

Copy Cats: Survey of Felines in Comic Strips

It is said that imitation is the greatest form of flattery. I would say that statement needs to be tempered with context and intent. If the intent of copying someone else's work, idea or styles is as an homage and to develop one's own voice then it is a form of praise. If the intent is to take advantage of someone's work and ideas and to produce for secondary gain such as money or fame something they did not create, I think it is not looked upon by the creator as flattery. When the intent is made to deceive, then it is just outright fraud. Where would we be artistically if people hadn't borrowed ideas, themes and styles and used those influences to create new works that might have gone on to influence others. That is the beauty of influences but also can be a trap for some artists. I chose to name my piece Copy Cats so as to cover two seemingly unrelated topics. More on the copy part later, now for Cats...<que *Memories* playing in the background>

For full disclosure, I am a dog person. I have never really cared for cats and in my early adulthood developed an allergy to them, forever sealing our relationship. I eye cats with a hint of suspicion and mistrust but also do take enjoyment in their antics in videos. It is a strange relationship I have with domestic felines. Big cats, that is another thing and I think they are among the most beautiful, powerful and deadly of all creatures. As a once budding zoologist, it was the big cats and the primates that most interested me. I use to draw them, read about them, put pictures I had cut out from magazine on my wall and certainly thought they were cool. I still do.

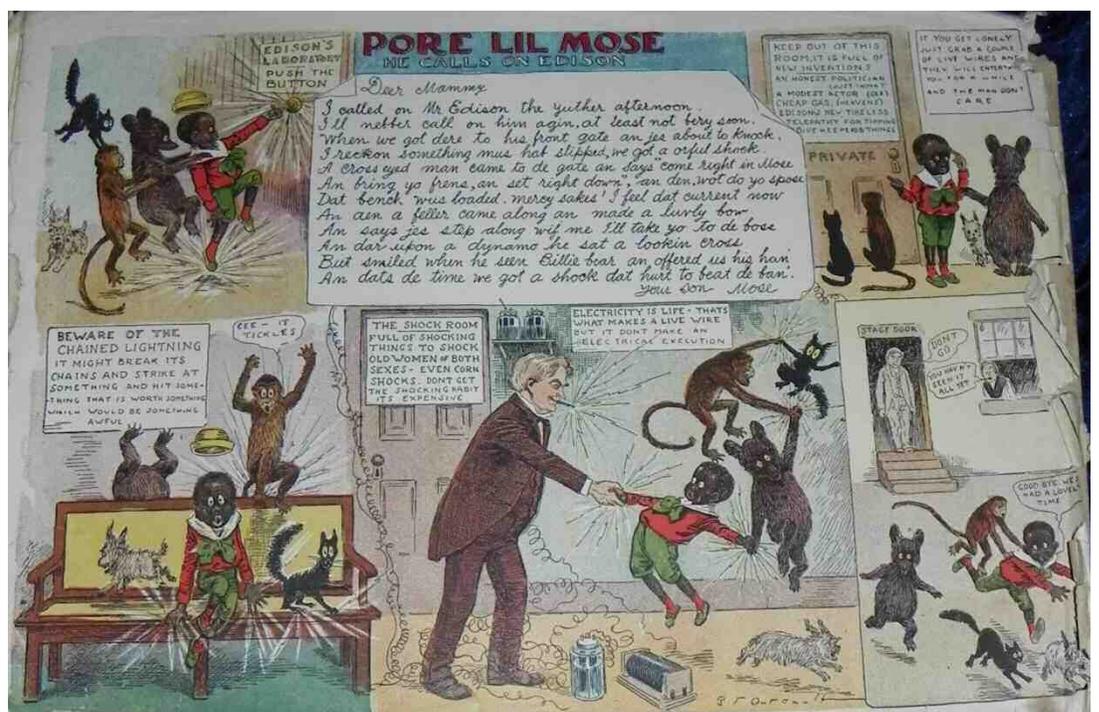
Cats have been with people for a long time, no need for me to embarrass myself with an incomplete history of cats or even cats in popular culture but I thought I'd talk about cats in comic strip art. A bit of a survey of different cats and how they were portrayed and perhaps some of the copy cats among cats in comic. By no means is this meant to be a complete and comprehensive catalogue, just some fun cat nip and perhaps some food for thought before your next cat nap.



Just as cats can be traced back to the earliest recorded human history, cats can be traced back to the earliest comic strips. Yellow Kid in Hogan's Alley had cats around him often as they were fellow denizens of the ghetto setting of this early comic strip. Rather than being just background objects, they were there to add to the story, action, comedy or the energy of the story. From 1900 to 1902 Richard Outcault developed a strip called "Pore Li'l Mose" which featured a black child who played a lot of pranks (foreshadowing the Buster Brown series that would begin in 1902). Li'l Mose was accompanied by his best friends who included a monkey names Monkey, a bear named Billy and cat named Pussy. I have recently added my first four



Outcaults to my collection but none feature a cat. Here is an Outcault sketch that I saw for sale recently that I thought was fitting for this article but didn't really advance my collection so after much deliberation decided to leave it for another collector. I think it just reaffirms that I am not alone in my mistrust of felines. The captions read as expected with the last line having the injured dog telling his friend to run.



THE YELLOW KID WRESTLES WITH THE TOBACCO HABIT.



For the purposes of this submission, I have decided to exclude rare or incidental cat appearances and focus on reoccurring cat characters and so I must skip Winsor McCay and I will omit strips that featured cats that were spin-offs of television or comic books like Tom of Tom and Jerry and Sylvester. I'll also exclude comic copycats of literature like *Puss in Boots* and *Alice in Wonderland's* Cheshire Cat.

BRINGING UP FATHER

Geo McManus is one of my all-time favorite artists. I love the style and timeless humor he brought to his work. The family had a reoccurring cat character that was a lot of fun. I was not able to find a name for the cat in research but I have seen the cat reoccur in over 50 examples and I am sure there are many more.



Here is my one daily with the cat. For the record, I love the way McManus portrayed the family dog too. McManus's art deco style, use of contrast, silhouette, design, clothing and the way he would draw a group of 100 people and make each one so very unmistakable from each



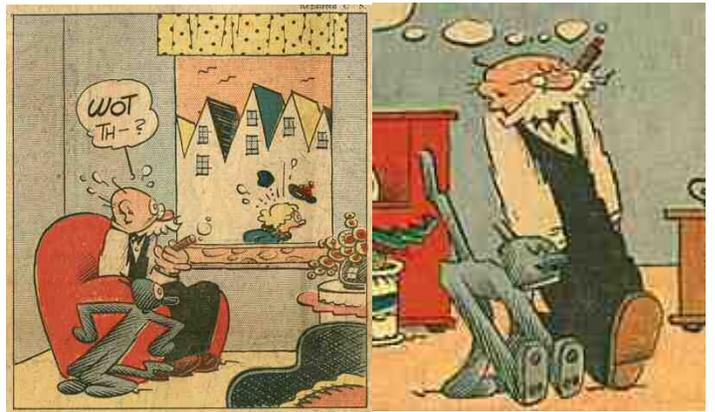
other always impresses. A real genius and the best part is that his humor still stands up 100 years later. I got this daily more for the Piano gag than the cat as my kids were all learning music at the time and I can certainly understand Maggie and Jigg's

situation. BUF began in 1913 but the earliest cat appearance I could find is below from Oct 1914. In this one, the cat is just referred to as cat and is used as a solution to a reoccurring dog problem.

Father Wanted To Help The Cat.



CLIFF STERRETT POLLY and HER PALS



Polly and her Pal's might have my favorite golden age era cats except for Krazy. Sterrett created in 1912 this comic strip that would morph in to one of the most innovative and influential strips capturing the Jazz age. From an early period in the strip, Kitty was there. The earliest I could find was from 1916 but my access to archives is rather limited. Although rarely a main character, Kitty was almost always present, often imitating Paw Perkins or others in gesture, movement and attitude to great effect. It is my favorite element of the strip. Below is my one Polly and Her Pal's strip with some nice Kitty images. Notice the expressions and sharp posture of Kitty, it still cracks me up. On the next page are a few more examples of Kitty. Kitty was, for lack of a better expression, a real copycat. I also believe Kitty to be the first cat to walk upright although my BUF example might be an exception.



Polly and Her Pals



Although not a cat, I find the next one such a copycat of Kitty I feel it is worthy of mention.

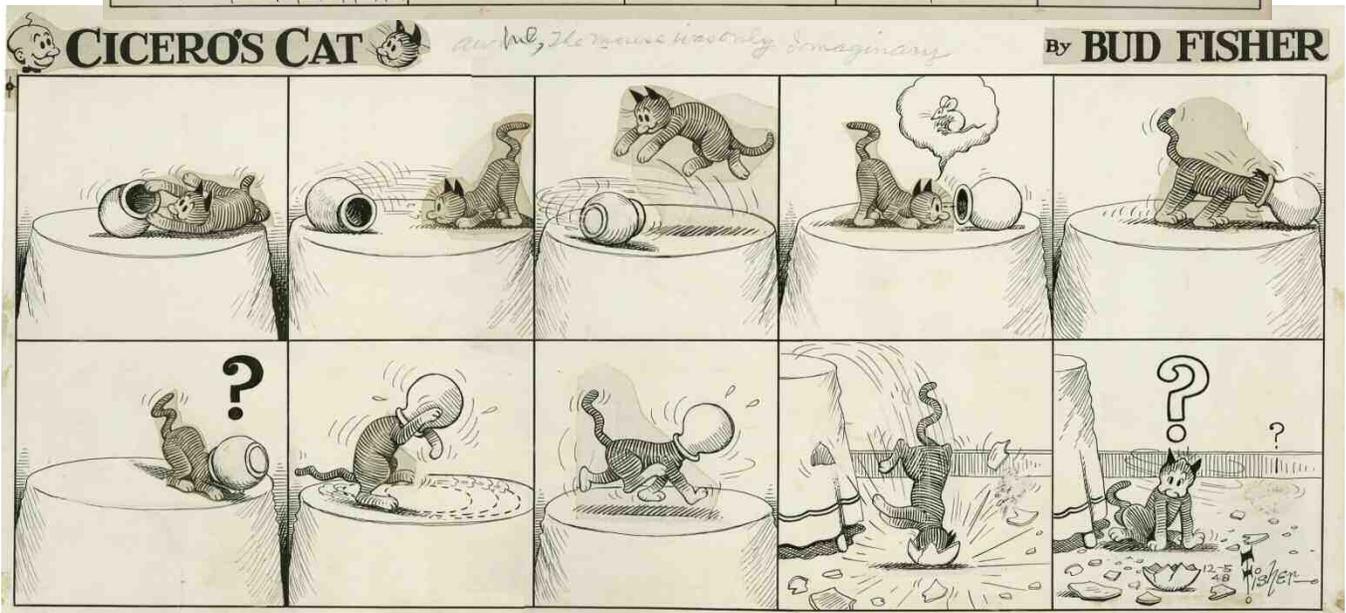
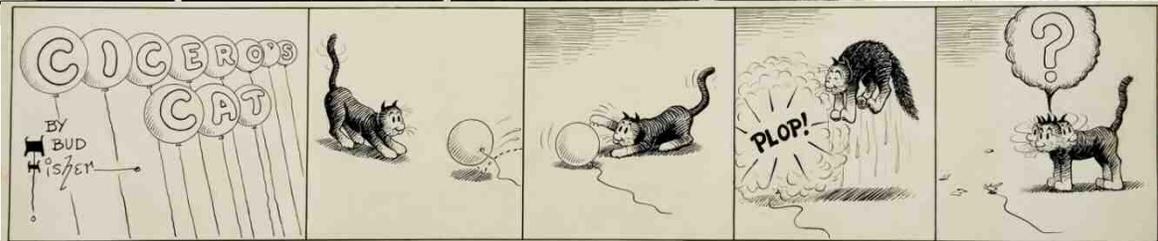
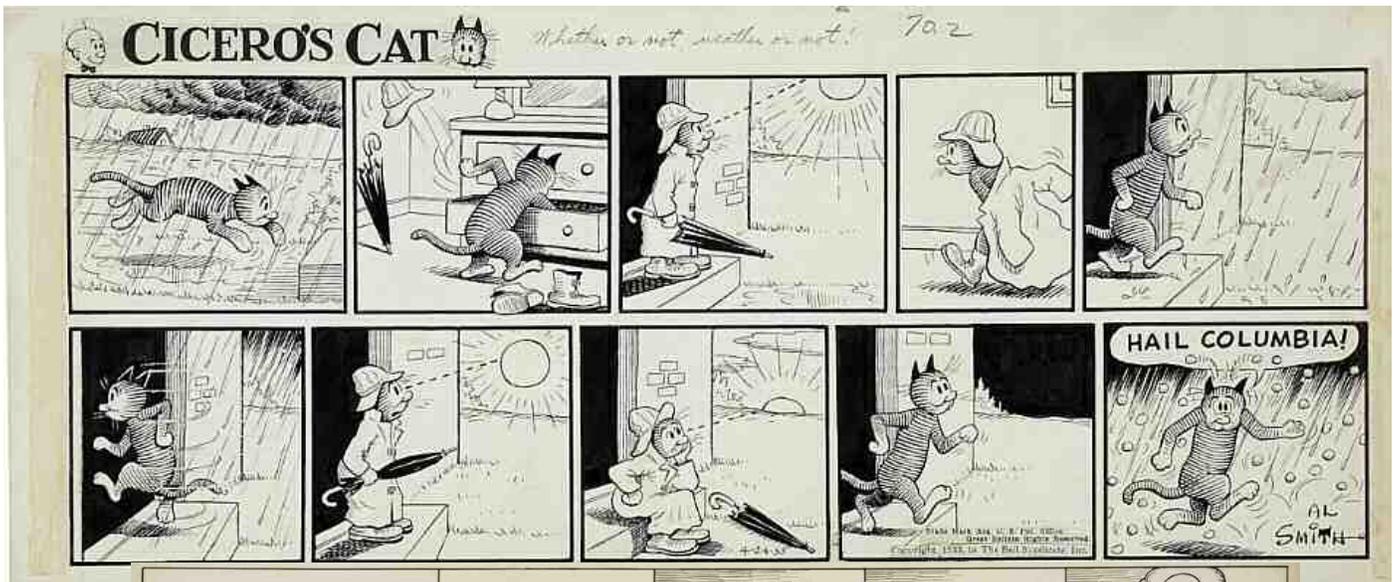


Hawkshaw Detective created by Gus Mager first saw publication from 1913 to 1922 and again from 1931 to 1956. I am more familiar with the later run but the original series spawned from an earlier series called *Sherlok the Monk* which began in 1904 and ran until the Hawkshaw name change. There is a crow that follows Hawkshaw around and not unlike Kitty, mimics posture and

demeanor of the main character. The early run of the strips that I have seen did not feature the bird and that is why I have thought of the later revival with Hawkshaw's shadow as an element borrowed from Polly.

CICERO'S CAT

Cicero's Cat began with Bud Fisher's Mutt and Jeff which began in 1903. Cicero was Mutt's son and he had a cat named Desdemona. In 1927 a topper was created for the Sunday to showcase Cicero but quickly got taken over by his feline counterpart. The gags were usually either cute cat tricks or small cat adventures. Later the cat took on a more human style of portrayal. This is my example of this cat strip from 1955 which is the first year Al Smith was able to sign his name to despite actually being credited as the artist for the strip and doing all the chores for the entire early run of the strip. Fisher's signature appears on the art for the first 2 decades. Notice the copycat style of the signature between the F in Fisher and T in Smith as well as the I. When colored, Desdemona was orange.

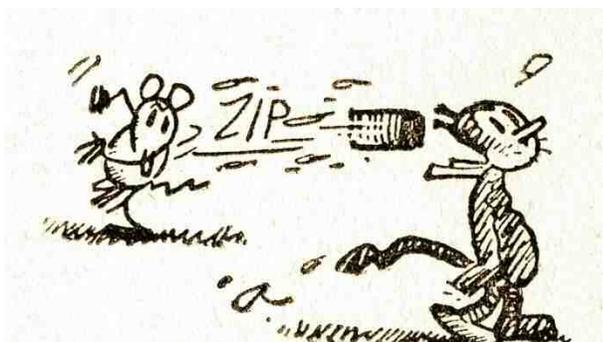
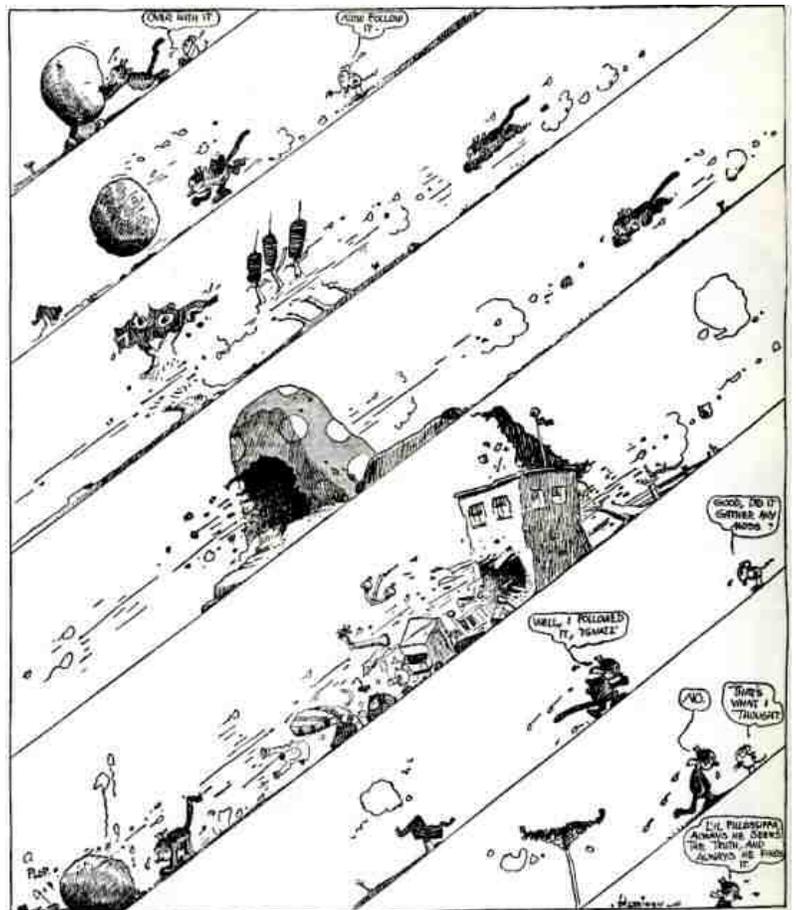




Krazy Kat probably should have been the first Kat I discussed but I decided to include it along its place in the time line of comic felines. One could write books on Krazy Kat, and they have! I would hazard to guess that more has been written on Krazy Kat and George Herriman than any other comic creator. To say anything other than the strip is pure genius would require a much more lengthy discussion. Herriman, in the tradition of McCay, took a seemingly simple idea (a love triangle between a mouse, cat and dog) and endlessly re-explored it in ways that challenged the readers

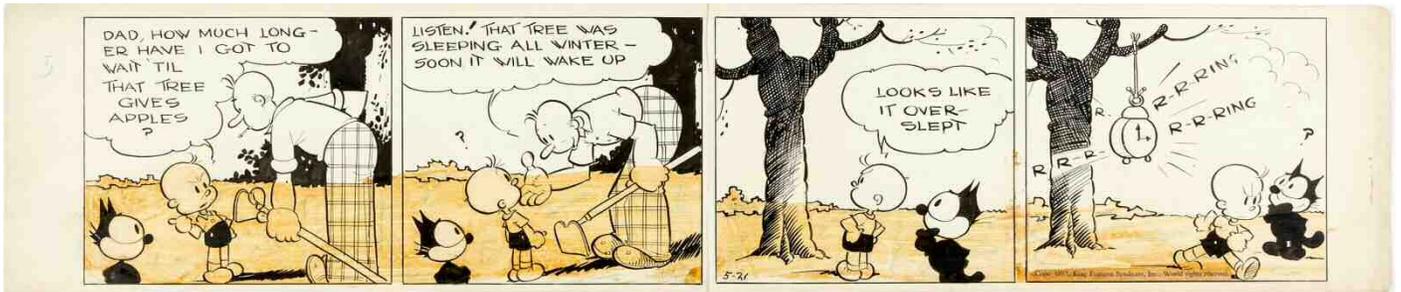


and the concept of comics. The language, characters, po'try and ever changing backgrounds makes this strip stand out against all others. Above is a tier from the one example I currently own but another Sunday is high on my want list. I am hoping the next one will feature a flying brick. Krazy Kat first ran in 1913 and continued until 1944. During those 3 decades Herriman's style changed but his ability to transform and redefine sequential art never wavered. I have a preference for the earlier, scratchier art but also love how bold the later lines and rendering was. I am stopping there before I will embarrass myself, sometimes less is more.

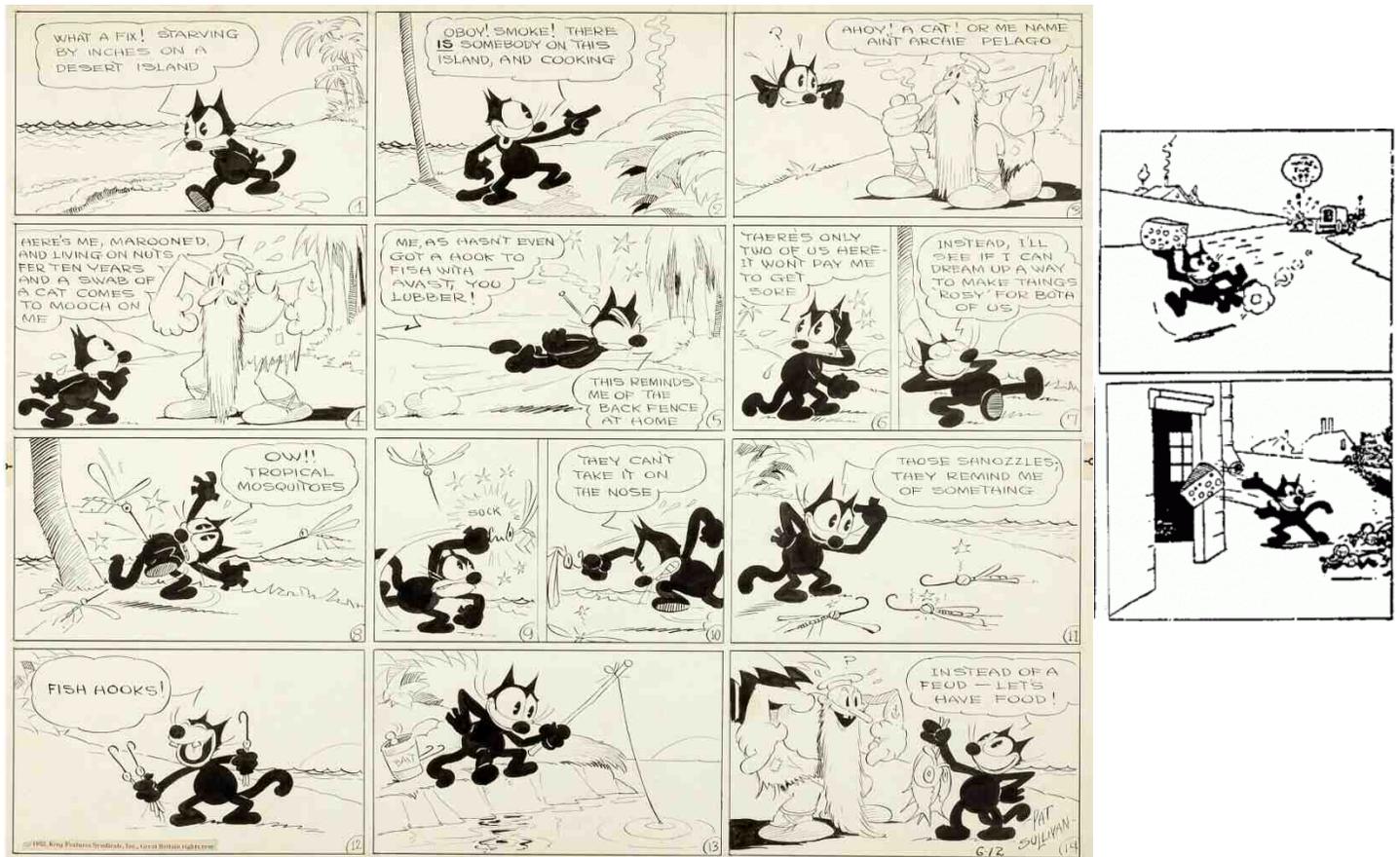


FELIX THE CAT

Felix the cat was created by Paul Sullivan in 1919 as a star of early animation and moved quickly into comic strips in 1923. Initially the strip was drawn by the creator but by 1927 Otto Messmer took over the chores. Messmer passed on the chores to his assistant Joe Oriolo in 1954 who continued it until 1966 when it ended. There was a brief rebirth of the Felix sharing a strip with Betty Boop from 1984 to 1987. There were also comic books featuring Felix. Felix seemed to get around more than most of the other comic cats. The exact credits to Felix's creation are a bit controversial and there are many that give Messmer credit. This topic alone would make an interesting article but that is for another day. My 1937 example is below which has some nice Felix images but does not show the ingenuity and energy of some of the more dynamic episodes. Like Peanuts and Nancy, Felix is an example of a simple character design that could be employed in many different ways and would be visually comprehensible. I do admit



to cheating a bit to squeeze Felix in, he technically started in animation but to me he has always been more of a comic than a cartoon. Below a Sunday from 1932 and two panels from a Sunday from 1923, his debut year. I think the animation background of Felix comes through in the art as his antics and body language are the most dynamic of all the cats.



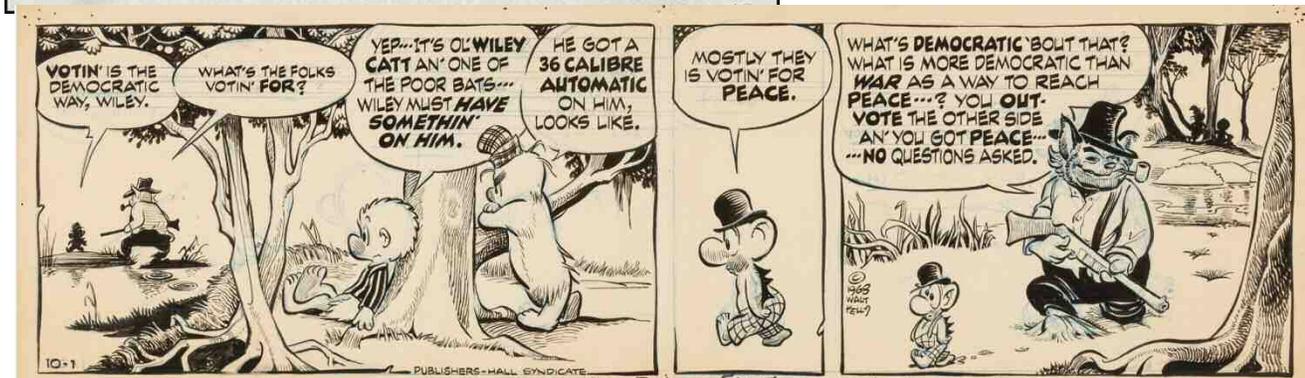
POGO

While Pogo was a possum, there were a few reoccurring cats in the strip including Tammananny Tiger, Wiley Catt and Butch. Tammananny Tiger was a political advisor of sorts and the name and character has ties to previous works by Thomas Nast. Here is one of



my few Pogo pieces that also happens to feature the Tiger. I must admit, I got this one more for the fantastic lettering and as a fun example.

Wiley cat was a gun-toting hillbilly menace and Butch was a brick throwing house cat, a bit of homage to Crazy Kat and his bricks and gender ambiguity. So, I guess 3 more copy cats of sorts. The following Pogos are not in my collection. Perhaps the example of Wiley is a bit too timely and political given the recent elections but when was Kelly not political and timely?



HEATHCLIFF

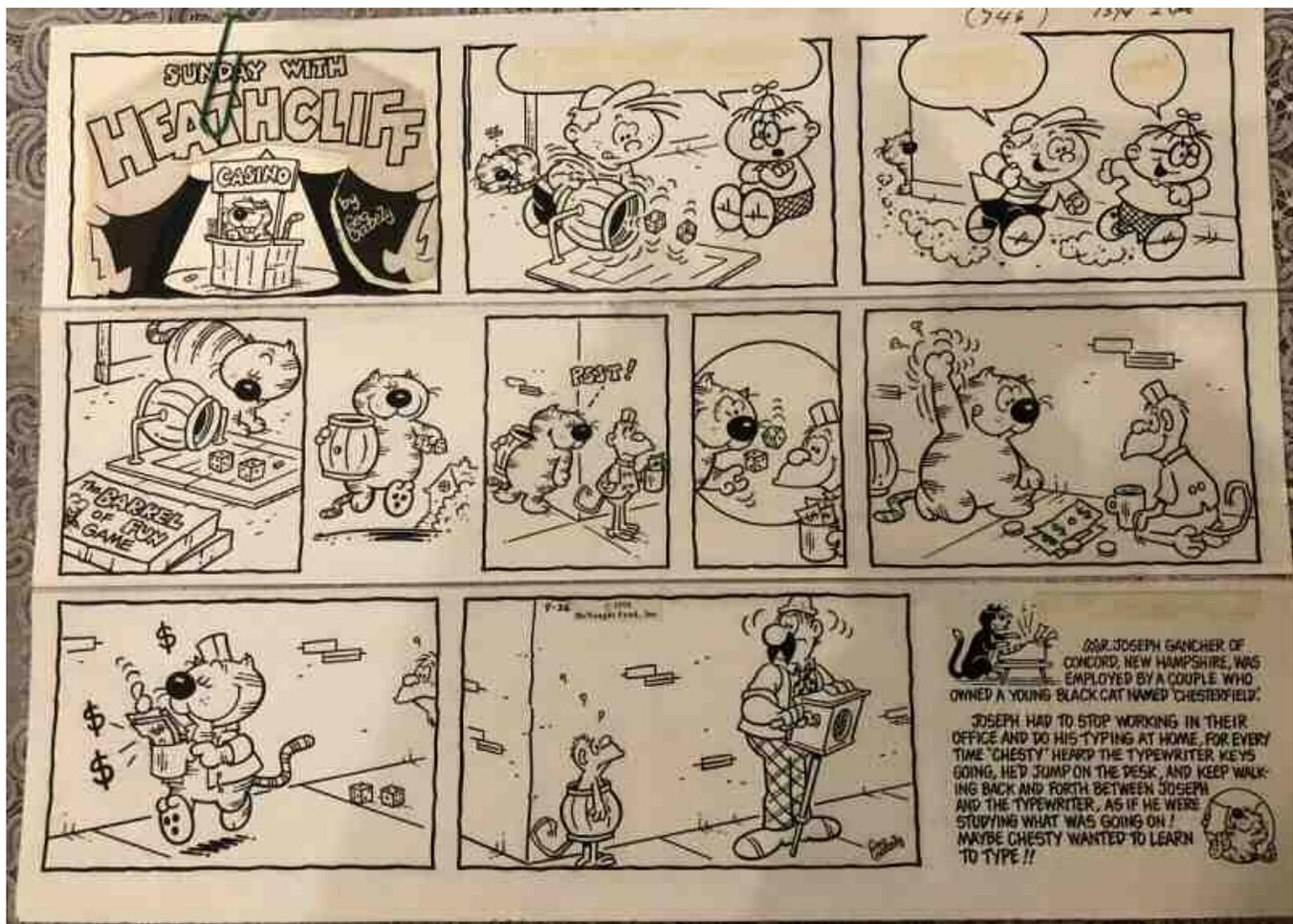
Heathcliff was a huge success created by George Gately in 1973 and went on to be syndicated in over 1000 papers at its peak. Peter Gallagher, Gately's nephew took over the artistic duties in 1988. Heathcliff was mostly a single panel gag cartoon in the dailies but on



Sundays would transform into a full comic strip Sunday. Heathcliff was a cool cat, not infrequently wearing a leather jacket whose time was spent harassing fishmongers, milkmen, local dogs, neighbours, garbage cans and romancing his Sonja, his love interest. I don't have an original Heathcliff in my collection and really don't recall seeing many available until just recently. I recall reading Heathcliff, the first cat with a strong attitude. I'd almost say Heathcliff was to cats what



Snoopy was to dogs in terms of creating a persona. Heathcliff was well merchandised and was turned into an animated series as well as a film and a video game.

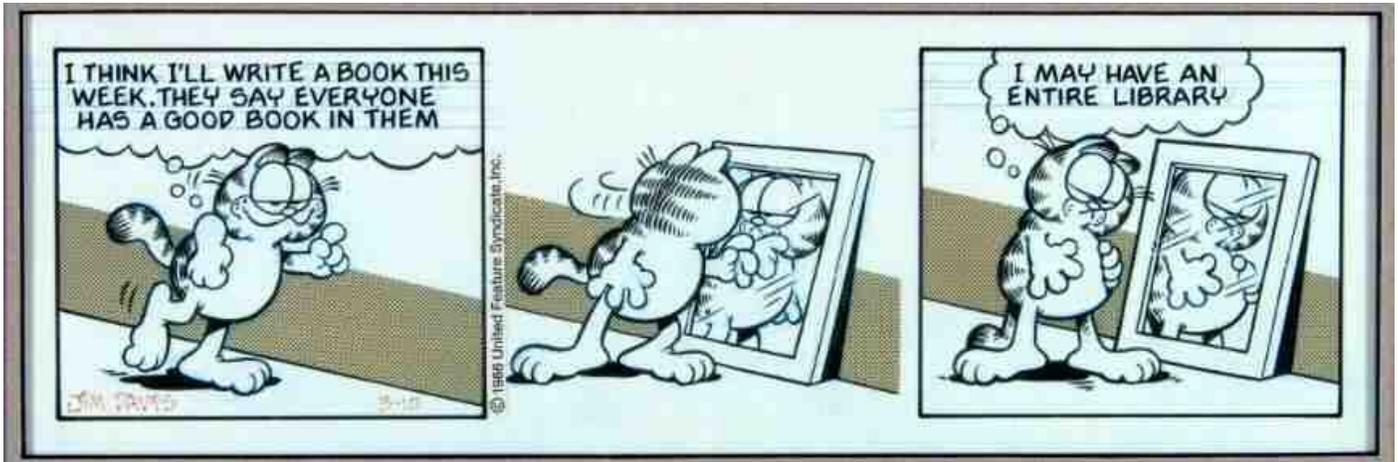




Garfield is arguably the most successful cartoon cat of all time. He is certainly better known than Krazy by the general public and I'd hazard a guess even more known today than Tom or Sylvester. It is hard not to see Garfield as a copycat of Heathcliff. There are many similarities in terms of design but more importantly in attitude. I always thought Garfield was better drawn and was funnier so to my 8 year old brain, it was no contest

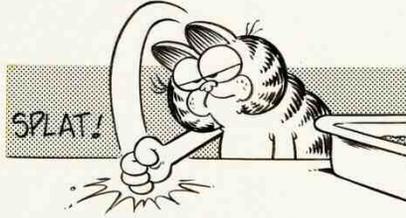
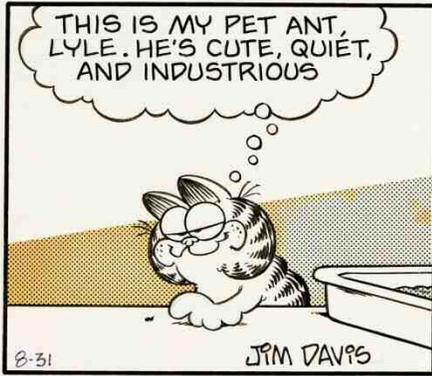


when the two were out at the same time as to which I preferred. Looking back, I still like Garfield jokes better but the cartooning of Gately was a lot more fun and involved. Here are the Garfields I own. The one from 1986 is one I have had for over a decade and the other two are courtesy of the Jim Davis auction dumps on Heritage. Although the prices on early dailies have held consistently, the later ones are a real bargain now but not of interest to me. My first one was not inexpensive but I liked the theme and gag. I know many see Garfield as being mundane and I'd have trouble arguing against that but there was something about this fat lazy cat that connected with me and I was obviously not alone as it

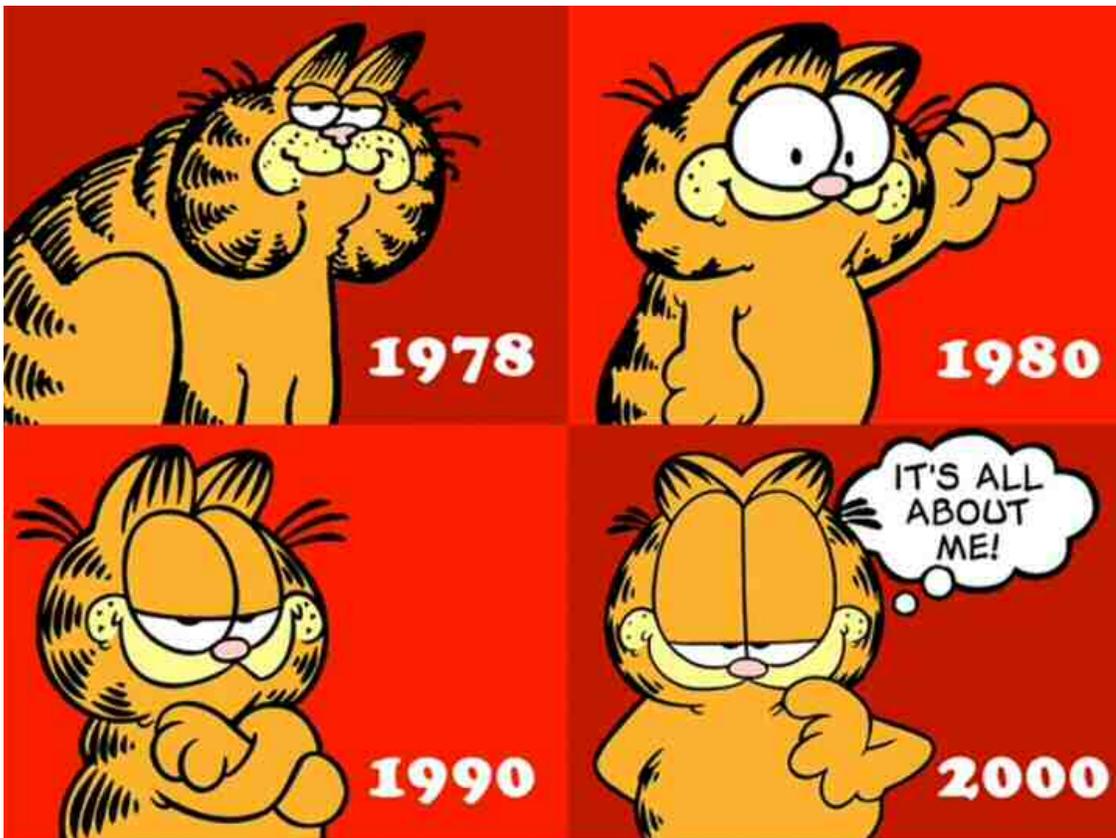


grew into one of the biggest comic strip related franchises of all time. In addition to the strips making its way into over 2600 newspapers, there have been books, 5 movies, television shows and 3 video games plus more toys, book marks, mugs and merchandise than you could imagine. According to Licensing International, Garfield makes \$750 million to a \$1 billion in sales every year! Jim Davis has a net worth of \$800 million according to Celebrity Net.





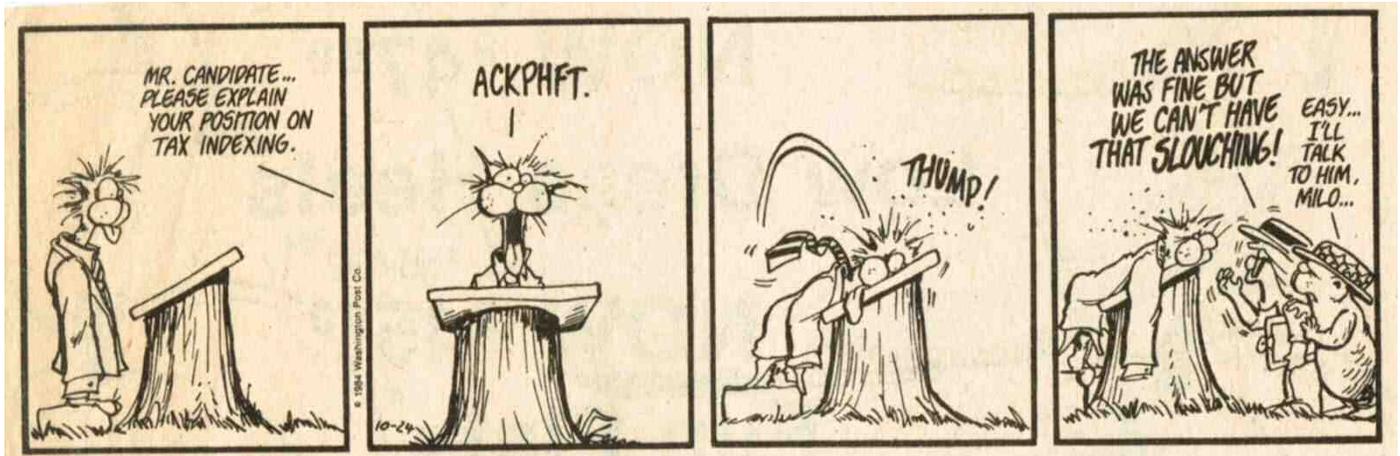
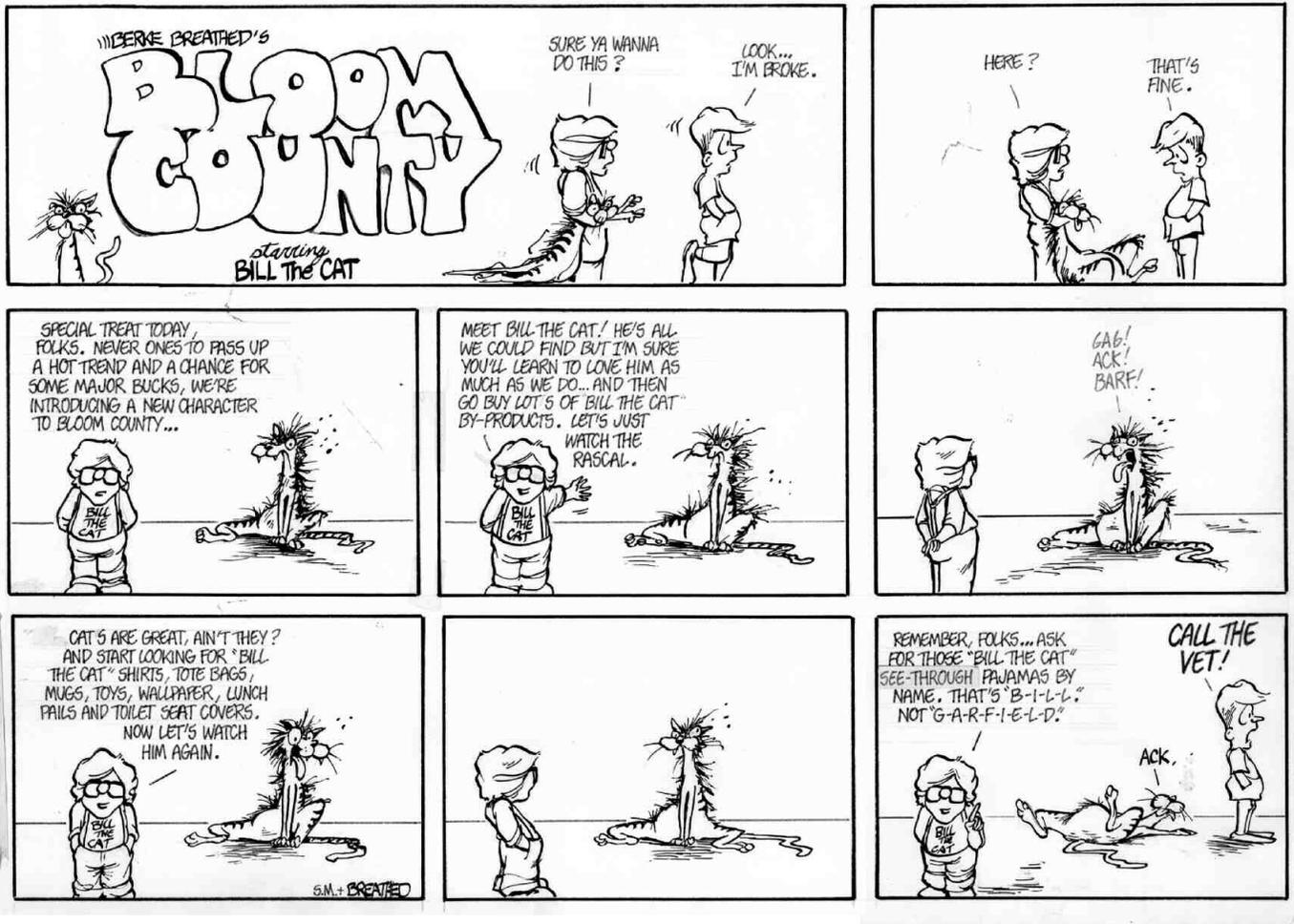
There was a triangle of sorts here with Jon, Odie and Garfield and the gags revolved around food, mailmen, dog/cat rivalry and Garfield's general contempt for humans. Below is a fun mashup I found on the internet, I am not sure who created it but I thought it was appropriate for my copycat submission.



There is a fun site, Garfield Minus Garfield that takes Garfield strips and removes the main character from them for some really interesting results. Here are some fun Garfield facts. The strip was originally meant to focus on Jon who was a cartoonist. Garfield walked on four legs until about 1984 then he started to walk upright. The first appearance of Lasagna was July 15th, 1978.

BLOOM COUNTY

Bill the Cat was a regular in Berkeley Breathed's Bloom County series. The series ran from 1980 to 1989 and again in 2015. The strip originates from Burke's university strip, The Academia Waltz which caught the eye of the Washington Post and he was recruited to do a nationally syndicated series. Bill is described as a flea-bitten, filthy, scraggly, orange tabby that was meant to be the antithesis of Garfield. Bill's vocabulary was limited to Ack and Pbthhh and he was often in a near catatonic state. I have had some Bloom County in my collection but none with Bill the cat. Below is a piece of art owned by our own Gary Land.



Calvin and Hobbes

To Tiger or not to Tiger...I decided to include the big cat in my survey of comic strip cats. I literally grew up reading comic strips and remember what a brilliant strip Calvin and Hobbes was when it first came out in 1985 and it was the first time I clipped comic strips other than the occasional favorite gag and that was because they were all favorites! I read and followed the strip every day and read and collected the reprint volumes as they came out as I might have missed a few dailies here and there. It was bliss. I am sure everyone here felt the same way but the relationship between the boy and his stuffed tiger was pure magic. Even today,



the strip holds up as one of the high points in comic art history. Having had the good fortune to visit the Billy Ireland Museum, I have seen several dozen originals in person and they are a marvel to see not just because of the content but the magic inking and layouts of Watterson come to life. The character for Hobbes was inspired by Watterson's



cat Sprite and the naming was after a 17th century philosopher. Hobbes would often see the potential consequences of the actions him and Calvin would embark upon but rarely intervened. Bill Watterson shunned the attention the strip brought and turned down the scores of marketing and merchandising offers that flooded in. He also ended the strip at a high point (2400 papers) in its popularity

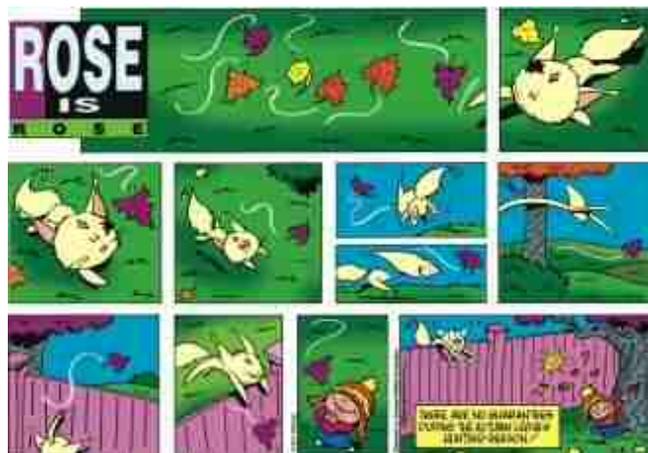
leaving millions of fans wanting more. He really was nearly monastic in his discipline and principles. Here are some scans of originals. Very few originals exist in collections outside of the Billy Ireland Museum where Watterson gifted all his art to. I still think owning one of these one day would be the cat's meow.



ROSE IS ROSE

Rose is Rose is a strip I have little familiarity with. Pat Brady created this strip in April of 1984 turning over the art and continuation of the strip to Dom Wimmer in 2005. The strip features Rose and Jimbo and their son Pasquale and their cat Peekaboo.

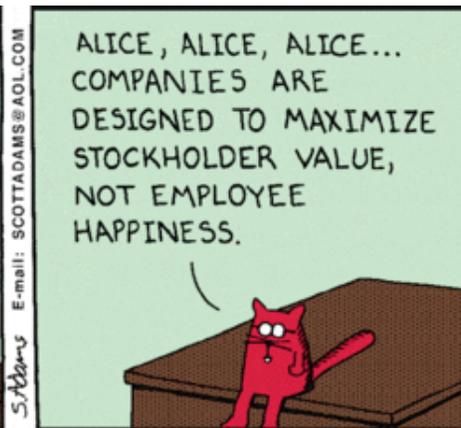
Peekaboo seems to be a much more playful and curious cat that we have seen in comics before. Also, Peekaboo is a light yellow in color shunning the orange or white/black of most of the other cats we have seen before.

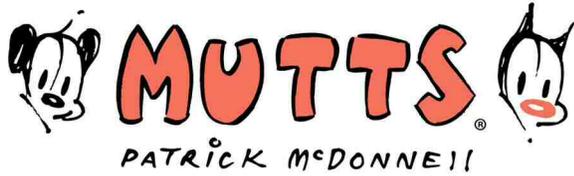


DILBERT™

Catbert is a reoccurring character in Scott Adams's Dilbert strip. Although the strip started in 1989, Catbert's first appearance was in September of 1994 when he attacked Ratbert and was later made homeless by Dogbert. The cat initially had

no name but fans wrote in asking for more Catbert and so he reappeared as the Evil Director of Human Resources. Other than being nasty and indifferent to humans, I don't think Catbert had another prior feline that he was modelled after. No Dilbert in my collection either...I think it is time I did some CATch up. Dilbert and the characters antics usually take place in the workplace and center around frustrations with corporate culture of which Catbert is often the mastermind behind. There are a few originals by Scott Adams in collections but they are not common and sell for quite high prices at auction. I have seen some images of examples that are terribly faded and I assume that marker was used. I was not able to find any images of originals with Catbert and so here are a few dailies with the feline terror.





MUTTS
PATRICK McDONNELL

Mooch from Mutts is a "tuxedo cat" and best friends with Earl, the main pup. I was an immediate fan of Mutts when it debuted and understood the deep love of comics and comic history Pat McDonnell had in his heart. The content is light on the surface but often is much deeper than it first appears. Many homages to

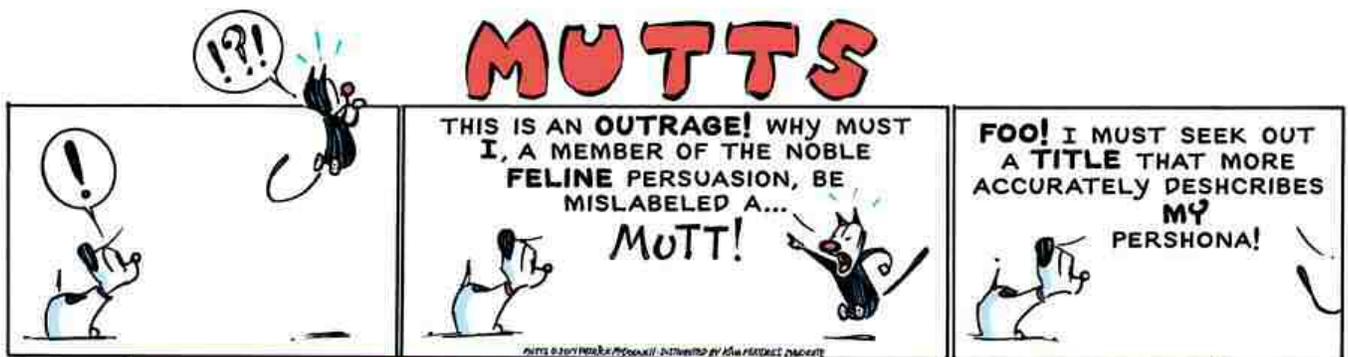
classic comic strips through the series including to Herriman, Watterson, King and Schulz. Although not a published

piece, I do have one specialty piece by Patrick in my collection with a little Mooch and Earl character sketch with the signature. McDonnell is very active in fund raising and charity work for humane societies and animal rescue efforts. Sept 5, 1994 was when the first Mutts was printed. The reoccurring theme of relationship triangles is also present within Mutts with Mooch, Earl and Earl's human Ozzie.



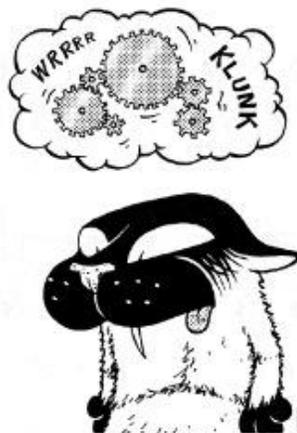
"GONE WITH THE CRAB"

Patrick McDonnell 04



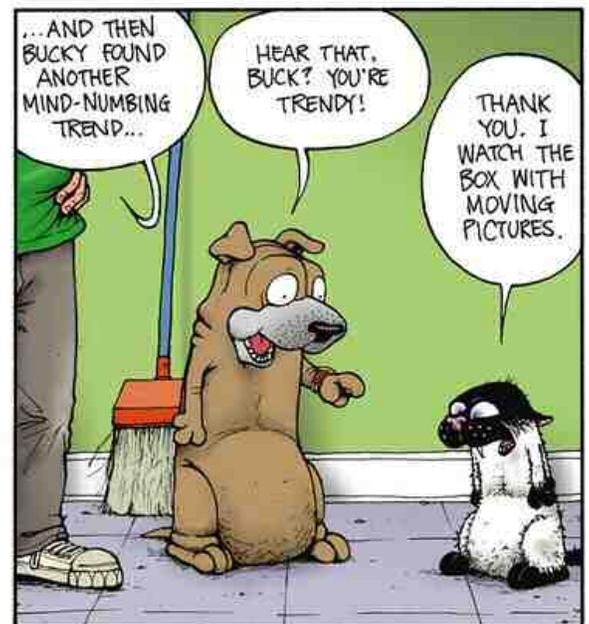
GET FUZZY

Bucky Cat along with Satchel Pooch and Rob Wilco make up the trio who inhabit the Get Fuzzy comic strip. This strip by Darby Conley ran from Sept 1999 to a hiatus that began in 2013. Best described as a defiant, aggressive cynical Siamese Cat with a missing canine tooth. Much of the humor from Bucky comes from his sense of superiority to every one around him and his attempts to do them harm. The self centered cat exploits the trusting nature of its canine co-dweller. There is often a lot of fun when the cat uses the wrong words or misuses the right words. When out of the house, Bucky is often carried around in a baby carrier to keep it out of trouble. Bucky does have a small bear toy he lavishes affection on when no one is watching. To the best of my knowledge, Get Fuzzy artwork is rare in collections and I don't recall having seen any for sale in the past.



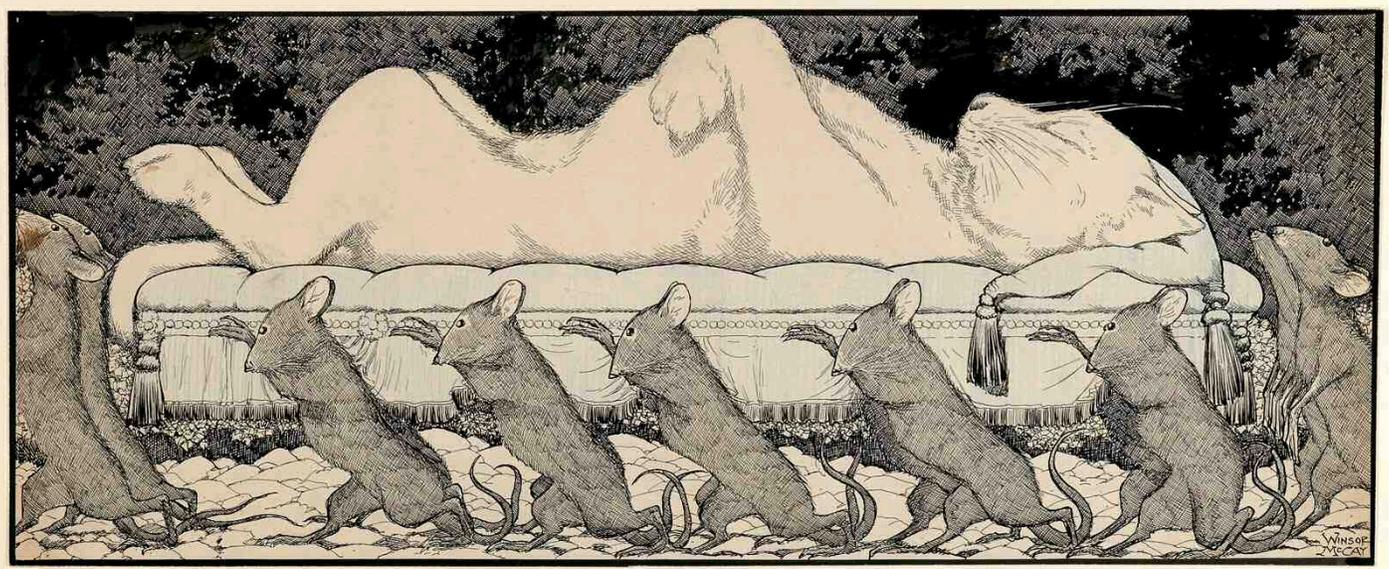
GET FUZZY

BY DARBY CONLEY



That is my survey of cats in comic strips. I purposefully avoided all the comics that came from animation like Tom and Jerry, Sylvester, Stimpny and the likes as well as cats that came from comics like Fritz, Tigress, Omaha, Blacksad, Chi, Luna, Streaky, Master Ren and so many others. Also there are all those characters who take on feline costumes like Catwoman, Cheetah, Black Cat and I am sure we could probably come up with quite a list. It was too long and being a bit of scaredy cat at how out of control all of that might get, I decided to catalog comic strip cats. I admit that Felix is a bit of a cheat but I always associated the character as a strip more than anything else. I can't tell you how much fun it was doing research for this and going down rabbit holes of reading around each strip as I looked for examples to include. As you have probably noticed, I have tried to employ as many puns and feline metaphors as I could without creating a CATastrophe. I did come to some insights into comic strip cats. There are a lot of relationships with owners and dogs as the source of humor reaffirming the Crazy Kat love/hate triangle works. Cats tend to be black and white or orange for the most part. Cats in recent years are often portrayed as indifferent to humans and a bit dangerous which is my general impression of the species and I wonder how much comic strips led to this perception of mine.

Early in my piece, I did say I was forced to skip the great Winsor McCay but thought I'd share this one interesting illustration circa a 1920 by McCay entitled "Cat Funeral" putting my Cat portion of the article to rest.



"There's an old saying in Tennessee — I know it's in Texas, probably in Tennessee — that says, fool me once, shame on — shame on you. Fool me — you can't get fooled again."

— **George W. Bush**

It is time to switch to the copy aspect of the submission and reflect on some fraudulent pieces. The topic is Fakes and Forgeries. I have talked at length about the forgeries in my collection and although prefer to not dredge up those painful lessons I hope I have learned, I will present a few of them here again. I wrote about this in 2012 so it has been a while. Heeding the former President's words above, with very few exceptions, I will not buy unpublished material or sketches. I will take every piece of art I acquire that is framed out of frame and I will look at each piece under a magnifying glass upon its arrival. I will not buy anything from a seller offering art by Picasso, Miro, Chagall and others in addition to comic art.

I thought I'd have some fun with the forgery and copycat theme. I hope this isn't crossing the line too far. If I offend anyone's sensibilities, my apologies and I blame it on COVID 19. For all of those that believe they have successfully navigated collecting to have avoided forgeries thus far, some bad news for you, you now own at least one. You will all find a **Certificate of Authenticity** to go along with some copied cats. I have a series of drawings of cats of questionable origin that I might have gotten at a book fair in Greenwich Village back in the early 70's. I was four years old so the details are a bit fuzzy and one must ignore the fact that two of the characters wouldn't have been created for several more years. Perhaps they were prototypes. Anyway, you will each get one of either a Garfield, a

Cat in the Hat or Calvin and Hobbes. I did think about printing the **Certificates of Authenticity** on toilet paper to reflect their true value but the logistics of that was too daunting. I thought it might be a fun way to drive home the fact that our hobby is full of forgeries and fakes. To those of us with some experience with art, some are laughable but to someone who doesn't know to be careful and doesn't know what to watch out for, they can be very successful in getting people to part with their hard earned money. I have seen items I would not touch hanging framed in some of the animation galleries. I find it hard to imagine that each of these galleries has dozens of Kane Batmans and Shuster Supermans, but perhaps they were there at that same book fair I was at back in the day.

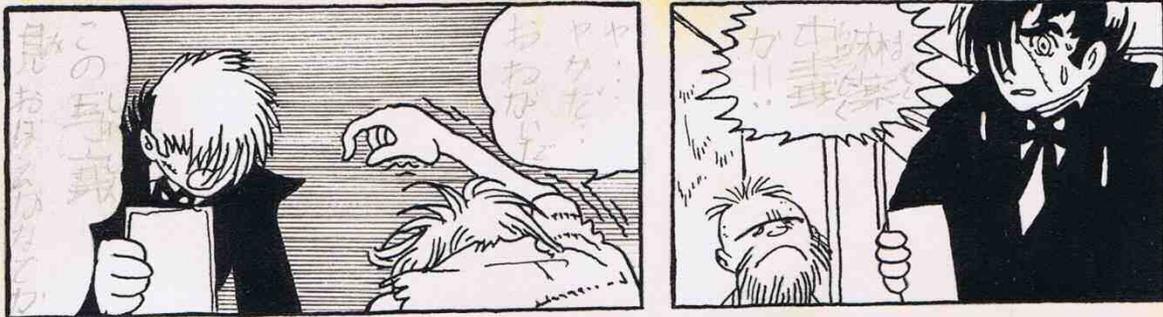
Some of the telltale signs of forgeries are misspelled names, hesitant lines, wrong style, done in books published after creator's death, poorly done signature and for me one of the big red flags is a certificate of authenticity. In some cases where a reputable gallery who represent artists and the COA is signed by the artist it is a thing of value and provenance, but that is a cat of a different color. The internet galleries and ebay sellers who offer certificate of authenticities already make me nervous. Usually it is worded such that if at some point you can prove that the piece you got is a forgery or misrepresented, they will give you your money back assuming they are still in business under the same name. As mentioned above, I won't buy an unpublished piece unless I am getting it from the artist or a collector I trust who can verify they got it directly from the artist. There are more fakes by some artists like Dr. Seuss, Bill Watterson, Charles Schulz, Matt Groening and others that I suspect they outnumber legitimate pieces by as high as 1000 to 1 in the case of Watterson. To spot a forgery may take a bit of work.

Research the artist and their style and make sure what you are looking at is consistent with that style. Look at the signature for fluidity and style. Look at the age of the paper/media to see if it matches with what you expect for the age of the piece. If there is provenance, verify it directly if you can. Hold pieces up to light to see if there are any telltale signs of being copies/prints. Look at the line work and art under a magnifying glass as some modern printers can do very good line replication including pencil marks. Consider the source the art is coming to you from and their reputation which includes auction houses. If it seems too good to be true, it is 100% too good to be true.

Here is a piece that still challenges me. I believe it is a forgery. I bought this Tezuka Black Jack page from a French collector in 2011. At that time a few other high end manga pages had been showing up in the European market including pages from Akira by Otomo and Lone Wolf and Cub interior pages by Kojima. These pieces really didn't exist in private collections until a few started trickling out. Those that had those pages were very tight lipped about where the pages came from. I was able to trace the source back to Japan and a company called Manga Legends. While in contact with them via emails, I had several conversations with an employee and the manager of the company about manga art. I was in the process of buying an Otomo page when some red flags had started to appear. I had been talking with several friends in Europe and Japan at the time about these pages and how odd it was that they were only being offered overseas. With some further investigation and discussion between us we came to the conclusion that the sellers were in Japan but not Japanese but pretending to be. This was based on the language they were using in both English and Japanese. They had claimed to be an affiliate of Animate, a large Japanese Manga corporation but when friends in Japan inquired this information was not able to be verified. Prior to me getting involved they had sold probably 30 pages over the previous 2 years to various collectors. Once I started to get worried, I asked for a refund of the several thousand I sent them and they refunded me right away. They also had some strict rules around ownership about the art they were selling. These included not discussing the source with anyone else and asking permission before you sold the piece in the future. The website they had was traced back to a French national in Japan who had worked in the manga industry (and who later ran for government in France a few years ago as part of the populist push). I am quoted several times in the article as the collector who didn't want to be identified and many of the emails were those from my correspondence with the company. You can read the online article with more details here. You will see some familiar names mentioned in the article.

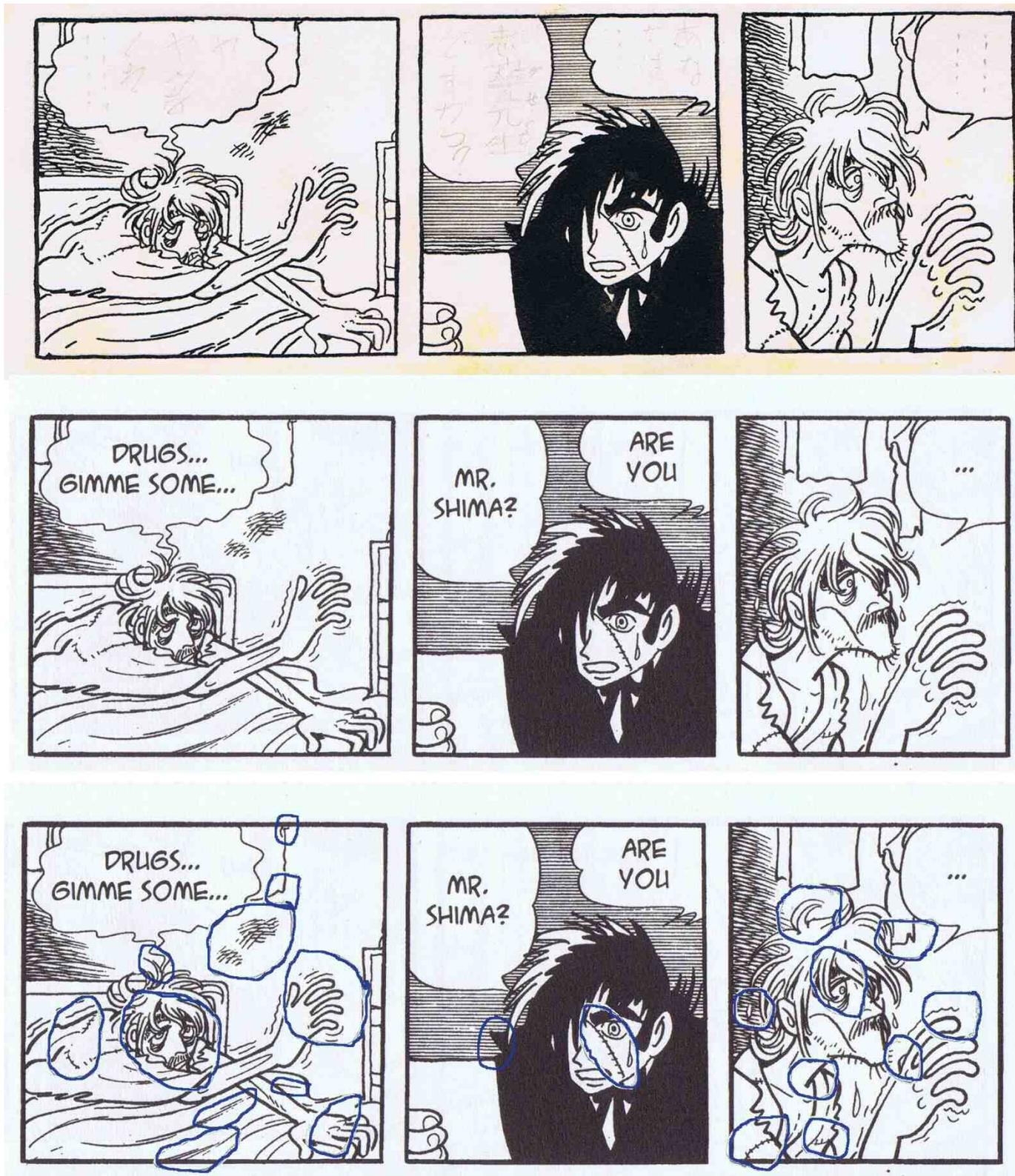
<https://www.hoodedutilitarian.com/2011/06/manga-legends-just-what-are-they-selling/>

So, my page is featured prominently and when Tezuka Productions was asked about my particular piece, they did not believe it was the original page based on the fact that they believe they hold all original Tezuka published pages from these series. I have since heard some conjecture from another Italian collector who also owns some of these Manga Legends pieces that these might have been pages stolen by assistants at some point. I am not sure that makes this any better. I will tell you my page looks great! It looks like the real deal. I have had it framed and on my wall since I



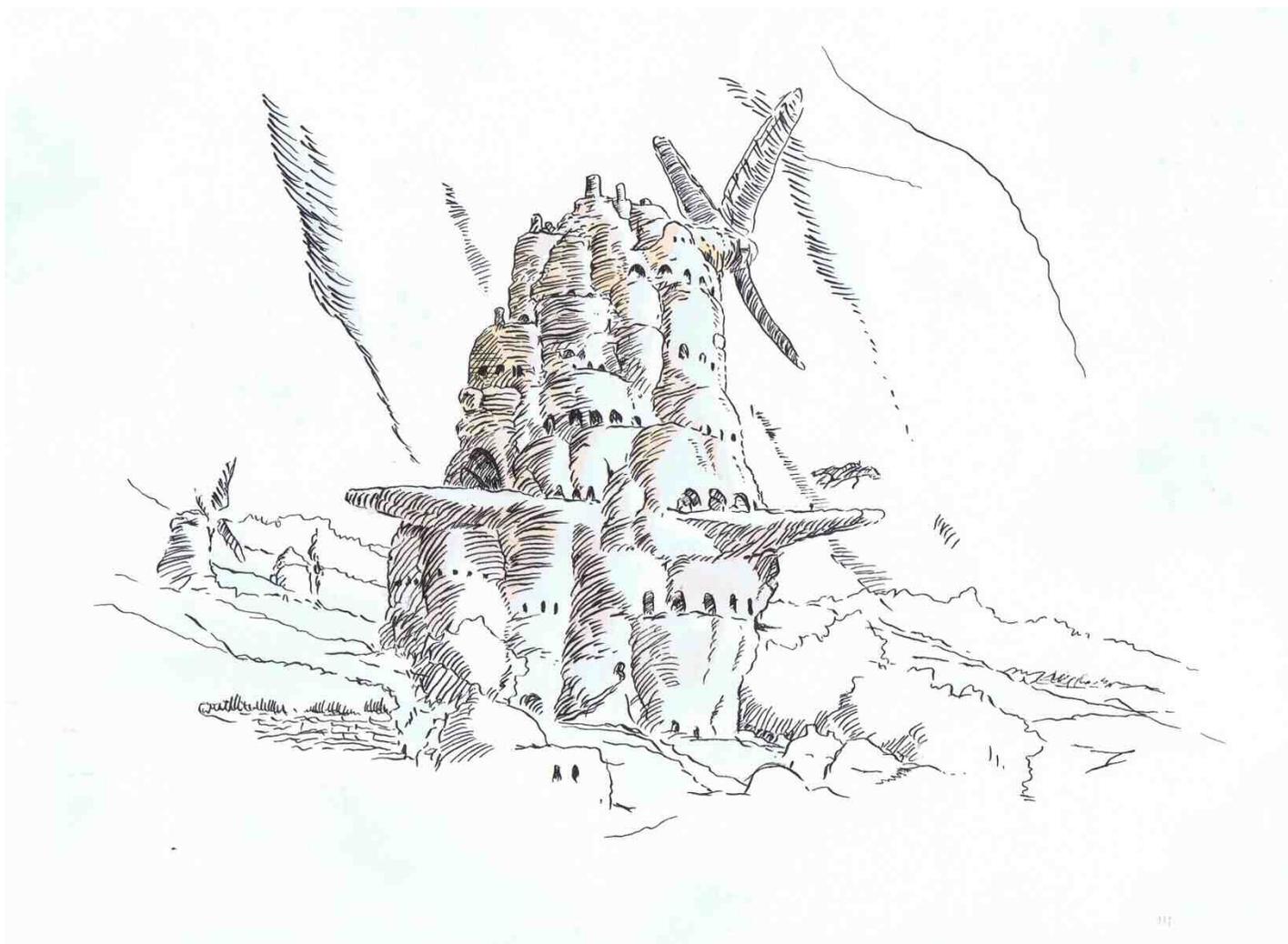
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through fine, detailed comparison that differences can be seen. Some of these could be attributed to the printing process but I think if you look close enough you will see there are enough small, subtle things that you cannot just explain away. The other tiers have similar inconsistencies.

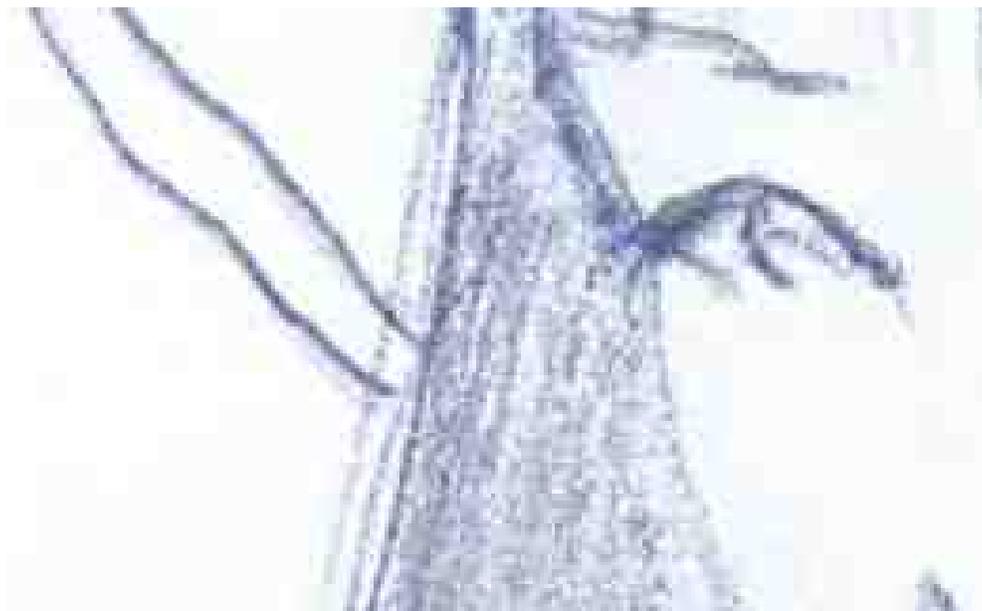


As part of that same deal with the French collector, I got a second Manga Legends piece, a nice Miyazaki illustration from Nausicaa. Also a forgery. Once I had enough evidence I went back to the French collector to try and get a refund but he was not in a financial position to do that. As a friendly settlement, I received several pieces of art and I

was able to retain the forgeries in my collection. I lost thousands in the whole deal but hopefully a lesson I learned. Education has its costs and sometimes the tuition is not official.

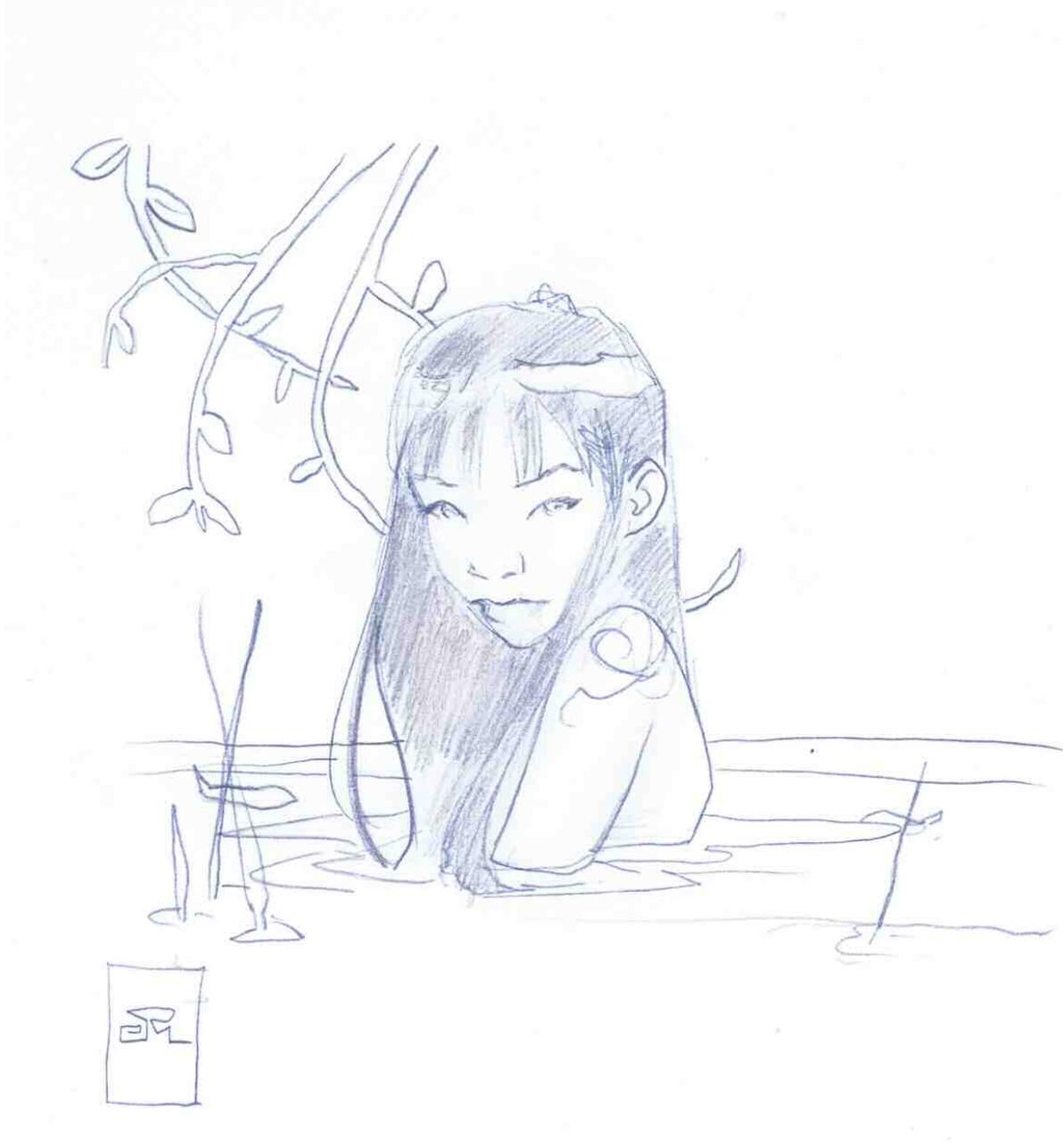


Here is another one that fooled me. It is a Joshua Middleton sketch I bought off of ebay from a US seller. I am a huge fan of Josh's work and in particular love anything to do with his original creator owned project, Sky Between the Branches. When I saw a sketch show up, I bid on it and won it for a few hundred dollars. When I got it, it looked



great and it went into my portfolio. A few months after posting in on comicartfans.com, I got a message saying there were similarities between it and two other Middleton sketches. I then started looking closer. On first glance, the pencil lines look

perfect but once you take out the magnifying glass, you can see inkjet splatter. It is not even a forgery, it is a print out that fooled me and it was done to defraud me. By the point I found out what I had, it was beyond the window for paypal or ebay to do anything. I did try and contact the seller but no response and then his ebay ID disappeared. I wonder how many others like this are out there.



Next up is a Bisley piece. I got this piece from a reputable former dealer as part of a bigger trade deal. He too got it from someone. It is a vintage Lobo drawing and it looked like Biz to me at the time. After someone else asked Simon about it he said it wasn't by him but I have understood he later changed that opinion. If you have ever met Simon in person as I have, perhaps you would also get the sense that his memory may not always spot on for various reasons. In the end, what I believe this piece to be is partially by Simon and then finished by an unknown amateur artist for the body portion of the drawing. I am in the process of selling it and it is very clearly marked as a likely forgery in my listing. The buyer has even quoted that in his request to buy the art. Like the Tezuka, I kept the piece because it looks good. It sold for \$100 with full disclosure although I have about \$800 into the piece a decade ago. Another expensive lesson although I am not sure what I learned from this one other than perhaps reinforcing my aversion to unpublished sketches.



Next up are three pieces that came from the same seller. These early comic art forgeries done in the mid to late 60's where they were sold at a convention. The person I bought them from had bought them from the original buyer at the show. The original buyer was duped but when I got them, they were fully disclosed as forgeries. They are 100% original art including the lettering. Two Terry and Pirates dailies and a Flash Gordon Sunday. They are fun pieces to own as the content is in keeping with my collecting interests. The Flash Gordon is huge and came framed (glass broke) so it is still matted and in the frame. The Terrys are done on thicker Bainbridge art board and at a size different from what Caniff would use...perhaps if you had never seen original art before and these were shown to you, you would believe these were real. I don't know if they were by Mark Landis as I have not seen enough of his work to compare to. I have written on the back in pen the history of these pieces and clearly stated they are forgeries so no one tries to misrepresent them in the future.



That is all that comes to mind as far as recent or current forgeries in my collection. I did write about a few others in the last article but those were not true forgeries or pieces made to defraud. They were just pieces that were likely partially production art/stat that were not fully disclosed to me at the time I bought. Most of them have moved on to other collections as gifts or with full disclosure.

I have had too many misrepresented or misattributed pieces to count. I seem to be on the wrong end of most reattributions. My tuition for the longitudinal course on forgeries and fakes in this hobby has been an expensive one. Perhaps I can save some of you the same tuition with the notes I have taken. I have had some near misses that my previous experiences had helped me out with. There was a French cartoonist who was forging Moebius and a few classic Franco-Belgian artists. I almost traded 3 good pieces to him for 2 of the forgeries but there were red flags with the art and I started talking to a friend in France who was also in the process of making a deal with this same guy. Too many coincidences and we both backed out of the deal only to hear reports from those that had been cheated by him over the next few months. One last piece to bring this submission full circle, the top two tiers from a Buster Brown Sunday that Hakes Auction House will have sold by the time this article sees prints. It is a good illustration of how we should learn from the mistakes of others rather than having to learn the hard way. It also reaffirms my mistrust of felines. The rest of the Sunday is fantastic too and perhaps I'll be the new owner in a few weeks 😊

DEEP IN THE WATERY WORLD OF THE SEA FOLK.....

YOU WERE TOO HANDSOME TO DROWN, SO WE CHANGED YOUR LUNGS TO BREATHE WATER.....

BUT...NO, YOU CAN'T DO THAT! CHANGE ME BACK QUICK!



NOTHING CAN CHANGE YOU BACK...YOU ARE ONE OF US FOREVER!

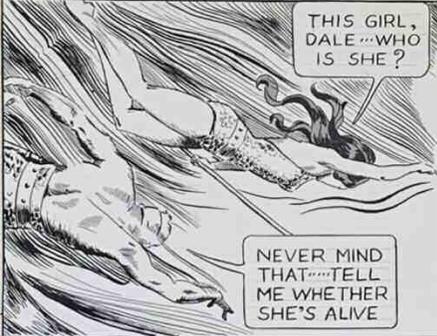
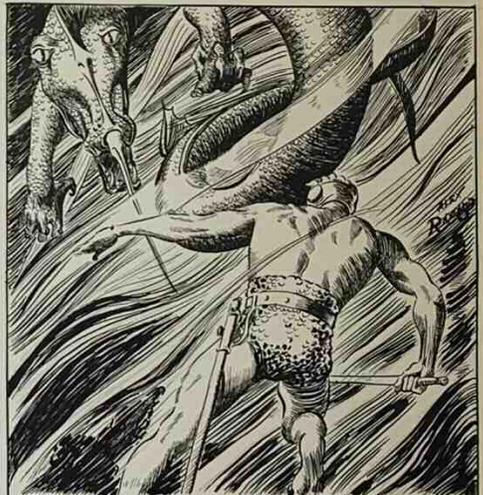
DOOMED TO A FISH'S LIFE! NEVER TO WALK IN THE OPEN AIR!...AND SEPARATED FROM DALE FOREVER!



PLEASE DON'T BEAR A GRUDGE...YOU'D HAVE DIED, IF IT WERE NOT FOR US...COME, I WISH TO SEE YOUR SUNKEN SHIP.....

DID...DID YOU FIND DALE... THE GIRL I MEAN?

THE SEA-QUEEN LEADS FLASH DOWN A CORRIDOR LEADING TO THE OPEN SEA.....



THIS GIRL, DALE...WHO IS SHE?

NEVER MIND THAT...TELL ME WHETHER SHE'S ALIVE.



TRITON MEETS THEM AT THE WRECKED SHIP.....

THE WOMAN AND THE OTHER MAN ESCAPED, QUEEN UNDINA

THANK HEAVENS! DALE AND ZARKOV ARE SAFE!

WE'LL ATTEND TO THEM LATER



AS UNDINA'S SOLDIERS ARE LOOTING THE SUNKEN ROCKET-SHIP, THERE IS A TERRIFIC RUSHING SOUND...A CHARGING DEVOURSOSAURUS!.....

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SHOUTING TO THE OTHERS TO DASH FOR THE SHIP, FLASH DRAWS HIS SWORD AND WHIRLS TO FACE THE BEAST!.....

NEXT WEEK: THE CANNIBAL MONSTER!



DON'T GO IN THERE TIGE

BEWARE OF THE CAT



TIGE YOU ARE NOT BEWAREING OF THE CAT

BEWARE OF THE CAT



WHAT'S THE MATTER?

KEEP OUT OF THERE, IT'S A BAD CAT

YOU'RE HURT TIGE



HE ISN'T BEING WARE OF THE CAT EITHER.

LEAVE IT TO ME



LEAVE IT TO HIM



WHAT'S THE SWEET THOUGHT?

YOU GOING THAT YARD AND YOU LL FIND OUT WHAT THE SWEET THOUGHT IS



YOU'D BETTER STAY OUT OF THERE



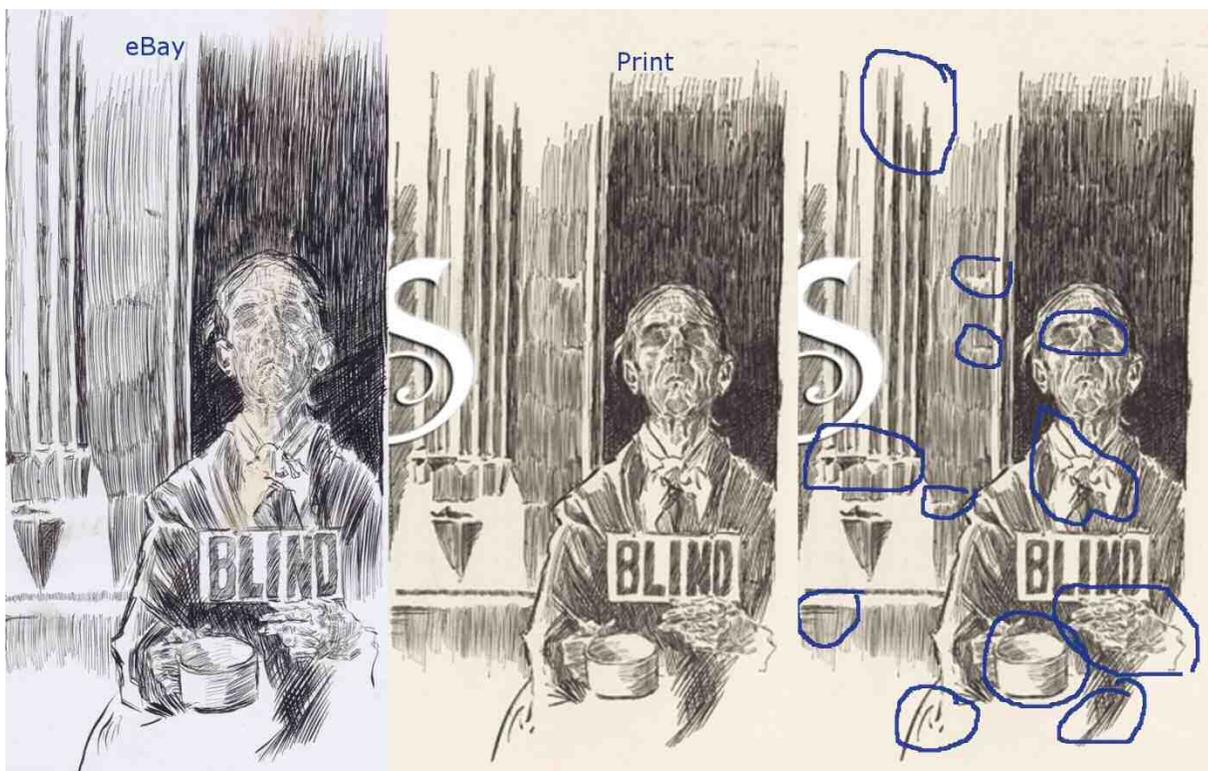
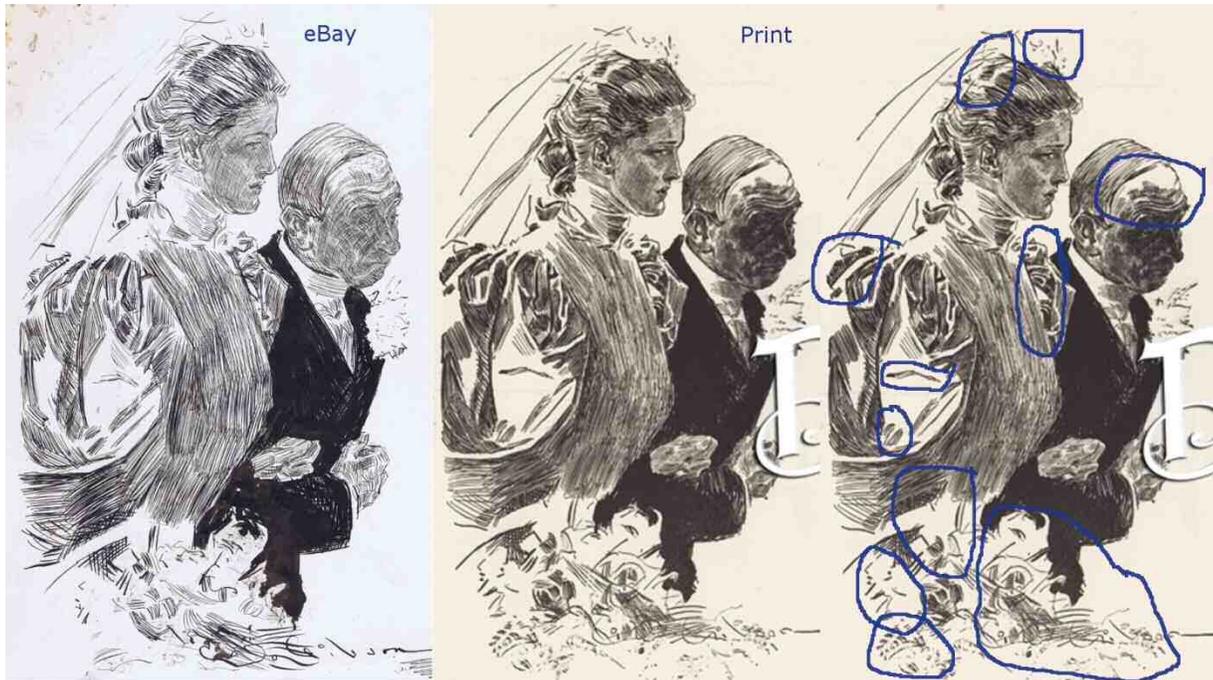
POOW

After I finished the above article, I went through another close call I'll share with you. I had seen a nice looking Charles Dana Gibson original on eBay from a reputable antique seller who did not have any questionable art by Miro, Chagall or Picasso for sale. The art looked good in the scans and I liked the theme of societal inequity and the rich being unable to see the poor. The only thing that bothered me on the scans I saw was the text and how the letters were spaced. I am well aware that Gibson had his students and many admirers copied his art. To that extent there are likely more copies of Gibson art out there than there are true originals. I knew all that but thought that this piece looked too well-done to be one of those. I decided to make an offer on eBay and it was accepted. I paid and the art was on its way to me. The art came in a nice oval frame which appealed to me too. Shipping was expensive but quick enough. I was happy when it arrived well packaged and opened it up. I was knee deep in Styrofoam popcorn and bubble wrap, but it was here. I took it out of frame to look at the art closely and it was original and on board that was of the right vintage. The



actual art was mounted for conservation on an artist board. It looks right. I took my scans and pictures and put the art back in the frame and started to think about where to put it up. I have a little library and when we first got married we bought antiques. There is a Victrola and an old 20's radio in that space along with a large high back reading chair... this would go well with the décor.

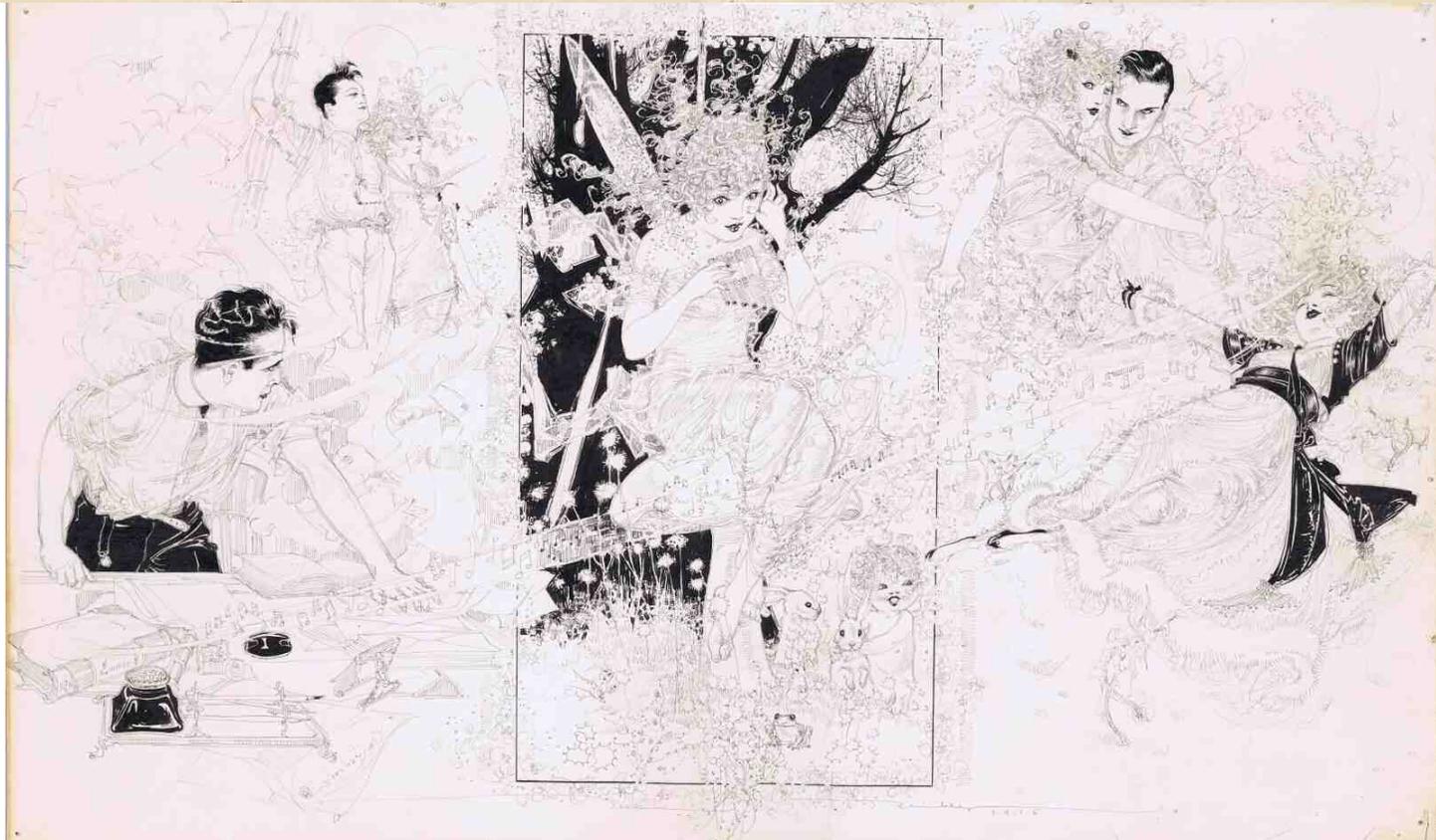
I wasn't sure about posting this one on Comcartfans website or not as it is illustration art but decided to go ahead. I had taken the meaning of the print to be as I mentioned earlier a social commentary with the one legally blind woman and the second rich lady unable to see the poverty and strife around her. Two people commented and one wondered if this was from a story about two blind women since the disabled beggar in this illustration looks more like a male. I would agree so that got me looking online for the story and I came across a person selling printed copies of Gibson art he has found in *Colliers* and *Life* magazines. Two Blind Women was among them! The image is not great and watermarked but it was enough for me to compare the art I had to it. I started to notice discrepancies right away. I will highlight some of these in subsequent images when I compare the two items. This got me worried that this was one of the student recreations that are plentiful and so I enlisted a few friends to opine on the piece. At that time I let the seller know the art arrived well packed and safe but now there was some question into if it was Gibson or not. He was very supportive after I explained my concerns and asked to be updated on what I found out.



I think, even with the small pictures above, you get a sense of the fact that there are a lot of differences. The people I asked were hedging their bets in opinions except George who had some experience with Gibson copies and he thought it was a study by someone else. George put me in touch with Roger Reed from Illustration House Gallery in NYC and he was definitive that it was a student copy. Roger had actually owned the original for a number of years and the size of the piece was different. The only scan he had handy of the true original was low resolution and is included here. It becomes rapidly apparent how much better the real Gibson looks and certainly different from what I had in front of me. The features on the faces of the two aristocrats are so much cleaner and elegant. The line work is the same as the printed piece. Roger mentioned that many times the Gibson student works are smaller in size since they were working from printed images and didn't know the size at which he normally worked at. Having just written this piece on fakes, the topic was on my mind and with some background knowledge of Gibson, I was vigilant and was still almost fooled. I might have to expand my criteria from not buying unpublished art to include not buying published art I can't find a published reference of to compare to. The seller, to his credit was quick to accept the decision and asked for guidance on how it should be listed going forward so as not to misrepresent it. I don't believe the seller was out to defraud nor is it likely the person who he got the art from knew either. If I were the owner of this piece I would have written on the back of it what it is but it was not mine to do so.



So in this case, a CFA-APA article actually saved me money whereas my previous article on Flappers...not so much. It has proven to be one of my most expensive as in the intervening months I have added two Brinkley Girl illustrations, a fun 1928 Tillie the Toiler daily, two new Winnie Winkle early dailies('21 and '23) and two Dumb Dora dailies...one by Young and another by Fung('28 and '31 respectively). The Nell Brinkley pieces are pretty rare. Swann has only had one or two in the past and only four appear in Heritage archives. Nell was just inducted into the Will Eisner Comic Hall of Fame this past June recognizing her for pioneering work that I have covered in my Women in Comics submission. See the next few images for these new additions. With each topic I cover, I do find that it does affect my collecting. I am hoping if it does after this article it will be more in the theme of cats rather than forgeries.





WINNIE WINKLE, THE DREAMWALKER

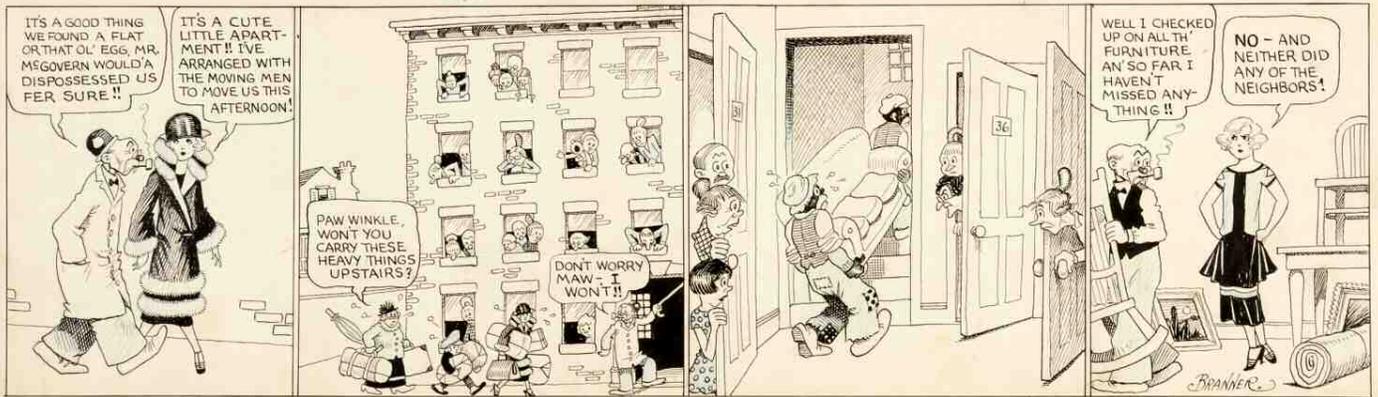
March 17 '21

The Life was Inaudible.



Fri - Dec 5, 1924

The Wife and the Fool.



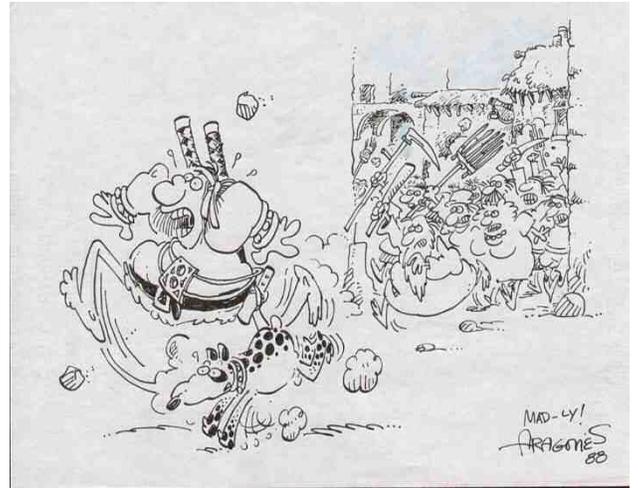
And then what she told!



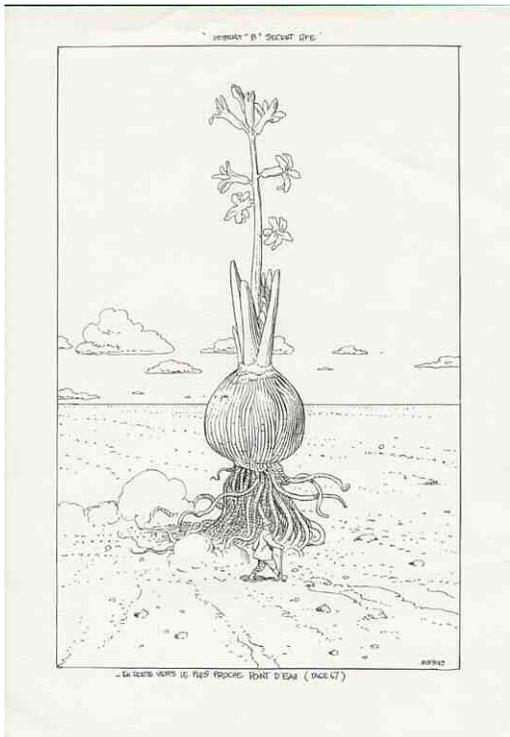


Just when I thought I was done... two more pieces have come up that fit in the realm of this article. Perhaps that is one of the downfalls or the bonuses of writing your articles early, new things arise to discuss.

Here is a Sergio Aragones piece I bought in my first year or two of collecting. I probably paid very little for it and it was my first piece by Sergio. 20 years later, I had someone ask me if they could buy it. I gave them a price and took it out of the portfolio to photograph for them and noticed the blacks didn't look right. A quick look under the magnifying glass confirmed my suspicion, it was a printed image that Sergio had hand colored and signed but was not art. Not a forgery but a piece that was likely misrepresented to me at the time of purchase either by accident or to cheat me or was never disclosed. I had it and had looked at it in the portfolio for literal decades but not until it was out did I pick up on the issues. That is one of the tricks that many of us have learned in spotting prints, look at the blacks, especially the solid lines and black spaces – if it is



uniform and no lines or brush strokes it is a print.



Here is another tale has a happier ending. I bought this Moebius illustration over a decade ago from a Swiss collector along with another Moebius. I liked the line work and kept this one while the other moved on into another collection. This art, as far as I can tell, is an unpublished 40 Days in the Desert illustration. A few years ago, I was talking with Jean-Marc L'Officer who was an agent of Moebius for a number of years about Moebius and an early Blueberry page I own. He has asked me if this piece was a print or an original since Moebius apparently did a number of one off prints of pieces of just line work. Having worked with Moebius in his studio for years, he had seen all kinds of things. It had never occurred to me and I started looking at it closer and under a magnifying glass. It is all fine line work and no real blacks to go after. At the point of line intersection it is hard to discern if there is overlapping ink. Being so use to being on the wrong side of these discoveries, I took the view point that I didn't know what it was but would not sell it without full disclosure. I did come close to selling it a few times and at one point even shipped it to a potential buyer to look at and to take to experts to form his opinion. I still, deep down believed it was original but now that the seeds of doubt were sown, it would be hard to uproot that weed. The potential buyer returned it not able to come to a conclusion and his experts were 2 to 1 in favor of it being

original but one thought it might be a print. I recently bought a USB microscope off amazon for \$30. It will zoom in to 100 times. Tonight as I was pulling art to send to Heritage to auction off, I passed by this piece in my portfolio and decided to take another look under magnification and with my regular glass and light, I still can't be certain. Under

the microscope, it is immediately clear that it is an original. The inks are clear and variable in thickness and color and line by line they are different. It is definitive and my gut instinct was right and for once I am on the right side of this coin toss.

Mailing Comments CFA-APA #112

Fun issue, it might be one of my favorite ones to date. I wrote about Uncle Fred in my submission and I bought an extra copy of the APA to give to him and his family. It was well received and they were very touched by it plus Fred loved looking at all the new Tarzan art.

John Stuart – loved seeing your Tarzan art. The Manning art looks fantastic. Hopefully when we can visit again, you will share them with me in person.

Rob Reiner – Fun idea talking about Tarzan Stamps! I appreciate the Bart Bush list. Sorry about the losses you were more connected with.

Ray Cuthbert – Great collection of Tarzan art with the highlight being Tom Yeates for me.

David Applegate – another fine edition under our stewardship! Having seen some of your Hogarth's in person is the only hope I have of coming back around to his side of the camp. Great pics from the 90's Fun to see younger versions of Scott, Albert and few others.

John Butler, Bill Leach and Marcleo Anciano – I know you won't see this but very sorry to be losing you from our ranks. Your contributions have been very much appreciated over the years. We are less whole with you all gone. Hopefully you find your way home in the future.

Jared Michalski – I liked that you chose the Disney Tarzan to talk about. It was fun to revisit that project I had not thought about in years. Thanks for interviewing Mike, it was insightful.

Alan Dion – Nice survey of Tarzan on film. I am rather partial to the Bo Derek movie but I don't seem to recall too many of the Tarzan scenes. The Weissmuller howl/call will forever be associated with the character.

Troy Pierce – nice to see your well-presented contribution. Many great images. Thanks for popping in!

Steve Smith – Focussing on Jane was a great approach. I think if it were not for Jane, my interest in Tarzan would have waned long ago. Your projects sound great. My wife's name is Jane...I wonder if that is pure coincidence.

Stuart Sayger – I have never read John Carter but I do love Dejah Thoris just from the images I have seen. Fantastic covers you created. I think Dejah looks quite different than Princess Aura but artists may not appreciate those differences and to them they are the same, much like your Batman and Superman. I liked the layout and look of your article, a lot of work went into it and it is appreciated.

Scott Stewart – I think my first Tarzan strip was by Celardo who was already a favorite of mine from his work on the jungle girls at Fiction House. Uncle Fred who I talked about in my article was good friends with John and kept up correspondence with him until his death.

Mark Nevins – this journal will certainly be your undoing. Well written and thought out article. I have never thought in terms of Dionysian vs. Apollonian sensibilities before and although I tend to prefer the chaotic in terms of art, I prefer order in my daily living and work. Duality is a fun thing to contemplate. Welcome my friend!

Dale Cendali – very nice to read you. I enjoyed your article and seeing some of the art in your collection. It is great that you have all that work up at your law firm. Fantastic Flash Gordon...really top notch.

Wally Harrington – Wally, you may hate me but I have nothing but brotherly love for you. You were one of my early mentors and guides in this hobby and I will never forget that. I credit you, Roger Clark and Scotty Moore for enabling me but also giving me a foundation on which to grow and learn in this hobby.

Ron Sonenthal – great article on Sky Masters. I have long admired the strip but have never read it nor knew about its background. So far, a good example has proven elusive.

Kevin Warzecha – fun interview. So many questions it would never have occurred to me to ask but some great responses.

Chad Kolean – Jones and Tarzan seem like the perfect pairing of artist and creator to me. I don't know if Jeffrey connected with the original ERB written character or more with the primal nature of the character, which ever it was, it had certainly led to some of my favorite Jones images.

Tom Vincent – Nice review of some less well known Wrightson masterpieces.

R.Gary Land – nice summary of the Thunder pedigree. The western version was the only one I had been previously familiar with and I think it is because I had a golden age comic at one point with the character.

Bob Kopman- Nice overview of Seth's work. I have read some but not nearly enough to get the landscape overview and that seems like an important piece.

Steve Stein – Fun article on Jack Kamen. He was an easy early favorite of mine when I started collecting due to his good girl art style and contribution to jungle girl comics. Although I have had a few pages "attributed" to him over the years, this Candy strip is the last one I have and serves as a good example of his work. I tried a Segway in Barcelona 6 years ago and it was brilliant. I knew Jack's son was the inventor and thought on that as I rode.



George Hagenauer – looking forward to seeing you again. It was interesting to read about your adventures in restoring 100 year old animation. Good for you.

Michael O'Connell – Copper Calhoun, another mystery solved. You are the Milton Caniff equivalent of the Hardy Boys! It was a great article and I liked the interview with Warren. I have yet to travel to SPX but it is one of the few North American conventions that I want to go to but have not had the opportunity. I believe it is very much like TCAF here in Toronto and that is still my favorite convention in the world. Hopefully it will be back in 2022.

Benno Rothschild – Nice collection of Sundays you have acquired.

Michael Finn – welcome. I am looking forward to reading your contributions as the golden age adventure comics are among my favorite topics and there is always more to learn. Fun survey of Tarzan inspired characters. I love that early Jungle Comics material and happy to see my Zolnerowich story ended up with you.

Dave Karlen – I like that Jesse Marsh water splash.

Lee Benaka – Nice Colan pages. I still pine for a Colan/Everett page but there seems to be a few collectors who have pitched a flag in that niche.

Keith Becker – well researched and explained process for your conclusion. It is a great page!

Michael Hranek – So many great covers done for the European market we never see. The ones you showed were very dynamic and a lot of fun. I do hope you are able to come up one day for a visit.

Joe Latino – sorry to hear that your art and comics are still in police custody. I hope you get them back quickly and it is a happy reunion.

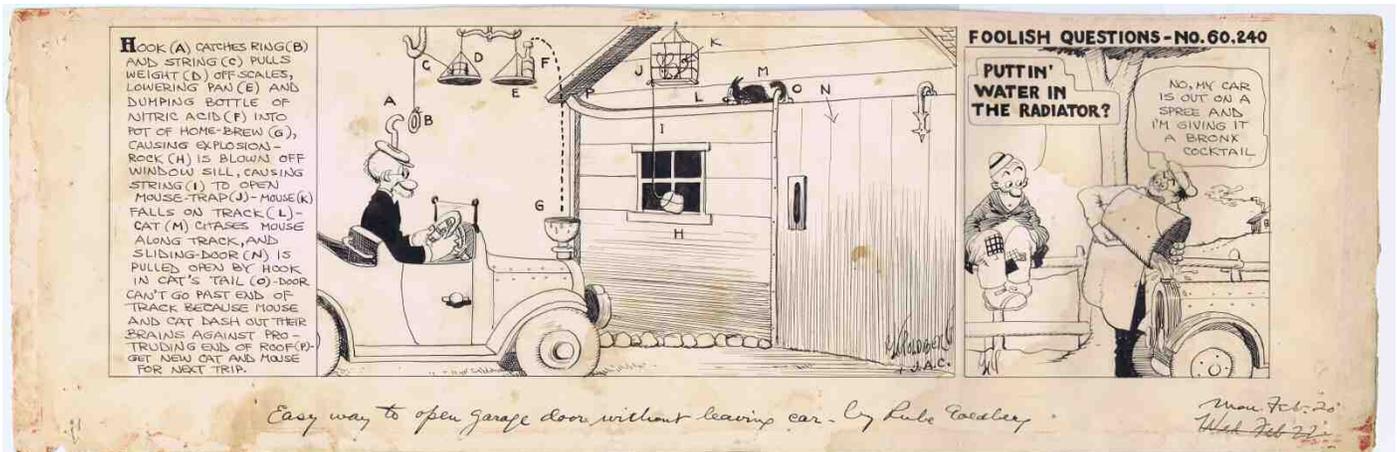
Aaron Sultan – I have owned a number of pages by Tuska over the years. I thought his art was great and always hoped to meet him in person.

Hal Turner – hey... lay off the Archie art☺ Bob and I are working on an Archie project for this journal. It has stagnated a bit but will pick up again soon.

Henry Franke – nice overview of the syndicated Tarzan strips.

Roger Hill – wow....your stories of finds and visiting and seeing art collections are things that we all dream of but your stories are so much bigger than my dreams. Thank you for sharing.

In the interest of no blank pages or spaces, here are a few more recent additions. The first one is a Rube Goldberg contraption daily. Rube Goldberg machines became part of the lexicon for decades and were used to describe over-elaborate and complicated devices to do simple things. Later in his work, he created Professor Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts as the inventor of these machines but this one is much earlier than those and predates Professor Butts. It also features a cat although not in a way feline lovers would appreciate. The second gag is also fun, I had to research a Bronx cocktail which was a drink created around 1899 and had the reputation of being a limp drink so much so that it was referenced in a 1913 play where a character was criticized for being as weak as a Bronx cocktail.



April, April, April...Sigh, what can I say? I am hopeless (and helpless) when it comes to certain Terry and the Pirates dailies from 1939. Here is Ms. Kane waiting to hear from Terry...teen drama at its best.