

Guilty Pleasures aka Girls of the Golden Age Jungle

By Jeff Singh

For someone with as odd tastes as I tend to have, I thought this contribution would be easy. I could write about Jungle Girls, obscure strip art, manga, My Little Pony (just kidding... really!), an unhealthy focus on Bill Sienkiewicz art and a dozen other topics. As I thought more about it, I think this whole hobby fits into the category of a guilty pleasure. I have no one in my regular life I would confide in or discuss comic art with, and so it does remain a secret I can't share with others.

I know when I first started in this hobby, I collected in a vacuum. I didn't know other collectors or have any one I could talk to about art. My colleagues at work, family, friends, kids and even pets don't get what I collect. Thanks to the internet and chat groups like comicart-1, I now have met many great people who I can talk art with and call friends. They get me and why I collect but perhaps not fully what I collect as much of it is of little interest to more mainstream collectors. I also like everything which poses its own challenges.



I decided with this submission to go with my first thoughts, Jungle Girls. The Seduction of the Innocent themes tie in with this but I have discussed that recently in other CFA-APA submissions. Jungle Girls and SOTI are how I first got into original art. I will share with you my shame... my first piece of comic art. Many have cool or meaningful first pieces, but I am not in that club. This is of the caliber that one might wonder not only how I ended up with it but what motivated me to continue in the hobby and what motivates me to still keep this page. It is from an embarrassing leather clad reinvention of Sheena by London Nights. I bought it as a novelty item as I was new to ebay and was looking to fill in the holes in my Fiction House runs of Fight Comics, Jungle Comics and Jumbo Comics.

There are a few basic archetypes for jungle girls in golden age comics. I am sure this applies to other genres like sci-fi, westerns and other adventure themes. There was the damsel in distress like Anne from Jungle Comics. Although often quite capable, she frequently fell into the role of helpless and hapless victim needing rescuing by the resident male hero, in this case, Kaanga. Tarzan had his fair share of maidens to rescue. The second archetype was that of a western female child lost in the jungle and raised by the jungle to rule over it and serve as its protector. Sheena fell into this role. Nyoka fit the role of the explorer who fell in love with the jungle and never left. There were other variations on these themes. Although my favorite jungle girl was always Sheena, I really liked Fox's Rulah. Great good girl art and a very fun read. Rulah was very accident prone and often found herself in the most precarious of traps. She was more apt to bungle her way out of harm than to coordinate bravery, skill and smarts. I am not quite sure of all the reasons I am drawn to the jungle girl genre but I think it is because many of the heroines were smart, strong and independent and didn't need anyone to protect them. It didn't hurt that they wore skimpy animal skin bikinis either!

Most of my early original comic art purchases were either art from Eisner-Iger studios or jungle girl themed pieces. In those early days of ebay, I got to know a few artists and even managed to get a few commissions. I did get a lot of Sheena or Rulah pieces and then a few Sheena and Rulah pieces. The idea of combining my two favorite characters from two competing publishers in one piece seemed like a fun way to interact with artists and get some neat art. The artists I was drawn to might seem strange choices for this theme but in the end the results were quite interesting. Here, for the first time are the fruits of my Sheena and Rulah together commissions.

The first was by Dan Parent. I had bought some Archie art from him and we chatted. I asked about a commission and he was up for it. It is a real fun piece with Betty and Sheena and Ronnie as Rulah. I would meet Dan over a decade after this piece was drawn and he still recalled having fun on it. It is still among my favorites. My email handle is monkeyb0y which is a Buckaroo Bonsai reference, but perhaps that was meant to me laying at Rulah's feet.



I don't recall the order all of the rest came in and at times several were being worked on. Here is one Guy Davis did for me around the time he was working on Sandman Mystery Theatre and selling his art on ebay.

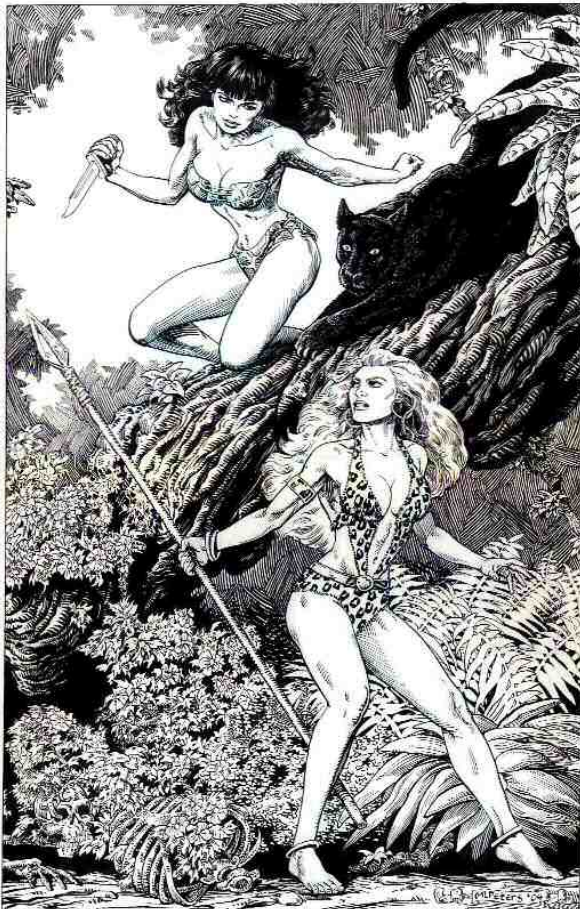


It was over 2 years in the making but a great piece with lots of mood and style.

Although early on in my collecting, I already knew I had found my hobby. I was moving away from content and looking more at art. I came from comics already a huge Howard Chaykin and Bill Sienkiewicz fan. When I met Mike Vosburg online, I complimented him on his work on American Flagg and asked about a commission. He humbly asked me if I was not mistaking him for Howard Chaykin and I confirmed I knew the difference and respected his work on the series too. On the next page is the one he did for me.



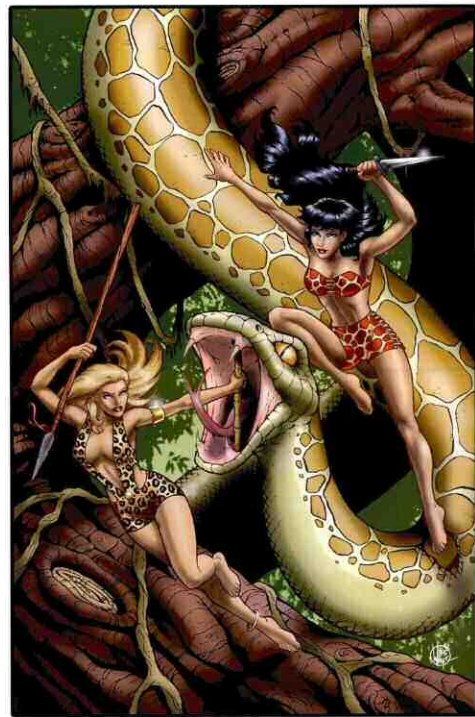
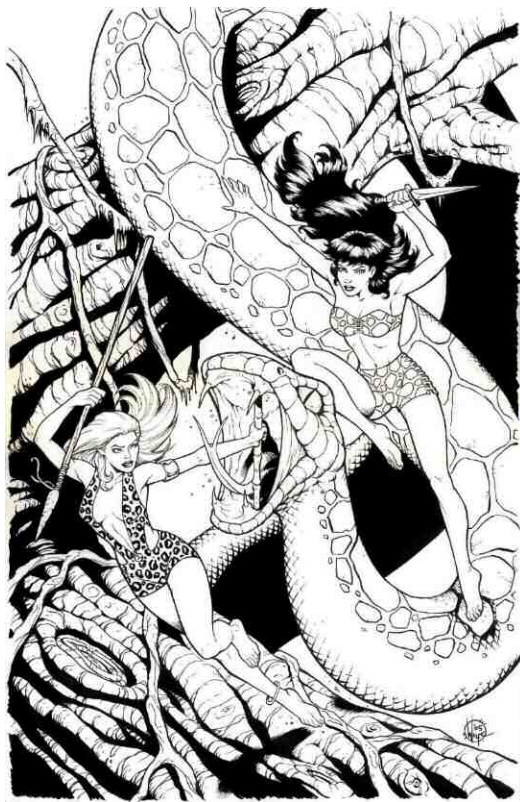
Mike Vosburg above and Michael Peters below



Two Commissions by Chris Schenck. With the second I asked for an homage to the BWS Daredevil Cover.



Vince Locke



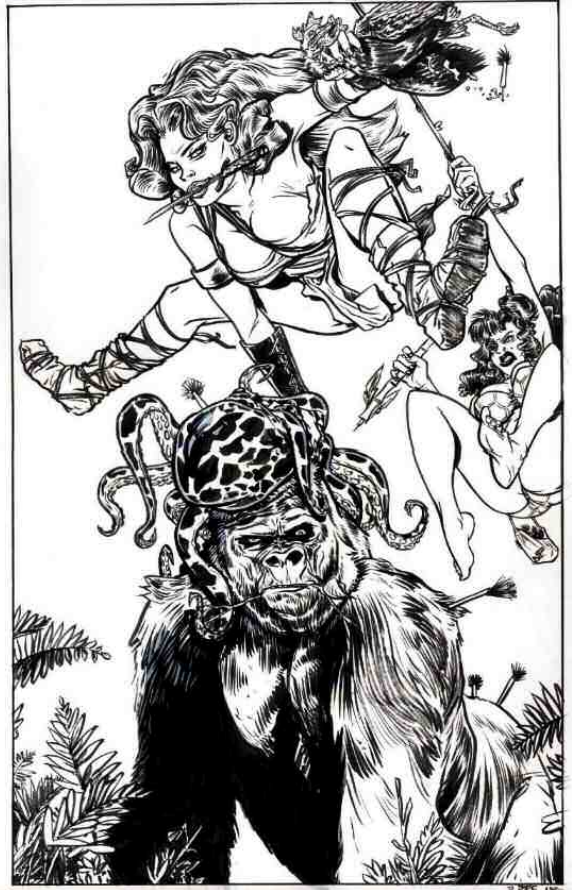
Eric Wolfe Hansen. Digitally colored for a print.



To JEFF

Sam Glanzman

Sam Glanzman above and Jim Keefe below

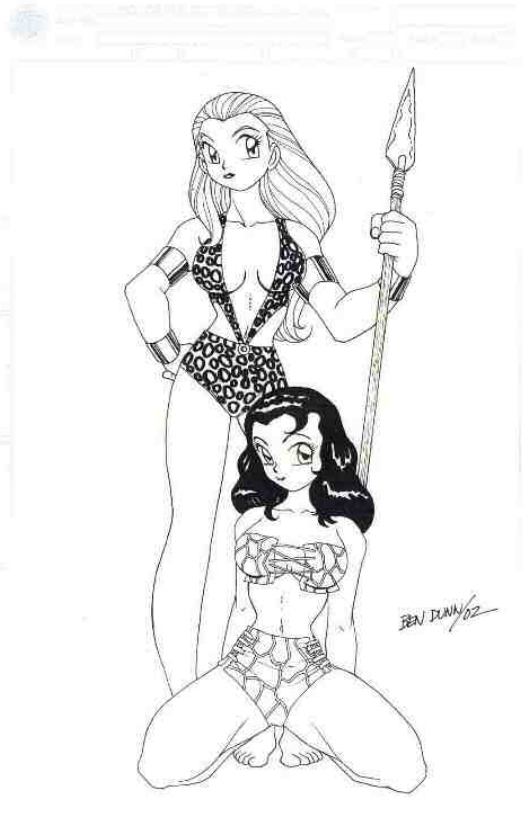


Nathan Fox above and Ben Dunn below



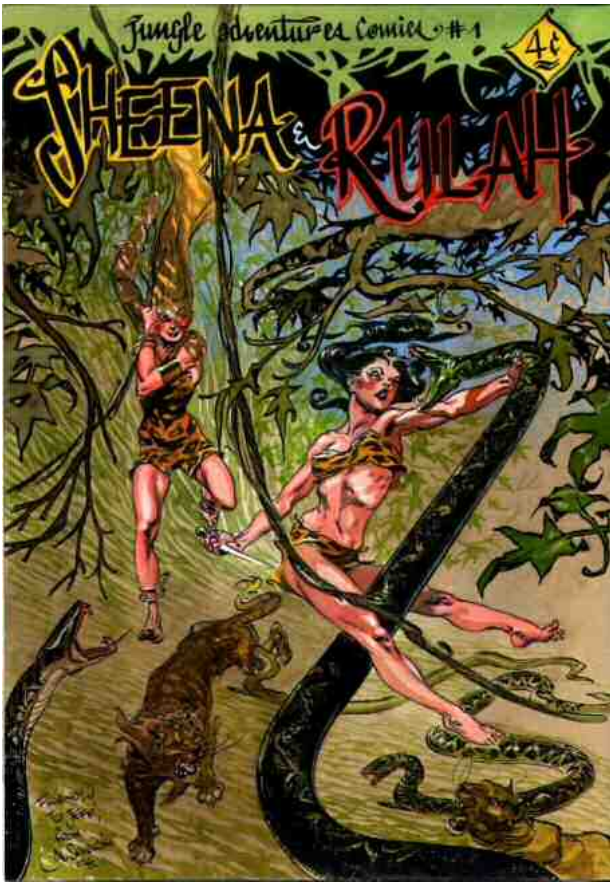
To Jeff, All the Best! Jim Keefe

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BEN DUNN/62

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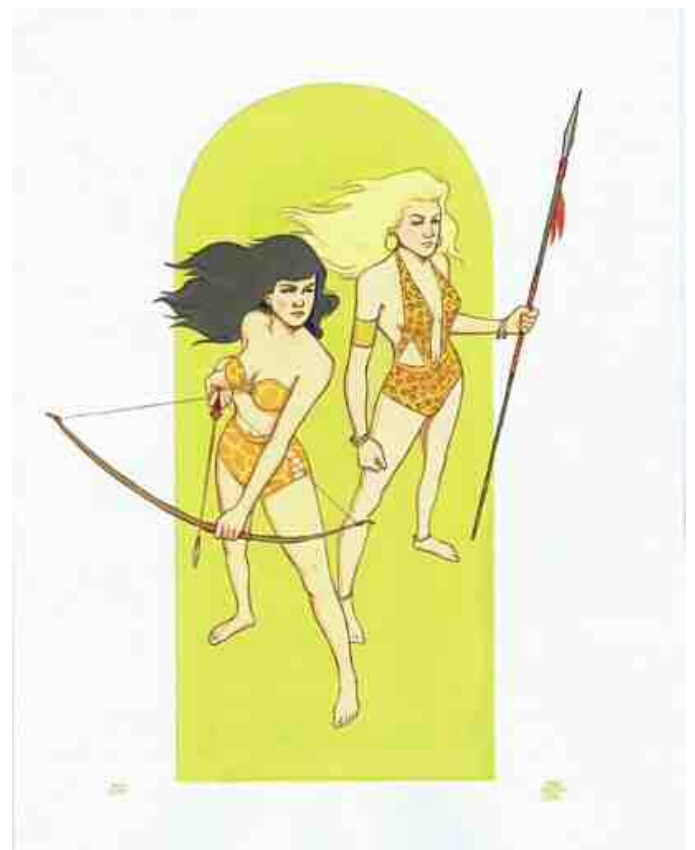
Alec Severin above and Anna Hybsier below



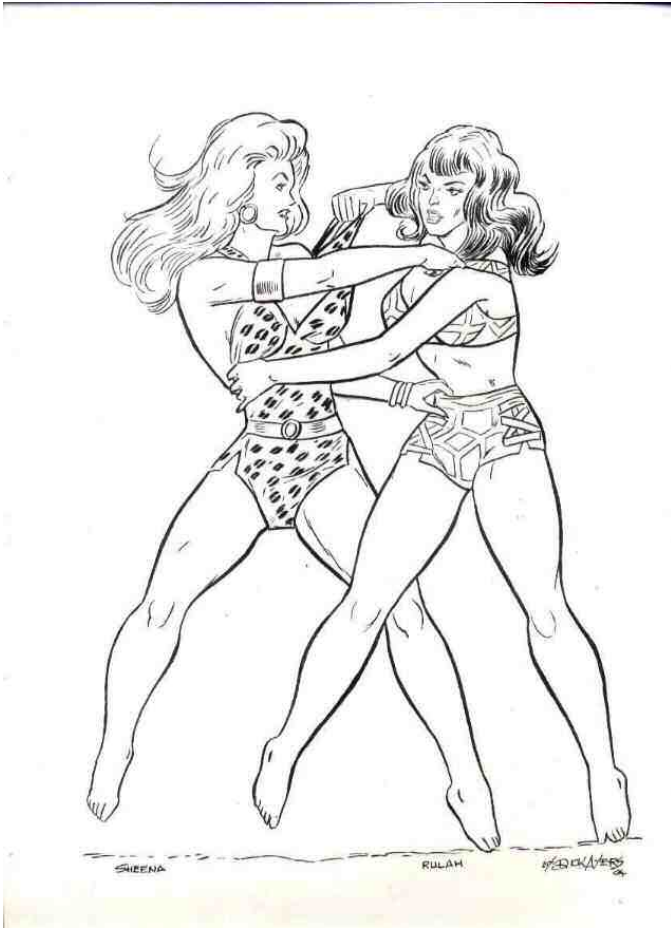
Terry Beatty above and Jori Bolton below



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Dick Ayers above and Newton Burcham below



Guilty Pleasures



Maxx above and Heather Martin below



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Devon Massey above and Rob Phipp below



Chris Ivy and Noel Tuazon



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It was fun going through and putting this collection together for this article. I remember each piece well. There are a number of interesting stories that go along with these pieces.

The Alec Severin piece I touched on a little in my article on him for CFA-APA. It was part of a trade deal that had led to a long friendship including an in person meeting in Brussels. It all began with a letter in French that I had a friend in Montreal translate for me. Alec's English has improved a lot but sadly my French hasn't.

The Nathan Fox piece was also a first contact piece I have become friends with and still get commissions from every year at the NYC comic con. The octopus and gorilla are reoccurring themes in his work. Now that I know his work a lot better, it is great to see them in the commission. When we first met, I had 2 kids and he was expecting his first. That was 11 years ago, now the kids are growing up but we still talk about that.

I have met up with Jim Keefe several times at cons and he always remembers me from this commission and a few subsequent commissions. I came to know Jim's work on Flash Gordon and he has a deep respect and love for the old strip and comic material. The Sheena and Rulah commission he did for me is in my opinion among his best work ever and I don't think he disagrees.

The Anna Hybsier piece I got from her when she was still in school. We have talked over the years and last summer when I was in Berlin, we met up for a coffee. She was embarrassed by this early piece but I think it is great and very similar to the style she still uses.

The Newton Burcham story didn't end so well. I still have a number of pieces by Newton but the way things unfolded makes it difficult to enjoy his work. Ask me over a beer about the story. I debated not putting his piece in here but he was one of the first I asked and it fits in with the article.

The Jori Bolton piece was the most recent of this theme. One of the things I like doing at cons is going around and checking out the art of new artists or students in the artist alley ghettoes. That is how I met Jori. He should be doing comic covers but sadly was

never discovered for comics and has moved on to do well in advertising art.

I still get a lot of commissions but have moved onto requesting other themes like the Dragonlady, Corto Maltese and sometimes Akira. After having compiled this gallery, I certainly have the itch to add more to it.

Other Comic Stuff:

Another great issue. Thanks to everyone for the kind comments on the Barron Storey article, it was a labor of love for me but also the biggest thing I had written outside of the field of medicine. I am running a little late on this submission so I am forgoing mailing comments as I'd have too much to say. I will say the guest member Bob Koppány's information regarding the sale of the Flash Gordon Sunday was very fascinating.

A few new pieces added to my collection of note. The first a swell Rip Kirby by Alex Raymond and then my first full Prince Valiant Sunday.

