard rail from the cliff...Ha, Ha, imagine his surprise.....



Don't miss next week, when someone may put you in an electric chair, and say, "Smile, you're on Candy Camera."





First of all, let us thank all of you who took the time to write to Viewpoint with your comments. I must say the response was excellent, thus the increase in size of this column. We hope you will continue to write us in the future and let us know what you think of our latest effort, Infinity Three. Due to the large response for comments we find it impossible to print certain letters in entirety, although we would like to. In this way we avoid repetitious material, which is only boring to other readers. Please take this into consideration when reading the below letters. We feel we have given a fair representation of your views on our past issues, and in future issues, please continue to speak out on other matters as well. By the way, address your comments to Gary Berman, 197-50F Peck Ave., Flushing, NY 11365, or Adam Malin, 16 E. 2 St., Freeport, NY 11520. Now onward!

Dear Gary,

I just received Infinity Two today and I must say that it was a welcome change from issue one. There seemed to be more cohesiveness this time especially between the artwork and articles. This issue's layout was much more professional in appearance.

I thoroughly enjoyed the interviews as Mr. Frazetta has been my all-time favorite illustrator since his days with the Ace ERB bookcovers. His illo accompanying the interview appeared to have been rendered with a felt-tipped pen. Was it? ("Yes, it was a blue flair.")

Mr. Wrightson has been my favorite rookie artist for some time now. His interview was quite enlightening. It is a shame that he couldn't have done the Conan strip for Marvel. I think his style fits Conan more so than does Barry Smith's (even though Smith does a commendable job.) I think Smith's style fits the character and appearance of John Jakes' *Brak the Barbarian* or Michael Morcocks' *Elric*.

Roy Krenkel's illustration of Conan was the best work I've ever seen him do. (*We agree, it's too bad the rest of the*

body couldn't have been done in the detail the face was.) If he did that type of work all the time he would merit my admiration and attention to say the least. I've followed his work since the days of the Ace ERB books, and I've always been disappointed that he hasn't done more work in comics, magazines, etc. Well, Gary, your second issue was a very commendable effort and much appreciated on my part. I'll be looking forward to seeing more written articles in Infinity. You'll receive my money shortly for the third issue.

Earl Johnson.

In almost all the letters we received the first words were something like, "much better than issue one". We're glad you appreciated the improvement and as time progresses we hope to continue improving. Thanks for the nice comments, it's especially nice coming from a person who obviously knows his hobby well.

Dear Gary,

Thanks very much for sending the copy of Infinity Two. Your printing and layout seem to have improved since issue number one. You included a large number of very worthwhile illustrations, and the two interviews were very enjoyable reading.

Looking forward to Infinity Three. Thanks again.

Sincerely,
Bob Kline.

Thanks for the comments, we hope you enjoy this issue as well. To our readers—look for more artwork by this fine artist in future issue of Infinity.

Adam and Gary—

You asked for comments, so here goes. Infinity Two was great. The only thing wrong was that what you called the front cover (except of page three) was on the back. It was good though.

The Wrightson interview was good, but I'm more inter-

ested in what Frank Frazetta had to say. I wish the Frazetta interview could have been longer. *(So do we, unfortunately the interview was done a few years back by a member of our staff, and it couldn't be changed.)*

The art was good, especially the Jeff Jones picture on page 40. I didn't like the pictures by Schenkman, though.

Other comments on other things: I'd say that, although Kirby's new comics are good, Colletta's inking on them isn't as good as it was in "Thor." "The New Gods," is a little too much like a Thor copy. *(It's still damned good, though.)*

Finally, I think you *should* raise your price to \$2.00 and put in 70 pages. It'd be worth the extra 50¢. Thanks for listening.

Dave Fryxell

First we want to explain the mixup concerning issue two's covers. As originally planned, the Jeff Jones oil was going to be the front cover. After receiving the painting from Frank, we felt it would fit the front cover better than the other piece. Thus, at the last moment we switched the two, which accounts for the interior errors concerning the covers. We're glad you like the "Wolfing", by Jones... it's probably one of the best liked pieces, along with Conan, in issue two. By the way, let us know what you think of this issue.

Dear Gary & Adam,

I enjoyed Infinity Two thoroughly. All art was fantastic, and I think Brunner's art topped everyone else's. His art was tops. And that cover! Have loads more art by Brunner. I really got a kick out of the interviews. I liked them both the same even though Berni's was longer.

I am in favor of you raising the price to \$2.00 and 70 pages but I don't care whether there are color covers or not. But don't you think Brunner's cover for number two would have really been stunning in color? *(It sure would have, but because of money it was out of the question at that point.)*

Please let me know when Infinity Three is to be out and its cost. Whatever the cost, I will buy it forever. Keep up this perfect work!!

PS. The only thing I didn't like was delivery. If you could speed up sending out your books it would be better. Thanks.

A buyer forever,
Mike Phillips.

Hope you like issue three as much as two. A vast majority of our readers agreed with you on the issue of raising our price and increasing the number of pages... so we did. The delivery problem is an unfortunate one. It is becoming increasingly aware to buyers of fan publications that advance orders are needed in order to go to press. This is why we ask all of our readers to order our latest issues as soon as possible, and survive the wait. The more advance orders we get, the more improvement we can accomplish. Subscriptions to Infinity are being offered for the first time.... Please purchase Infinity through subscriptions, it will speed up our production while saving you money. See details elsewhere. Once again, thanks for your comments.

Dear Adam,

To start off, INFINITY TWO was a very nice cultural art magazine (fanzine has always seemed a little too trite and rough a name to me.) A big improvement over INFINITY ONE. The front cover was pretty good, but I've seen better work by Brunner. The inside front cover by Roy Krenkel was a very beautiful work. The inside work by Brunner was

great, the Virgil Finlay collection was terrible, very cluttered; he's such an excellent artist, I don't see how he could do that work. The Berni Wrightson interview was good, it answered a lot of questions of mine. Then, who is this guy Schenkman? I got through with the Wrightson interview and I'm slapped in the face with some scratchy monstrosity, eccchhh! You had a beautiful Frank Frazetta drawing, yet what does he do that isn't beautiful? The interview was nice, but my only regret was that it wasn't longer. *(We agree, but as explained elsewhere it wasn't up to us. But I think you'd agree we were quite fortunate to have an interview with this fine illustrator.)*

The Krenkel folio was beautiful in its own special way. The letter column, I suggest that you refrain from interrupting the letter, it seems to break the train of thought. *(We agree, and promise never to do it again.)* The Jeff Jones ink layout of the paperback, Wolfing, was excellent. Then we get another mess splattered on the inside back cover but I won't go into that again. The back cover was good, but should have been used as the front cover.

Yet you guys put a lot of work into it, and I'm sure INFINITY THREE will even be better. The type print was good, and I suggest that you make INFINITY a seventy pager. Then you were wondering about a reprint from an E.C., I think something from their Science Fiction lineup like Williamson, Frazetta, Wood, something that was not reprinted in the Ballantine paperback revival, then maybe some work from, "Tales of Valor." That about wraps 'er up for now.

Best wishes,
Randy Yeates

There are only a few points of disagreement we have with you so let's get right down to them. First — Although the Finlay's were not the best of his work I feel they were good and warrant publishing. Perhaps, the reason you didn't like them is the fact that they were printed from copies. We liked the Schenkman pieces as did many others. I guess it's a matter of taste though. Although we did not have room for the EC strip this issue we do have a special one in mind for future publishing and we have the permission from Mr. Gaines. So look for it in one of our future issues. By the way, we hope you like the way your art came out in this issue.



Dear Adam,

Thanks for the copies of Infinity 2. You have really made a quantum-jump in quality from your first issue. The Krenkel pieces completely stole the show, and the interviews were first rate—all in all, impressive and handsome. Since my ad is in your issue, naturally I have interests of my own in hoping that your magazine gets the circulation and sales it deserves—but then too, I'm lucky to have such a splendid zine for a showplace.

Best,
Kenneth Smith



Dear Adam,

My main reason for writing is because of INFINITY TWO! You weren't kidding when you said it was going to be terrific. (*I did?!*) It was...and yes, it was worth the money this time!! Well worth it. It is such a vast improvement over the first issue. I don't know how you managed to improve it so quickly and so *MUCH*... but I found it to be one of the most enjoyable, and for once *QUALITY* fanzines I've ever read!

Best—
Alan Light.

By the way—I hope everyone will take advantage of the tremendous thing Alan is offering in his new publication "The Buyer's Guide". It's great for the advertiser as we can attest to, and for the fan as well.

**Sorry about the mixup on the price of INFINITY THREE, midpoint in our advertising...we decided to increase the number of pages, have two volumes and color covers after our first ads were submitted. We also had to raise the price to two dollars. For those who were lucky enough to get their \$1.50 to us in time, let us say it was an advance order. For those who sent us the two dollars later let us hope you will feel this publication was worth the extra fifty cents.*

Dear Gary and Adam,

Re INFINITY TWO: Although there were a few pieces of nice art in this issue (Notably the Brunner stuff), I am not one of those who flip over seeing incredibly bad sketches just because they were done by big name pros. I love the work by Steranko, Wrightson, etc., if it is their good stuff. Mind you, I am not criticizing you for not being able to get them to do their best stuff but to publish something merely because it was by a pro, I just can't see. In my opinion much fan art I have seen far exceeds (in quality) some "Pro" sketches I've seen published in fanzines. Of course, what do we mean by fan and pro art? As examples both Don Newton and John Richardson are pros but do not work for any comic companies. Within this context I classify them as fan artists (Though their work is just as good as most "pros"), because they do art for fanzines as a hobby, generally speaking. At any rate, I am sure you are trying to get the best art you can.

You asked if anyone could verify the RB&CC's circulation. Don't you think I would have been the one to ask? (*Of course we do, but from past experience on writing to the SFCA, I very rarely get a response in any form.*) Right now the RB&CC sells right around 1950 to 2050 copies per issue. Of this, about 80% is subscriptions, 18% single issue purchases, and 2% samples. I seriously doubt that there are any more than 500 (at the very most) *serious* comic collectors, (who are aware of organized fandom), who do not read the RB&CC, at any given time. In fact, I would say the number is less.

G. B. Love

Thanks for your comments, Gordon. I must say, though, that I do not agree with you on quite a few points mentioned in your letter. I too don't like seeing a bunch of sketches hashed together to form a fanzine, but this is how you made INFINITY TWO sound. What happened to all the finished artwork by Krenkel, Finlay, Jeff Jones, Wrightson, Morrow, and all the rest? You fail to mention these pieces, and they surely were not sketches. To be honest, I take this remark as an insult, both personally and collectively. We do not publish something "just because it is by a pro"; if we did, I assure you we wouldn't be around for our third, fourth, and fifth issues. Perhaps this is why it takes such a long time between issues. We pick and choose from our art supply until we have only the best and then print it. This is not to say we will not print sketches from time to time, because often sketches are preliminaries to drawings and they show how an artist works up to a finished piece. Perhaps some of our readers are interested. We don't agree with you that the Frazetta piece was "incredibly bad", although it was a sketch.

BRUNNER



And by the way, we do have many fan artists to showcase, and we are working with them to produce some of their best work for printing. Such as Randy Yeates and Rick Rydell who definitely warrant attention by fandom and have a fine future ahead of them in comic art. Still, we do appreciate your comments (although I think you seem to destroy without creating, that is you criticize without offering ideas for improvement.) And thank you for the info on circulation. I guess we goofed!

Dear Gary and Adam,

I received INFINITY TWO the other day, and I must say that I was pleasantly pleased! Although there was quite a wait between #1 and 2, the delay was well worth it. (See our response to G.B.'s letter for the reason.) It seems that in the short span of one issue, you have achieved the task of advancing from the ranks of the "run of the mill delusions of grandeur" to real *quality*. Despite the fact that you featured the work of prominent artists such as Foster, Wrightson and Kirby in your initial effort, the issue just did not seem to "click" (for lack of a better word). The basic reason for this, I believe, was the inclusion of sub-standard fan art, poor type reproductions, and the inclusion of such features as the Galactus interview and the comic quiz. So that I won't be misunderstood, let me make it clear that I am all for fan art, but art, whether it be by fan or pro, must be, above all, *good*. As for the above mentioned features, their place seems to be in the many child level crudzines which seem to be making the rounds today. In short then, I found INFINITY ONE to have potential, but was not impressed enough with it to dish out \$1.50 for it at the N.Y. Con. (In fact, the only way I ever *did* get a copy was in the package deal with two.)

Which brings us to #2! (Betcha thought I'd never get here!) What a metamorphosis! The first thing which struck me was the IBM type, which gave the mag a 100% better appearance. Of course, there was still a bit of fan art in the issue, but this time good editorial policy won out, and only the *deserving* stuff was printed. The pro art used in this issue was well chosen and gave the mag the "class" necessary to survive in the fanzine market today. The interviews, for the most part were much better than those in the first issue, perhaps because they were longer, or maybe because of the subjects. In any case well done! The only complaint I would

have in this area would be that the answers given to many of the questions were too short and tended to be of the "yes and no variety" (I hope we have avoided this problem this time, if not we will take your advice in our next attempts at interviewing.)

The Viewpoint section was intelligently conducted, and is one of the better fanzine letter columns. Perhaps the best thing about the issue was that you knew when to quit. Too often, a zine with adequate amount of good material tries to beef up the size and the finished product is usually a mess. (Although we don't feel it was a mess, "This Is Legend" did what you were saying in their first issue.) I'm pleased to say that this isn't the case with INFINITY TWO.

Looking forward to number three—

Ray Foushee Jr.

What can you say about a letter as nice as this—except thanks and hope you like our new look (the two volume set idea). Let us know... Okay?

Dear Gary,

I received my copies of Infinity Two in the mail this week and was extremely satisfied with your efforts. Thank you, and I hope you continue to produce this fine magazine. It is truly a tribute to the artists of today.

J. Anthony Hyatt.

Greetings.

This is going to be a critical letter; so if you don't like being criticized, stop. ("Oh, come now!")

I waited a long time for your book. It came the day before I mailed a nasty letter of inquiry about its lateness. I will pass that over since all fanzines are a little to a lot late. The worst thing is that the wait was not worth it.

Why is this? Well, you had 23 full pages of art including your coated stock covers and 11 spot illustrations. There are more full pages of art than spot illos. (You sound like an advertisement for us, so what's the matter with all of this?) On the other hand there was one editorial telling me how hard you guys tried and a letters section. Half the book was art and at least a third of the pages with writing on them had drawings taking up space. This is a little extreme. You could have saved me a lot of money by not using coated stock on your cover and by using smaller type and closer



spacing on the pages with text to use less pages. (*The coated stock covers added to the pieces and did not raise the price you paid, only the price we paid for the issue. We have smaller type and two columns this time.*) Now don't get me wrong, I enjoyed the art; it was mostly good. There was a tremendous amount of worthwhile artwork, but that is all there was, really. Those interviews were fun but lacked any real depth. All in all, I have to say that with some consideration to the pocketbook of the fan you could have made the book a great deal cheaper or put a lot more articles in to make it a lot more interesting. As it is INFINITY is just a glorified art zine and I hated myself when I bought "The Magic of Frank Frazetta" at five bucks a shot or so. I don't think art zines are worth it and I know yours isn't worth a dollar-fifty.

Paul Rew.

The only reason this letter is appearing in our letter column is that I feel we have an obligation to print opposing "viewpoints". We disagree on every point you made, and the backbone of these disagreements seems to be your disdain for art-based zines. This is what we are trying to do and we think we have succeeded. We are an art zine with articles, and we will not change. Many people want more articles, but the fact is, not one person has sat down and written a good article for use in INFINITY, except the ones that appear in this issue, and these come from our staff. I'm sure you would find most and probably just about all of our readers feel our magazine is worth the money they paid, and this is evident in the amount of people who continue to reorder and resubscribe. I guess not much more can be said, but I suggest you read the advertisements before sending your money out, because I think we made it clear that INFINITY is and will continue to be an art zine.

Dear Gary,

I'm very impressed with INFINITY TWO, especially art-wise. Although I feel you should exploit other fields of comics; the EC thing sounds great if you can pull it off. I liked the interviews, they were more informative than some I've read. Right now it's kinda hard for me to really criticize INFINITY until issue number three or four. Everything seems to be on your side, and I hope your best and fullest potential will be seen. I quite enjoyed INFINITY TWO, it has a very professional look.

Best,
Mike Roberts

I really don't remember mentioning last issue that we would go totally for EC comics. For that there are many other fine magazines such as Squa Tront and Spa Fon. We of course will talk of EC from time to time but this won't be an EC based magazine—It's a science-fiction-fantasy-comic publication. We agree that it is hard to formulate any kind of opinion until a little later on and I am sure that we will be able to improve as time progresses. We find more people are coming to us with information concerning artwork and interviews, as I am sure is the case with fanzines going on their third or fourth issues. Once again, thanks for your comments.

Gary and Adam—

Received Infinity Two a few days ago and decided to comment on it. On the whole it was just short of perfect. The Berni Wrightson interview was superb. Frank's interview



was too short. I liked the way you used a large variety of artists. (*Then you are sure to like issue three and future issues as we expand into new fields of art encompassing new artists and their techniques.*)

Jones was excellent in the issue. So was Wrightson, but you need more by him. (*This issue we have a few more pieces by Jones and Wrightson, yet it is unfortunate that it is extremely hard to acquire unpublished art by both these fine artists, especially the latter.*) Please continue your interviews, and try to get some from Wood, Kirby, Adams, Williamson, etc. There's not too much more you can criticize on it. It was just great. Also try to get some photographs of the artists.

I'll be looking forward to issue number three—

Best wishes,
Paul Fritch

Thanks for the opinions—Paul. We did pretty well on your list of artists. We've got three out of four in this issue. We'll try to get something by Adams, soon. We are also working on a photograph column for our future issues, but for now why not look at some of the other magazines, in particular those that have coverage of the conventions.

Dear Adam,

I was very impressed with the fantastic improvement you have made between your first and second issues. I am looking forward to seeing how you can top an issue that was almost perfect.

Sincerely yours,
Mike Knapstein

If that was a bet, I think we won it... What do you think?

This brings us to the end of this issue's Viewpoints. The reason the column is as long as it is because we feel that each of the letters printed had something valid to say. We have always enjoyed letters columns, as it gives everybody a chance to talk. So please continue to support this column, as it is YOUR platform. Thanks.

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