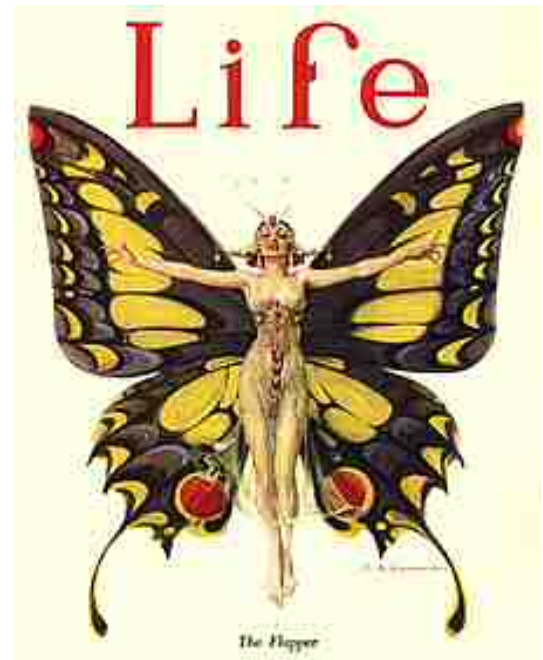


Women in Comics is such a great topic...but also a bit tricky if you don't frame it correctly. To talk about any class/group as a topic potentially supposes the idea that they need to be singled out to make them worthy of praise in the bigger scheme of all artists. It is like saying she is a great female artist and having to make that distinction instead of saying she is a great artist and able to hold her own against any other artist. So, I thought I'd pick a topic that was about great artists that happen to be female and also about a female archetype that was revolutionary at the time. The flapper model was also appropriated by some great artists who happened to be male and for a more complete overview of the topic, they will humbly be included.

The young, fashionable and liberated women of the 1920's were called flappers. Popular but also controversial, the persona became an ambassador of early 20th century feminism. Flappers were everywhere, Magazine Cover, newspapers, movies and in real life at the speakeasies and Gin dives. Comics also embraced the flapper genre and several of the pioneering artists and writers of these characters were female.

The term flapper has an origin dating back to the 1600's and flap was a term used for prostitutes and wild, flighty women. It continued to have this derogatory connotation but also came to be used in Britain to describe gawky young teenage girls. The word grew more popular in the first 2 decades of the twentieth century and came into more common usage in the mid-teens.

The roaring twenties hit and there was a culmination of multiple events that led to the social changes, women's rights and more mainstream female independence. It was an epoch post World War I and women had gotten the right to vote with the 19th Amendment in August of 1920. People were moving into the cities more than ever (in 1920, for the first time, more people lived in cities than in rural communities). Post war and post Spanish



Flu Pandemic led to a feeling in young people that life was short and that it could end at any moment so live for the moment and not wait at home to be married. Prohibition had banned alcohol and this combined with a growth in jazz music and illegal venues to drink and socialize provided the milieu for the birth of what we now think of as flappers. From this came a young and more independent woman who was brash and rebelled against the strict Victorian moral codes that had defined a woman and her appearance for decades prior. They dressed differently, cut their hair short, drank, smoke, cursed, had their own

language, were free-spirited, danced and were more sexually liberated than at any other time prior. The stereotypical flapper has a very distinct aesthetic to their appearance with certain dresses(short, straight cut), shorter haircuts and hats or headbands defining the look. There is certainly a lot more to the discussion of what the influences and repercussion of flapper culture were but they are beyond the scope of what I wish to write about. The flapper era ended in October of 1929 with the crash of the stock market. Their style and influence lived on but the free spending and living of the 20's gave way to a more frugal and careful depression lifestyle.

The 1920's was also the time when comic strips were just starting to evolve and so it is natural that Flappers appeared between the panel borders. With women attending colleges more frequently, writing books and plays, it is understandable that there would be women artists in comics and there seemed to be an almost natural calling for the artists of flapper comics

to be women. I'd like to take you on a bit of a survey of Flappers in comics of the 1920's and early 30's, several of these written or illustrated by strong, independent women. Even those created and penned by men were portrayals of independent and confident women.



Gibson Girl

touch on a few of those as well although not all of those were by female artists. Leading up to the comic strips were the illustrators of the previous decades. Women had a certain appearance in illustrations of the previous era and best captured by Charles Dana Gibson. So classic were his depictions that they became known as Gibson Girls. Nell Brinkley created her own, more independent and free loving spirited girls that were popularly known as the Brinkley girls and was a precursor to the flappers. She illustrated for Hearst Newspapers. Brinkley would have been among the first to do female cartoon characters and that is what the newspapers wanted from her talents. It is reported that an editor had told her that she was to do comics, she replied, "But that's not what I came here to do," the editor replied "But that's what we want you to do, little girl, and you must do what we want." To which Nell replied, "But I won't make comics...I've got a good daddy back in Denver and I'll go back there to him." Nell won and the rest is history as she went on to become a renowned illustrative cartoonist. I don't have any art by Brinkley in my collection but having written this piece, I think that will soon change.

Flapper Fanny – created by Ethel Hays in January 1925 was the first true Flapper dedicated feature. It was a daily, single panel strip with a flapper girl saying something witty or silly. She purposefully abandoned the fancy style of Brinkley choosing a more slender, short haired flapper. Ethel Hays was born in Montana, 1892 and went on to study art in Los Angeles and New York City on her way to become a fine art painter. She started to teach painting to recovering soldiers during World War I and

I have a few examples of these in my collection and so I'll share with you what I have and a bit of background information on the artist and strip. Flappers appeared in other comic strips and I will try and





when there was a cohort of them interested in cartooning, she decided to learn as well and enrolled in the Landon School of Illustration and Cartooning. She went on to her first work with the Cleveland Press for a flapper feature entitled Vic and Ethel before creating Flapper Fanny Says. She gave up the strip in 1931 after having been married since 1925 and now having two children, she found it too much work. The chores were passed on to another female pioneering comic artist, Gladys Parker. She went on to illustrate children's books, including Raggedy Ann and Andy. She passed away at the age of 97 in 1989 leaving a legacy of being one of the first and most important pioneering female cartoonists. Flapper Fanny ran until 1940 with Parker working until 1935 and then handing over the feature to Sylvia Sneiderman until the strips end in 1940. Very little is known (other than a few odd published illustrations over the years) about the rest of Sneiderman's career until her death in 1989. Gladys Parker on the other hand went on to a long career in comics, illustration, dress making and movie costume design. She is best known for the Mopsy character she created which was a post-flapper female feature. My favorite work by Gladys Parker is her work on Flyin' Jenny between Russell Keaton and Marc Swayze. Above is my one Flapper Fanny strip by Sneiderman and below is my Flyin' Jenny by Gladys Parker (signed as Keaton)



Flapper Philosophy – was a King Features Flapper daily one panel gag created to compete with Flapper Fanny. The strip was created by Faith Burrows (1904-1997) and ran from 1928 to 1935. After that she worked on a short run strips for King Features called Ritzy Rosalie. There does not appear to be much other information on career from that point on until she passed away in 1997. The content was very similar to Flapper Fannie with single panel gags and flighty or naïve commentary/gags. The one below from 1928 is in my collection.



Other Flappers but not by women artists

Etta Kett – a long running strip that started in 1925 and ended in 1975 by Paul Robinson (1898-1974). It initially ran as a single strip that offered advice to teenagers on subjects of etiquette (hence the name). By late 1925, it was a flapper strip that evolved during the depression years with Etta shunning her freestyle life and becoming more responsible and going to college. I have always found the line and figure work on this strip to be ethereal. Prior to Etta Kett, Robinson had worked on a Samson and Delilah strip and a single panel gag strip called Just Among Us Girls starting in the early 20's. The one original I have for this strip is pictured below and is a large format strip similar in size to early Raymond X-9s.



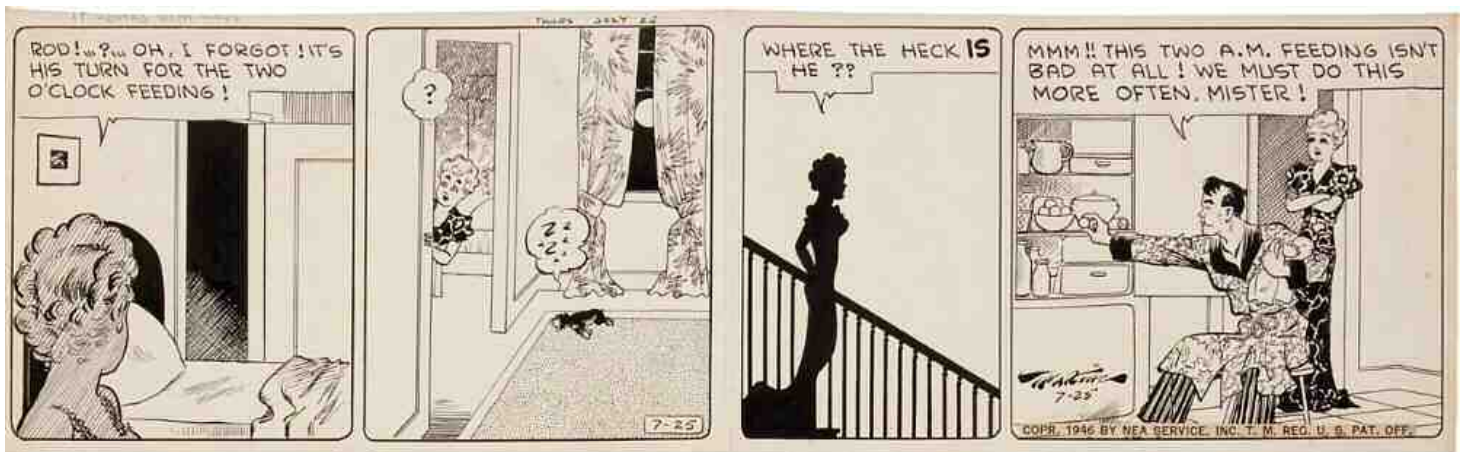
Polly and Her Pals – the quintessential Jazz Age comic strip. Polly started in 1912 as **Positive Polly** that changed to **Polly and Her Pals** in 1913 as the strip moved from Hearst to King Features. It is often considered among the most innovative and experimental strips of its era. Cliff Sterrett was the creator. Polly was an early prototype of the flapper girl. In addition to the abstract and innovative textures Sterrett used, I always find Kitty very funny. The cat always mimicked the mood, expression and body language of Paw. I was very happy to be able to add an early Polly to my collection late last year and I think it is a good one. Sterrett was known for using assistants and ghost artists during the hey days of the strip in the later 30's and 40's and again returning to solo duties later in the run. Paul Fung, Verne Greene were among the more famous of these helpers.



Blondie is perhaps the most famous of the Flapper girls. Prior to *Blondie* (1935-), Chic Young had created *Dumb Dora* and *Beautiful Bab*. Blondie Boopadoop was a carefree flapper girl that liked to go dancing with Dagwood Bumstead, heir to an industrial fortune. The early years of this strip were fantastically exciting with Dagwood being disowned for marrying Blondie, a hunger strike, court cases and the likes. Having abandoned his fortune, the strip evolved into the much more familiar middle class mundane suburban domestic drama with mail man, giant sandwiches, couch naps and late for work gags.



Boots and Her Buddies ran from 1924 to 1968. Created by Edgar Martin (1898-1960), the strip focused on fashion and beauty. Boots was a flapper but evolved over the decades with the times. Boots actually began as a strip Martin created in 1921 called *The Life of Girls* and was where Boots first appeared. She went on to be "America's Sweetheart". The strip initially focused on fashion and college life at an unnamed college modeled after Monmouth College where Martin's father had been a Biology professor and Martin had started his education before going to the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts and onto comic strips around that same time. In 1928, on a trip to New York, Boots got a haircut that was named the Boots Bob and it became a national sensation. Due to the high readership and loyalty the strip had earned, it continued for decades and Boots matured with her reading cohort and began dating a number of suitors. When she met Ruggles, fans wrote in in droves asking for a marriage that Martin gave them in 1945. Boots was also reprinted in comic book format.



Meet the Misses ran for 2 years for McClure and featured the art of Jack Wilhelm. Here is my one example. I liked the loose style, crazy motion lines and distorted body contortions, all of which reminds me of Colan on Daredevil decades later.



Girlfriends – Pre Dick Tracey Chester Gould portrayed flapper girls which had a limited run in 1931. Flapper girls were common in the early Dick Tracey stories.

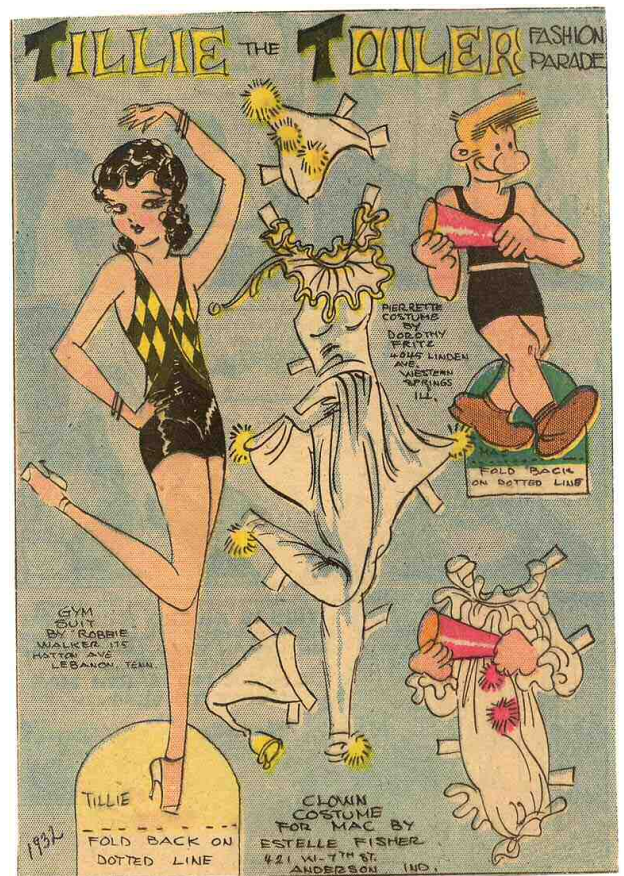
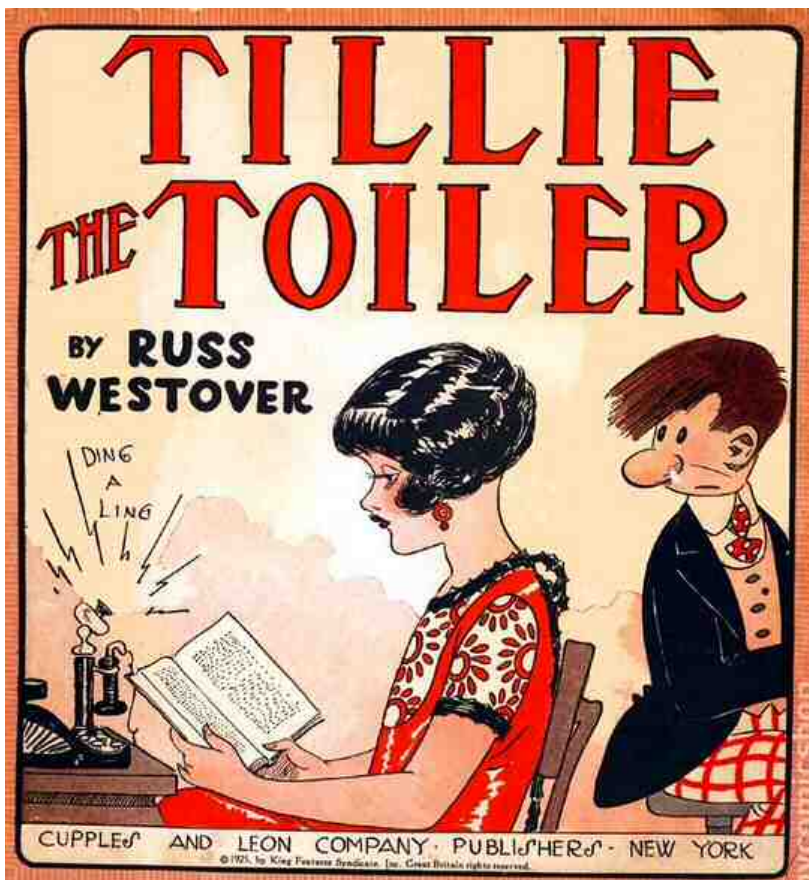


Fritzi Ritz was created by Larry Whittington in 1922 but was taken over by the better known Ernie Bushmiller in 1925. Fritzi started out as a flapper but the strip was usurped with the introduction of her much younger cousin Nancy. Nancy first appeared in 1933 and by 1938 the strip is renamed Nancy although the Sundays continue under the Fritzi Ritz title for some time.

FRITZI RITZ



Tillie the Toiler started in 1921 and ran until 1959. Although a smart, independent and employed character, the early Tillie appearance is that of a flapper. Over the years her appearances changed with the times.



Toots and Casper ran for almost 40 years from 1918 to 1956 and was originally created by Jimmy Murphy for a Hearst paper but was picked up by King Features in 1919. The female character, Toots was based on Murphy's wife and was portrayed as a young and attractive young wife with style. The comic couple had a child, Buttercup who predated Skeezix in Gasline Alley



Toots and Casper

by about 3 months. I have not read any reprints so I can't speak to how much of the flapper attitude Toots had but she certainly had the look.

Betty Boop came in the post flapper era and I was not sure if I should include her but decided to do so because she embodies much of the flapper joie de vie and I happen to have an example to include. Betty was first conceived in 1930 by Fleischer Studios, Betty was a background character until around 1931 and did not get fully realized until '32. She was based on a famous singer Helen Kane who later sued the studio for using her likeness and singing style. From what I read it sounds like an interesting case and eventually the studio was able to prove the imagery, style of singing and Kane's tag line "Boop-oop-a-doop" all had origins other than Kane. Recall Chic Young's Blondie's last name was Boopadoop. The *Betty Boop* strip ran as a daily from Jun 1934 to March 1935 so examples are fairly rare and I am lucky to own the one below. The Sunday ran from Nov 1934 to Nov 1937.



Winnie Winkle created by Martin Branner (conceived by Joseph Patterson) began in 1920 and continued to 1996. Winnie was the breadwinner and worked and supported her parents and adopted step-brother. Winnie was unmarried until 1937 and in 1941 her husband Will disappeared during the war leaving a pregnant Winnie to fend for herself. This was considered to risqué by some publishers and the strip was dropped. The strip also was the source for 10 movies in the late 20's. Being so responsible and motivated, perhaps Winnie doesn't quite qualify as a true flapper other than her style.



With the media popularity of the Flapper revolution, the costumes of the flappers became more mainstream and it could be argued that many female appearances in the strips could be seen as fitting this genre but perhaps more in looks than attitude. Just a few examples include Ms. Fair from *Little Orphan Annie* by Gray, Nora from *Bringing Up Father* by McManus, *Rosie Beau* also by McManus, *Dixie Dugan* by Striebel, and multiple examples of minor or incidental characters in many of the strips of the period. I am sure I have missed some others that were worthy of mention...for each to discover on their own I suppose.

Below are two *Dixie Dugan* illustrations in my collection. Dixie was a showgirl for the first short period of the strip but soon transitioned to a career girl. Another example of a strong, independent female character although not a flapper. Dixie was modeled after Louise Brooks.



Mailing Comments:

I found this a really interesting issue as it is well outside my wheelhouse. Other than the Betty Pages, I don't think I have ever picked up a fanzine like the ones that were discussed here. It was insightful and I found the amateur illustrations of those who would go on to be superstars very enlightening. Thank you again to all that contributed and to David and John for making it happen. It was also an interesting epoch for the APA as this was written during the COVID 19 Pandemic and our world and daily lives changed dramatically. I am sure there was a lot of time for reflection, introspection and re-visiting many things including comics and fandom for each of us.

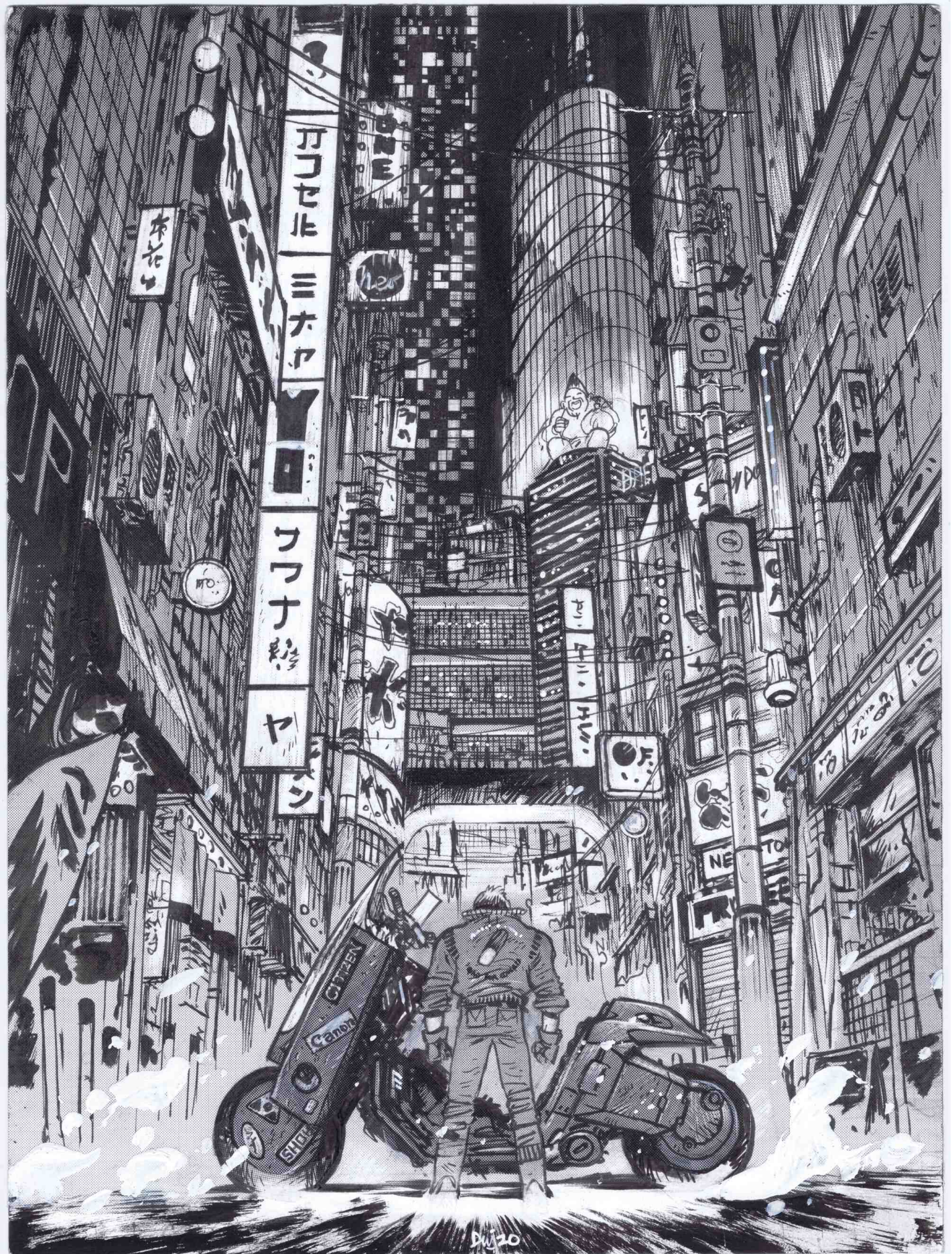
Rob Reiner – fun to hear about your early escapades in fandom and very cool on the Wertham interview. I'd love to read the Wertham interview as SOTI and the comic code have always been areas of interest to me. I can't get enough of that history.

John Butler – FOOM is something I had never looked at before. I might have to search out an issue or two now to check them out for myself. I'm glad you liked the previous submissions, thanks for the kind words. I'd love to put out a book of the best of my Dragon Lady commissions but I have a few that were off the mark so not all success stories. I have learned to be more selective of who I enlist. Currently I have 2 really cool ones on the go with two artists in France. I picked up this Corto Maltese from Gerhard a week or so ago. He lives about 45 minutes away and so we did the deal in person.



Speaking of commissions, here is one that worth an article unto itself and perhaps there will be one. It is a story that involves planes, trains, automobiles and an adventure to Verona to pick up the art, a studio visit and a lunch with Manara. I apologize for the nudity in CFA-APA but what am I to do, it is Manara. The inspiration for this piece was the "*something too spicy*" print Caniff did circa 1940. This was my dream commission and it far exceeded my expectations. There is a certain aspect of the whole process I'd like to keep out of print so perhaps a story better told in person. The image below is from a digital photo and the right side has slightly warped perspective due to a bit of a curl in the art. The art was framed as soon as I got back and sits on my wall. It is quite large, 18 x 24 inches. This necessitated it travelling rolled in a heavy tube on my journeys as the Manara visit was squeezed in during an Italian excursion between a Breccia exhibition in Toulouse and the Angouleme BD festival.





Wally Harrington – Williamson Jann of the Jungle art is the stuff of dreams. I recall many years ago, Tom Yeates showing me copies of an unpublished issue of this that was all Williamson. It was the greatest thing I'd ever seen. As a Williamson and jungle girl fan, I really should have gone after these a bit harder instead of just bidding others up. Don't worry, I wasn't the underbidder so it wasn't me spending your money. I love McWilliams girls but also his underwater action. I'd have bought A and C over D in the quiz.

Ron Sonenthal – nice interview with Kyle. I always find an artist's perspective insightful as while we see the art, many times they see their job and so process was a good topic to dissect.

Ray Cuthbert – I miss our visits every few years. Hopefully when travel returns to normal we can meet up again. Those commissions by Chris look spectacular. It is really great to see all the cover and other recreations you have been getting done. A great way to enjoy original art and images you love on pieces that are otherwise not obtainable. I should commission a Hugo Pratt Corto page, Herge Tintin, Peyo Smurfs and a Little Nemo Sunday and be done with those want list items. Any suggestion on artists would be appreciated as I'm serious.

Bill Leach – Wow! I think if I ever came to visit you, I'd have to make it a 2 or 3 day trip as you have so much incredible art that you keep pulling out. All those pieces you had done for HFTCOF are amazing and I was sorry to hear of your loss however belated. The Sergio Aragones piece is my favorite. I enjoyed your submission very much.

Gary Land – good to see you back in the APA. I am sorry to hear about all your trials and tribulation and your loss. A gluteal abscess... a literal pain in the ass. I am glad you have recovered and it sounds like you are back on your feet again and I am glad for you. As bad as 2019 was for you, at least you got a great Wonder Woman by Sale out of it. May 2020 be better for you.

Bob Kopman – it was good to see you two weeks ago. I missed the exhibition in Hamilton so very glad for the pics. Very cool Fiona was the artist on the Sneaky Dee's sign. I spent more than a few University nights there and I have had more than a few stabbings come into the ER from there when I was in residency. It was just the right kind of seedy music bar. It sounds like its future might be in jeopardy with a new condo/corporate development as it was on the news just this week and we were telling the kids about this old haunt.

Stuart Sayer – fun article and I love the rigor in your retro party requirements. I have watched you show twice now, very enjoyable and you do a good job of broadening others horizons in terms of art and artists. Keep up the great work!

Kevin Warzecha – fun interviews. Zeppelin or Floyd? That is a tough one, Eagles/CCR, Beatles/Stones....easy...

Hal Turner – Great story about a fantastic piece of art. I am already a Shimizu fan but sadly lack an example. Yours is perfect.

Michael O'Connell – we are kindred spirits in our love for Caniff but your dedication and sleuth work is both fascinating and inspiring. I love your stories and the information you dig up. I agree that the story behind the art is as important as the art itself in many circumstances. I hope your collection one day ends up in a museum as it is surely worthy of that status.

Satya Chetri – revisiting and coloring a GN I love is a tricky topic. I think what they did was pretty cool and the fact that it was Campbell doing the colors helps as he was the one to bring the Moore script to life. Do I really need another copy of this on my shelf? I think so. I am on the fence about the Companion guide but I don't have anything like that in my collection and it is a very unique item that complements the books well.

Scott Stewart – very cool selection of artists to showcase. Many names I don't know and some fantastic art. Thanks.

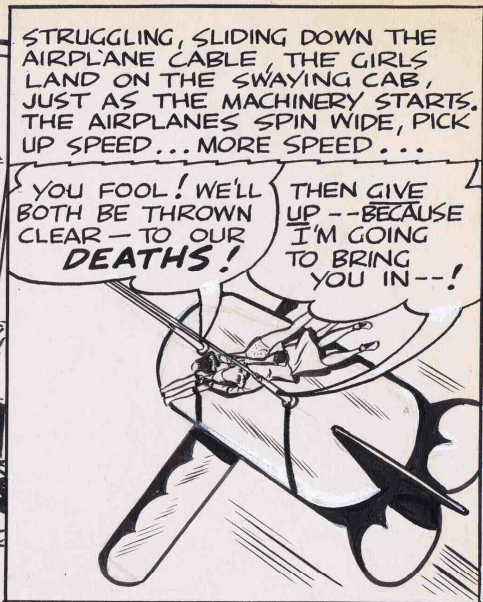
Lee Banaka – Thanks for your words of support about the Swamp Thing piece. I loved the Marvel What If? run so it was fun revisiting these books with you. You have some fun pages.

Chad Kolean – It is great seeing some of that early Jones art. I put all those Jones images in my submission last time for you.

Alan Dion – I often wonder if underappreciated and relatively unknown are synonymous. For those that know Whitney, Rosenburger and Giolitti, they know how great they are. Those that don't know them are missing out. Out of the 3 it is a toss up between Whitney and Rosenburger but they were quite different in style. Both drew great looking girls and I think Ogden's work on Undercover Girl gets him my vote as those are among some of my favorite pieces in my collection. Racy as all heck! Here they are in all their GGA glory. I have never really given Herbie a chance, perhaps something to add to the reading list.



THEN START CUTTING — BECAUSE HERE I COME!



YOU FOOL! WE'LL BOTH BE THROWN CLEAR — TO OUR DEATHS!

THEN GIVE UP — BECAUSE I'M GOING TO BRING YOU IN —!



STOP -- STOP! I QUIT! I QUIT! I'LL TELL YOU ANYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW!



IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF UNDERCOVER GIRL FACES THE BATTLE OF HER LIFE WIN — THE HOUSE THAT

6

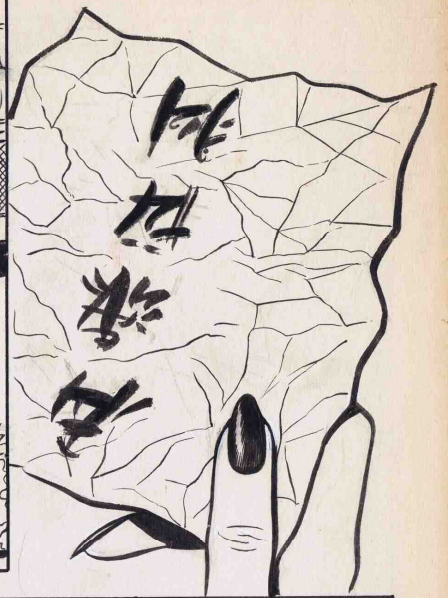
Undercover Girl #5 6/4

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HE'S DEAD, AND I HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING WHETHER MING LEE FOUND HIS FORMULA-- OR WHETHER SOME OTHER GOVERNMENT GOT HOLD OF IT!



WHY-- THERE'S A PAPER IN HIS HAND!



NEXT MORNING, IN THE ISLAND HOTEL ...
HELLO, LU! CAN YOU TRANSLATE THIS PAPER FOR ME?
I WOULD BE GLAD TO!



"ON THE FACE OF THE LOTUS IS THE SECRET OF THE SAGE!"
LOTUS? I DON'T SEE HOW A LOTUS FLOWER COULD HOLD A MESSAGE!



I HEARD HOW YOU FOUND MING LEE AND SUMMONED THE ISLAND POLICE. MING LEE FAMOUS MAN. THEY SAY HIS JADE RING WORTH MANY DOLLARS!
RING? I DIDN'T SEE ANY RING!



IT IS FAMOUS RING. CARVED LIKE LIVING LOTUS BY GREAT TAN SAN. IT--
DID YOU SAY LOTUS?



3

UNDERCOVER GIRL #5

6 1/4

P21

Joe Latino – I know nothing about animation art but of course grew up with the cartoons and loved Marvin. I appreciate the story behind his creation. I would never have guessed he was over 70 years old. Thanks for the support for my work during this time. I am glad I was able to introduce a few people to King and Gasoline Alley... it is one of those strips many have ignored for years including myself. Once you have seen what King could do and did, it is hard to go back.

Stephen Stein – fantastic overview of early women comic artists. Although I knew most of the names and the styles, getting some of the background on them was great. There were a few new names for me in there. Very nicely presented.

Keith Becker – Welcome to the club. Nice to hear about your early collecting and fun to see that prelim to the unpublished Wrightson Spirit piece I have. It is the first time I have seen that image.

Benno Rothschild – Wow, so much great art. I love the Bastian piece. I think I might have to see about doing an interview with Jeremy as I have a few of his pieces as well and I have known him for a long time. That Peanuts is spectacular as well. For me the biggest take home message from this issue of APA is I need a Yuko Shimizu piece.

Tom Vincent – Thank you for sharing all that great Wrightson fan art. Lots of images I don't recall seeing before.

Marcelo Anciano – Seeing Gary's prelims and the finished pages was a real treat. Those pencils are real treasures and as much as I love his ink work, in this case I am not sure what I liked more.

Micheal Hranek – I have similar non-memories of Fanzines too so I was not able to write about them. Thanks for the kind comments in your submission. I won't be submitting multiple articles going forward and will aim to keep them under 20 pages (10 double sided) with rare exceptions.

Dave Karlen – those international comic covers can be such a mix bag in terms of both content and quality. The Mexican paintings you picked up look fantastic.

George Hagenauer – my annual art gathering consisted of only 6 people this year and was mainly an outdoor affair due to pandemic precautions. Your presence was missed but it would have been impossible for you to come up as there would have been a 2 week quarantine period for you. I suspect next summer will be too soon but maybe the fall or if not 2022. Your stories of you early experience in fandom and art collecting are always gems.

John Stuart – I love Redondo Rima. One of my favorite pages I had I believe I got from you years ago and I'd still have it if a certain US dealer/collector had not been so persistent in his pursuit of every page. I ended up with the Kubert Tarzan prelims I have because of that deal and those are among my favorite treasures. I am hoping to do an APA article on it in the future.

Roger Hill – always great to hear you stories and there are so many of them. In my mind, you practically invented comic fanzines and if not, certainly brought them up to a new standard.

David Applegate – Oh Captain, My Captain! Another fine issue and prepared against a most trying backdrop of circumstances. Great selection of Byrne fanzine art, most of it new to me. This issue of APA had more new art for me than any previous issues. That DD 200 cover is iconic to me and hopefully when it is safe to travel again I will get a chance to see it in person. The In Memoriam section is always sobering. You did a great job with the Russ Cochran piece. For me, the loss I most felt was Uderzo. Asterix was such a part of my childhood and is still among my favorite comics of all time. I had gotten to know Thomas Gianni in recent years and got to say hello again at C2E2 this year. He will be missed. I met Gimenez in Barcelona about a decade ago. At the time I knew Metabarons but had not read it yet. We had finished with a visit at Jordi Bernet's home/studio and with Jordi and a friend we walked Las Ramblas and met up with Juan for a drink before heading off to a spectacular lunch with Jordi and his wife. I have since read the entire Metabaron's run and most of the rest of his work that has been translated and am a huge fan. I wish I had known then what I know now (I think that is what is going to be written on my tombstone).

Until next time, happy art hunting.