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(1904 – 1987)

Old Stage #1, 1883, Otto's Tavern  
Program in Oak Grove

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EDITOR, PUBLISHER, DESIGNER  
ILLUSTRATIONS, JON

**MATT ZIMMER**  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

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# Illustration

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by David Sanders
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## From the Editor...

Anyone with an interest in the art of the great pulp magazines is undoubtedly familiar with the name of Walter Baumhofer. While there were hundreds of artists who labored in the salt mines of the pulp industry, few left such an indelible mark on its history. His brilliant draftsmanship, startling color sense, and imaginative compositions continue to inspire and delight today.

The wonderfully detailed and exhaustive document of Baumhofer's life that you hold in your hands is the result of untold hours of research conducted by the incorporeal pulp art historian David Sanders. For those of you who have read some of the other articles that have appeared in this magazine under his byline, you know that you're in for a treat. This tome is like a lifeline to a lost world of pulp art work, and I hope that you're as excited about it as I am!

If you've never visited David's exceptional website [www.PulpArtists.com](http://www.PulpArtists.com), you should take a look and prepare to be amazed. It's easy in this age of Google and the internet to think that information on obscure illustrators is just a Facebook group or blog post away, but the reality is that in-depth research on these artists is very rare. Most of what you can find there in the wild is drawn from a few random sources that were highly inaccurate to begin with. David works to correct this misinformation, and the incredibly detailed biographies on his website are the fulfillment of this mission. His focus is the long-undocumented history of the pulp art field, and he's doing amazing work on a daily basis to capture some of this wonderful history before it vanishes forever. Check it out!

As I've often stated before, this magazine could not exist without YOU—the great fans of illustration history. I also owe a debt of gratitude to all of the advertisers who continue to support our efforts in each and every issue. Their support helps keep the lights on, and I appreciate it very much. Please check out their offerings, visit their websites, and be sure to say you saw their ads in *Illustration Magazine*!

Daniel Zimmer, Publisher

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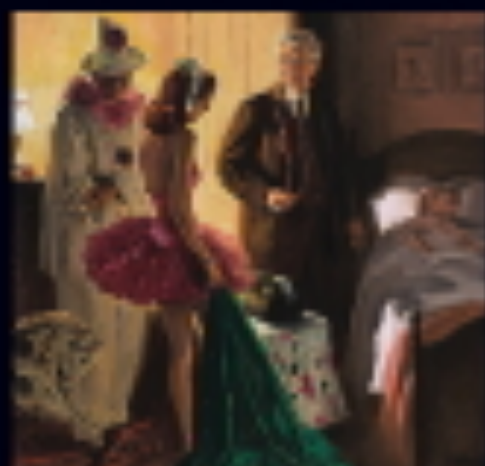
Walter M. Baumhofer (1904-1987)



"Hell is the Holy Land"  
Illustration for Liberty magazine, 1938  
Olive Canvas, 20" x 20"



"The Truggin'"  
Cover for The American magazine, March 1948  
Olive Canvas, 20" x 20"



"Celia and Danon"  
Olive Canvas, 20" x 20"



"The Robert E. Lee" calendar illustration, 1941  
Watercolor on Paper, 9" x 12"

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"Whims of Fate"  
Acrylic on Board, 26 1/4" x 34 1/4"



"Whims of the Dream"  
Acrylic on Board, 21 1/2" x 31 1/4"



"Glimpse of Liberty"  
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Walter M. Baumhofer, September 1987

# WALTER M. BAUMHOFER

(1904 - 1987)

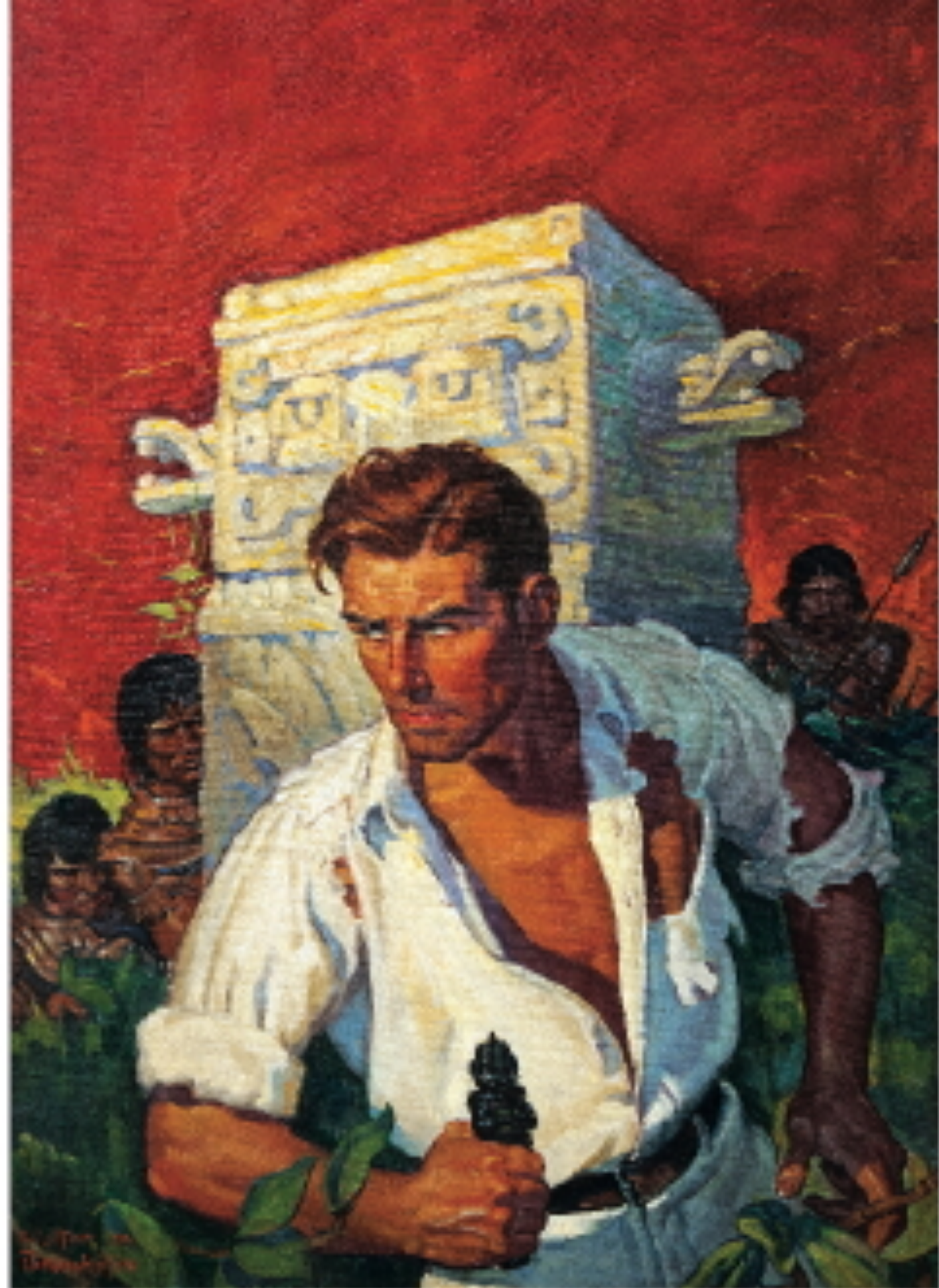
by David Saunders

In the world of pulp magazines, the name Walter Baumhofer will always associate with a solemn and respectful gravitas. His masterful cover paintings from the golden era of *Detective*, *Dime Mystery*, *Dime Western*, *Pete Rose*, *Dog Songs*, and *The Spide* are among the most iconic images in pulp art history. The design and execution of his work combines an impressive combination of conventional brushwork with a classical flair for composing striking scenes of intriguing villains, rugged heroes, and scallier women. His creative ambitions elevated him from the two-paging fold of the pulp magazine into the respectable and higher-paying realm of the slick magazine industry. When he quit the pulps, he left behind a legacy of innovative design and high standards that the next generation of artists struggled to maintain. Although he is renowned for his paintings of pulp magazine covers, the actual number of years he worked in the field is but one chapter in a lifelong history of creative accomplishments. That full story has never been told.

## EARLY DAYS

Walter Maria Baumhofer was born November 1, 1904, in Brooklyn, New York. His father, Henry Baumhofer, was born in 1868 in Oldenburg, Germany, and came to America in 1884. His mother, Marie Walters, was born in 1873 in Hanover, Germany, and came to America in 1898. His parents met in Brooklyn, where they were married on December 14, 1898. They had two children. The artist's older brother, Richard Herman Baumhofer, was born February 18, 1900. The family lived in a modest apartment at 22 Ralph Avenue in Brooklyn. The father worked as a clerk accountant at a coffee import company in Brooklyn. Although his mother's maiden name was Walters, the artist was actually named after his father's re-named brother, Walter Baumhofer, who was born in 1871 and lived with the family while working as a constable at a boarding house in Brooklyn.

The artist was born with a natural charismatic talent. From his earliest years, he was able to charm his parents and dogs with



Original cover illustration for *The Gongs*, March 1944. All as above. Photograph by Scott Graham



Young Wilbur Beardsley with his dog Sport, and his cat Pete, 1924

a special affinity, and he had profoundly close relationships with pets throughout his life. His first pets were a cat named "Sport," and a friskier kitten named "Pete." He chose the names to reflect their personalities. His dog was always ready to play as he was a "good sport." His high-spirited cat enjoyed such mischievous games that his mother would exclaim, "For the love of Pete! Take that cat outside!" Although there were no casual snapshots of the young Wilbur Beardsley, he does appear in the background of one remarkable group photo. In 1911, at the age of nine, he borrowed a friend's camera to photograph Pete and Sport in his back yard, where there was plenty of sunlight. To make sure they sat still for their portraits, he straddled the bench behind them. In the margins of the printed photo he carefully wrote the name of each pet. He identified himself only as "Oh well, you know this town." The artist cherished this snapshot for the rest of his life as a sentimental treasure of his childhood.

In 1914, when he was 18 years old, the Great War in Europe ignited strong feelings against Germany, and a clamoring protest against German-



Wilbur Beardsley with his parents, 1929

Americans. Popular culture at that time often denoted Germans as bloodthirsty Huns. At the same time, his father was fired from his job as an accountant. With a wife and two children to support, his 45-year-old father was forced to abandon his career as a skilled clerical worker and to instead look for employment in manual labor. He eventually found a job as the superintendent of an apartment building at 1400 Bushwick Avenue. The job came with the added benefit that his family was permitted to live rent-free in the first floor apartment. Henry Beardsley's daily routine was to take out the garbage, mop the hallway floors, and sweep the sidewalk. If the need arose, he would do basic handyman repairs—he could fix a window that wouldn't stay open, or



1400 and 1402 Bushwick Avenue

oil a squeaky hinge on a closet door. But when a tenant needed walls painted, he hired a local painter. If tenants had carpentry, gas or electric problems, he would arrange to hire local tradesmen. When a plumber was needed, he hired a guy named George Gould, a German-American who lived next door at 1402 Bushwick Avenue. That plumber's seven-year-old son was John



Goald (1986-2006), who became Walter Kazanofski's childhood best friend. Oddly enough, he grew up to have his own significant career as an artist and illustrator. (See Illustration #56.) The two pals from Bushwick Avenue went to the same elementary school. According to the childhood recollections of John Goald, he was first recognized in the neighborhood as the local artist, while Walter Kazanofski was considered the neighborhood musician. This reputation was based on the fact that Walter played the violin from his earliest years. He practiced his scales every day while standing in the sunlit window of the crowded tenement. His playing was such that his neighbors could not fail to notice his prodigious virtuosity. After he won the elementary school talent show, he was widely regarded in the community as a gifted violinist. The two pals grew up with clearly defined neighborhood identities as "the artist" and "the musician." In addition to their creative talents, the boys also had another claim to fame on Bushwick Avenue. They were notorious pranksters in the style of "Ems and Frits," the Kalamazoo-area 100s.

Walter Kazanofski's father had a workshop in the basement where the boys liked to goof around. One day they decided to do something about the giant cockroaches that swarmed around the cardboard waste paper. According to John Goald, the boys trapped a dozen of the two-inch-long "water bugs" and painted them different colors. They decided to see which bug could run the fastest, so they painted little white numbers on their backs and placed them at the "starting pit," which was usually an empty can on the concrete floor. At the sound of the whistle they lifted the can and shouted, "They're off!" Instead of scampering toward the chalk-drawn finish line, the bugs ran like hell in all directions and escaped up the building's airstair. After plenty of giggles, the boys moved on to further delinquency and forget all about the hair-brained scheme. Until a few days later, when a low-likelihood tenant reported to the Superintendent that her apartment was infested by the cockroaches that seemed to have escaped from some devilish racket.

One of those damascuses had rather nasty serious life-altering consequences. In 1915, at the age of 11, Walter Kazanofski was down in his father's basement workshop trying to remove the gunpowder from several live rounds of .30-06 rifle ammunition. One shell exploded and blew off portions of three fingers on his left hand. As with most of



Kazanofski's wounded left hand

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WEE WEE, a Baumhofer cartoon published in *The Judge*, 1941

each candidate, Walter Baumhofer's childish misadventure became a formative event in his life. It not only shattered his left hand, it also shattered his self-image as a future star performer and first violinist at Carnegie Hall. While recovering with a bandaged left hand he went into a funk, until his pal John Gould told him, "Listen, you have to face facts! With only one good hand, you'll never play the violin, and you're outta here for any manual labor! So get it just here to become an artist like real artists are the only people that need only one good hand. You're pretty good at drawing, so why don't you just concentrate on that?" Walter Baumhofer took his pal's advice to heart and began to consider his drawings as a more serious way. He soon discovered he could express his lively imagination and natural talent with this convenient resource. He began to study art with the same technical discipline he had formerly dedicated to the violin.

He dropped up scrap paper and used hole-punch and ring binders to fabricate hand-made sketchbooks, which he carried everywhere. Although he had previously drawn humorous caricatures of his friends and neighbors, he instead began to draw formal posed portraits of oblique family members.

In September of 1918, at the age of 13, Walter Baumhofer began to attend Brooklyn's Commercial High School, located on Albany Avenue and Deegan Street. This was the same

school his older brother had graduated from the year before. It was a popular all-boy school with a reputation for academic excellence. Many families wanted to get their sons into this school, so it was rather crowded. There were 300 kids in the freshman class. Despite the large number of students, Baumhofer was elected Class President. This impressive feat reflects the outstanding nature of his personality. Walter Baumhofer had one quality.

According to the artist, "I was lucky enough to attend the only high school in the metropolitan area with a really good art department." His most influential art teacher was Nicholas Freimak (1879-1948), a Brooklynite of Austrian ancestry, who was certified to teach Mechanical Drawing. Baumhofer fondly credited this teacher with encouraging and challenging him to seriously apply himself to art. "Freimak looked me up in front of the class and told me I could draw if I tried. He was right. His encouragement opened up a new world for me. I sometimes wonder what I'd be doing if I hadn't been given this early encouragement." When asked about observed art classes, his teacher suggested he take classes at the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

Free Saturday evening art classes were allowed to be public in the back rooms of the Brooklyn Museum at 200 Eastern Parkway. This long-running non-profit program generously benefited many young artists in New York City. The courses were taught by professional artists, as well as volunteer teachers from neighborhood high schools. The museum's enlightened director, William Henry Fox (1868-1962), organized the program to promote a greater awareness of art in the lives of two million Brooklynites, many of whom were recent immigrants. Most philanthropists of that time regarded immigrants as culturally deprived. According to the inscription by Emma Lazarus on the plaque of the Statue of Liberty, these newest New Yorkers were the "wretched refuse" from foreign "yearning shores" of "Yank, poor, and huddled masses." Nevertheless, the Brooklyn Museum was inspired to uplift their lives with an introduction to art, despite such noble intentions, it is an impressive historical fact that ultimately it was the American culture that was uplifted by the sophisticated artistic contributions of immigrants from Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, and the Middle East, who gradually revised the face of America.

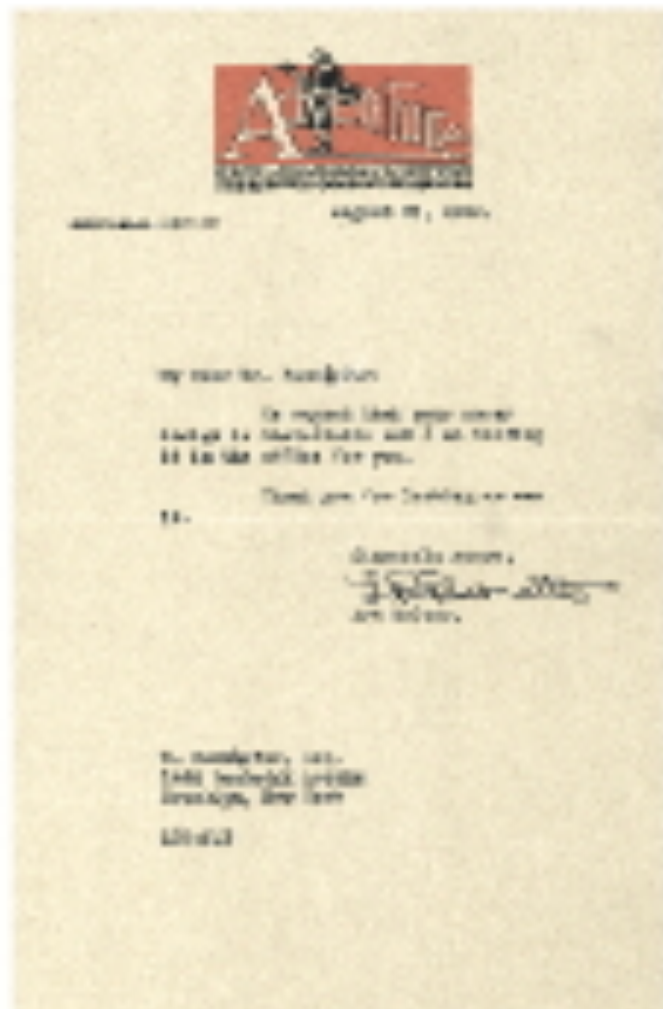
While still in high school, Baumhofer began to find ways to work as an artist. He illustrated articles for school pub-



Baumhofer's poster winning poster design, 1921

lectures, newsletters, pamphlets and yearbooks. In 1921, he joined a city-wide poster competition for an occasion which was organized as part of a grand commemorative pageant, "America's Making," a patriotic post-war celebration of our national diversity. The pageant was held for two weeks in the fall at the New York 7th Regiment Armory. Walter designed an impressive poster in a bold graphic style that featured a solemnly graced God of War armed with a musketeer's shield, towering over a metropolis of lowly foreign laborers. It was entitled "Honor The Men Who Forged That Shield." He won first prize, which was a one-year scholarship to attend the Pratt Institute of Brooklyn, School of Art. His poster was reproduced in articles and advertised announcements in New York City newspapers. It was also displayed in shop windows on Fifth Avenue, and throughout the city in preparation for the spectacular event, which was staged from October 29 to November 12, 1921.

In the summer of 1922, after having completed his junior year at high school, Walter Baumhofer was 17 years old, over six feet tall, and full of beans. He was a big fan of pulp magazines, and in his opinion, "Adventure magazine in those days was a big cut above the other pulps, featuring really good



Baumhofer's first rejection slip, August 26, 1922

authors." So he snatched up his finest painting and took the Brooklyn Rapid Transit (BRT) subway over to Manhattan for his very first visit to a pulp magazine publishing house. With the irrepressible gumption of youth, he hand-delivered his first prospective pulp-cover painting to the editorial office of Adventure magazine, which was published by the Edgeway Company on Spring Street and MacDougal in Greenwich Village. The doorman directed him to a crowded waiting room, where he sat in limbo with other unacknowledged visitors carrying their own unsolicited paintings, drawings, or manuscripts. After sitting around for an hour without permission to see an editor, he accepted the secretary's offer to leave his painting, with a self-addressed stamped envelope and her kind assurance that an editor would eventually consider it merit as soon as time permitted. Six weeks later on August 26, 1922, the art editor of Adventure, Laurance Harcourt Barstow (1886-1971), faced the awkward task of gently bursting the brazen schoolboy's bubble: "My dear Mr. W. Baumhofer, Esq.: We regret that your cover design is unavailable and I am holding it in the office for you. Thank you for letting us see it. The critical word is "unavailable." At that time it was commonly used in a legal disclaimer on the returns page of most maga-



Yearbook & Class President of Commercial High School, 1923

tion. "Original material of all kinds solicited. Unavailable material will be returned only when accompanied by postage. Not responsible for material lost in mail." So the word "unavailable" in this context means "not useful" which has a non-judgmental sound. Instead of feeling discouraged, Walter Baumhofer accepted this with a cheerful resignation that was typical of his character. He concentrated on the bright side, and was proud to be in personal correspondence with a professional magazine editor in respectful discussion of a serious business matter concerning his art. He scheduled a return visit to review his painting and meet the art editor "man-to-man," after which he proudly preserved the first professional rejection letter for the rest of his life.

Five months later, on January 18, 1923, during the winter semester, he and 200 other young men graduated from Brooklyn Commercial High School in a spectacular commencement ceremony. According to *The Brooklyn Eagle* newspaper, "The President of the Class, Walter H. Baumhofer, delivered the address of welcome." To commemorate the occasion, a 20 by 30 inch print was produced, which was composed of 200 small oval-shaped photographs of each graduate. Only three people in the center of this crowd were honored

THE EVENING WORLD, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1923.  
**Seventeen-Year-Old Student Wins  
 Many Medals as Artist and Writer**



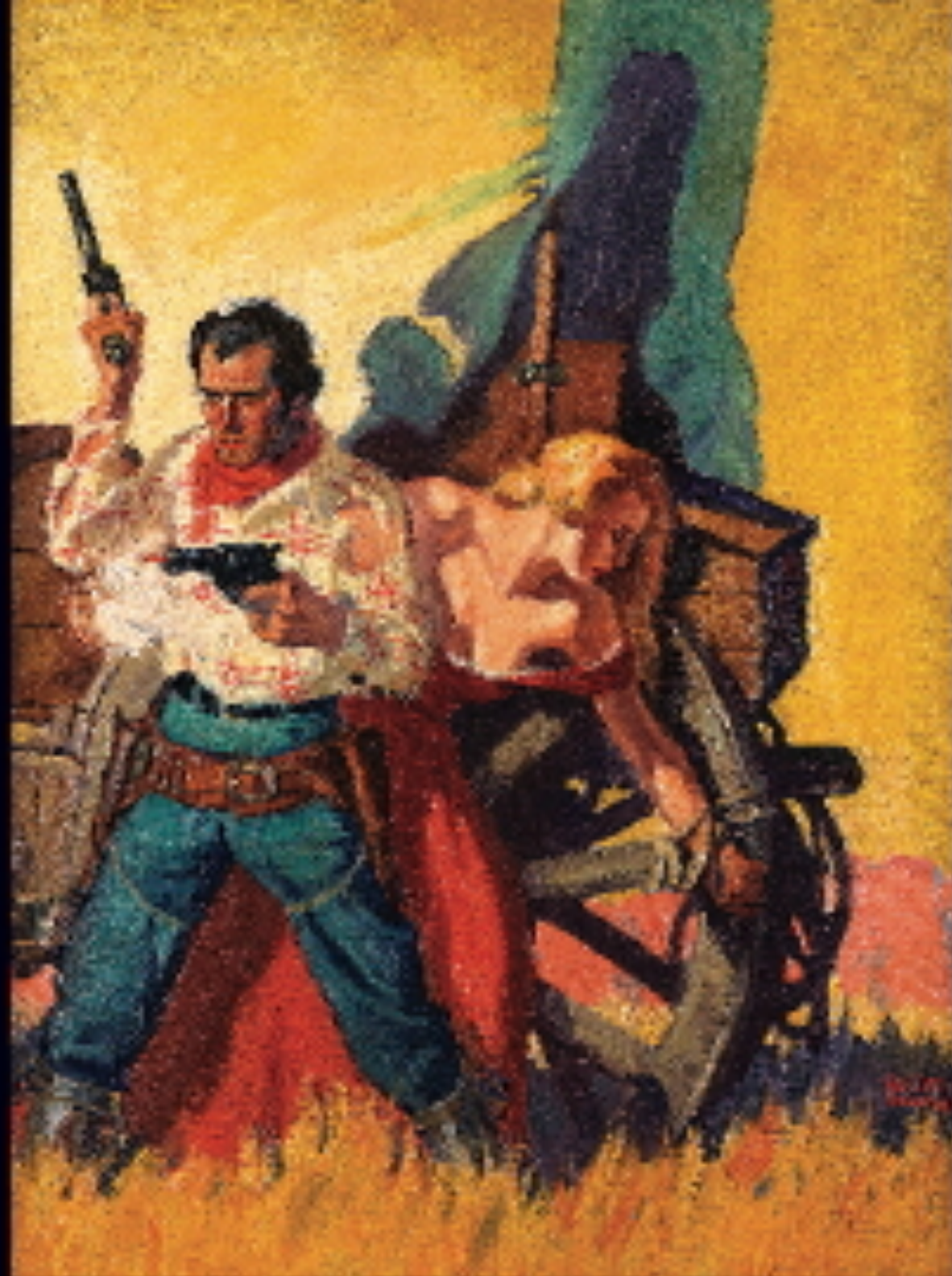
The Evening World, Monday, February 5, 1923

to appear in larger rectangular photos. These three exceptional participants were Laurence Taylor (Faculty Chairman), Gilbert Kayser (School Principal), and Walter Baumhofer (President of the Class). This special tribute is another indication of the exceptional nature of his outstanding personality.

A week later on February 5, 1923, the New York newspaper *The Evening World* published an article with the intriguing headline, "Seventeen-Year-Old Student Wins Many Medals as Artist and Writer. Walter Baumhofer Shows Theory That Proficiency Comes With Long Study."

The old theory that artists and writers must study for years to become proficient has been completely disproved by Walter Baumhofer, a 17 year old student, who graduated from Commercial High School last week. Since discovering his talents for writing and art a year and a half ago, Walter has accumulated a collection of medals and prizes that would make a veteran in either field proud of his achievements.

His initial effort as an artist was handsomely repaid, for he captured first prize in the "American Making" poem contest, in which all students from all parts of



## Saluting the Life and Career of Walter M. Baumhofer

Cover Illustration for *Dime Western*, February 1933



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Ames design, October 1921

the city completed. This he accomplished without aid or instruction. He availed himself of the free Saturday morning art classes held at the Brooklyn Art Museum, and has just been awarded a scholarship to Pratt Institute, and the most coveted art award, The Saint-Gaudens Medal.

The most recent feather in Walter's cap was the winning of a medal in the Short Story Contest conducted by *The Ledges*, a commercial publication, which he illustrated himself. The story was splendidly handled and displayed a brilliant talent for writing, as well as ability in art.

Walter's scholastic record ranks among the best in the city. He has maintained an average of over 90 percent, is a member of the Lambda Chi honor society of the school, and is art editor of *The Ledges*. He has twice been President and Secretary of the Art Club, and of the Honor Club. Many of his stories have been published. The distinction of delivering the class valedictory at commencement has been awarded to him.

In talking with a reporter from the Brooklyn Queens section of *The Evening World*, Mr. Buehler said: "There is nothing unusual about me except my height (Walter is six-foot-three). I have never done anything out of the ordinary in trying for a prize. I guess I was just lucky. I haven't made up my mind whether I will follow art or writing. I think it will probably be art. It's



A portrait of the artist's brother Michael Buehler, February 15, 1923 (presented to the 22nd BIMA.)

very much interested in poster advertising. One seems to have accomplished as much when his work is displayed throughout the city."

Included in Walter's gifts is a keen sense of humor, which he has brought out in the many cartoons he has published in the school paper.

#### ART SCHOOL DAYS

In the Spring of 1923, he began to attend the Pratt Institute of Brooklyn, School of Art, at 200 Willoughby Avenue. One year later, he was joined by his childhood pal Jelts Gruhl. Other classmates from his old neighborhood included David Berger (1908-1982), and Frank Kasser (1910-1993). They were both Brooklynites of German ancestry who went on to careers as pulp magazine illustrators. Among his new friends at Pratt were Rudolph Bolanki (1909-2001), Frederick Baker (1898-1973), and Alvin Lash (1913-1992).

All Midtown students in the three-year training program were taught lettering, layout, drawing, color design, advertising, poster design, painting, and finally the most advanced class, *Painting for Commercial Model*. His art teachers were Frederic Van Vliet Baker (1876-1944), Frank Leonard Allen (1884-1966), Walter Scott Perry (1850-1934), Will Samuel Taylor (1882-1968), Max Rudolf Hermann (1878-1929), and Harold Winfield Scott (1897-1977). Pratt students also received valuable training from visiting professional artists who were invited to conduct seminars, lectures, and



Baumhofer caricatures the teachers in the Post school yearbook, 1924. Left to right: The First Editor, Frank L. Allen, Walter G. Berry, 1922 & Right: Max G. Sherman

critiques. The past artists during his years of attendance included Norman Redwell (1894-1936), Dean Curwood (1891-1948), Franklin Smith (1874-1948), Frank Carter (1891-1955), and Charles Dean Gibson (1887-1944). All of this for only \$75 annual tuition.

Considering his only career as a wanderkind of poster design, it is no surprise that he continued to focus on the particular field of art school. According to the artist, "While at Pratt I labored under the delusion that I was meant to be a poster artist, so my chosen medium was tempera." In many ways the art of poster design is the essence of advertising, because a good poster is a well-composed visual message that stimulates interest in the eyes of an indifferent public. Luckily, this fascination with poster design was not misguided, because the same skill was useful in designing magazine covers that would grab the attention of busy pedestrians.

According to school records, Walter Baumhofer was manager of the baseball team in 1918. He was also an excellent tennis player, and competed in tennis tournaments, after his first year the scholarship ran out, so he paid his way by working as a stenographer, a time-keeper, and a printer of newspaper advertisements. The Class of 1925 yearbook includes several of his cartoon drawings of the faculty and students. His sense of humor is also reflected in his yearbook pieces, which show him with his back to the camera, head tilted and holding a sign, as though he were on the ground for some unenviable birthday present. The paragraph accompanying this carnival photograph provides no clarification: "Walter M. Baumhofer can enjoy a parade from the back of a crowd. His gift himself up to despair and Commercial Art since Madeline left." After considerable research I turned out "Madeline" was not a lost love. She was an elderly nude model in the Life Drawing Class, who was loved and reformed by obnoxious disreputable. Rather than discouraging the students, Baumhofer's yearbook contributions mostly record his sense of humor. He was obviously resistant to being objectified by formal documentation. This may be why he went on his only childhood impulse, "Oh well, you know



A Baumhofer cartoon from the Post yearbook, May 1924



Norman Redwell addresses Post students, 1924



Student work, 1904

his own.' Perhaps he preferred to see himself as a free spirit and a rugged individualist. Such an idea might have worked in his favor, because those were the essential qualities needed for success as a freelance artist.

## AURORA

Another 'free spirit' among the Pratt student body was Aurora Leach. She was born Amanda Moore Lindjohn in Portland, Maine, on August 20, 1863, which made her one year older than Walter Burdick. Her father, Sherman Crosby Lindjohn, was born in Cape Elizabeth, Maine, in 1872. He worked as a farmer driving horses for a light transport service. Her mother, Annie H. Mason, was born in 1878 in North Amherst, Maine, and worked as a dressmaker. Her parents married in Portland, on August 7, 1902. They lived at 41 Grand Avenue, which was the home of the husband's widowed mother, Eliza T. Lindjohn, who was 66 years old. When the child was born she was named after her mother's sister, Aurora T. Mason, a registered nurse at Serrano Hospital in Maine, and a graduate of the Central Maine General Hospital at Lewiston. Although 'Aurora' was an exceptional name, she was usually called 'Aur'.

Aur was an only child. While her father was busy driving a team of horses to the warehouse district of Portland harbor, her mother stayed at home year-round with the grandmother. The winter climate in Portland is freezing cold with an average snowfall of 60 inches, so the baby and her mother and grand-



Student work, 1904

mother spent the winter months in a climate-induced confinement. Records indicate that as time went on her mother began to suffer from 'impaired health.' After a few years, the marriage fell apart and ended in divorce in 1886. Aurora was seven years old and her mother was 22.

In 1881 her mother married a second husband, Frank Libby Leach, who was born in Boston in 1860. The groom was 21 and the bride was 18. He was a traveling salesman for the Lithigh Portland Cement Company. The newlyweds left Portland and moved to Boston, where they lived at 75 Laurel Street.

Meanwhile, on July 11, 1883, her father Sherman C. Lindjohn married his second wife, Mary Laker Tibbets in Portland, where he remained as a tanner for the rest of his life. In 1915 they had a child, Herman C. Lindjohn, Jr., who was Aurora's half-brother.

By 1888, her stepfather Frank Leach had become regional sales manager of the cement company, so they were prosperous enough to move to a pink apartment building at 40 Pennington Street in Boston. Their new home was only four blocks from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, where young Aurora first became involved in art. The museum operated a museum art school, which also offered a children's art program. Her mother and stepfather had no additional children, so she remained the center of their parental concerns. At the age of 14, she attended art classes at the museum. These experiences helped her to develop a creative and independent





Alameda, 1923

nature, with a playful streak of mischief.

By 1923, she had graduated high school and was ready for college. Her father's work had mostly shifted to Hartford, Connecticut, so the family moved there and lived at 1899 Farmington Avenue. Alameda decided to attend the Hartford Art School. She was inspired by her mother's skill as a dressmaker, and grew interested in fabrics, textures, and costume design. Her most influential teacher was Margaret B. Lincoln (1865-1961). She was known to treat her students with tender consideration, while challenging them to produce their finest work. According to one of her former pupils, "We have in our memories a certain sunny day when school was dismissed at 5:06, and not a member of the class made a move to depart. We have never been able to figure out whether that was a case of 'Art for Art's sake' or 'Art for Miss Lincoln's sake.'" In 1923, Alameda won First Place in the school's annual Costume Show. For one class assignment she designed a prospective cover of *Vogue* magazine. It was included in the 1923 Annual School Art Show and won a prize, which received notice in the local newspaper.

As fate would have it, Margaret B. Lincoln also taught Costume Illustration at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, where she encouraged her best students to apply for advanced training to become professional artists. Alameda took her advice. She applied to Pratt as a transfer student, and was accepted for admission after having completed her second year at Hartford in June of 1924.



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**W**  
 FLESH



Alameda Leach, 1923

In September of 1924, she arrived in New York to study at Pratt. She had just turned 21, and was a free spirit in the fashion of the roaring '20s. She studied Design Illustration with Ernest W. Wilson (1886-1969), and Costume Illustration with her mentor from Harvard, Margaret B. Lincoln.

Among the social clubs at Pratt, she belonged to the Natsong Club. Their aim was to organize social activities, entertainments, and parties. The name "Natsong" refers to the special spice added to festive drinks. During the years of Prohibition, 1920 to 1933, several costume weeks such as Natsong, Glogg, Peppin, Pouch, Nappy, Spicy and Snappy, all gained a new dimension of thrilling defiance. Her yearbook quotations reflect this spirited, gaudy culture:

Dylan and Rita met to get Pines,  
Dylan demanded, "Cherie come lunch with me!"  
As Rita passed, the menu to inspect,  
He asked, "How do you get that snappy far effect?"  
How it must be said that Dylan is a...  
Great admirer of the work of Miss Leach.

The accompanying photograph of Miss Leach sipping in a black and a dress of her own design underscores the impression of a sophisticated, low-key flapper.

In many ways, Alameda Leach and Walter Baumhofer were a perfect couple. They met at Pratt, fell in love, and remained that way for the rest of their lives.

During the Spring semester, the annual Pratt Fraternity Review was staged on April 17, 1925. The General Director of the event was Rudolph Burkhardt. He scheduled a costume dance by Rita Leach as the closing act of the first half just before intermission. According to the program brochure, the second half of the evening was devoted to a general dance. "On with the dance! Let joy be unconfined! No hospital rooms when youth and pleasure meet to chase the glowing hours with flying feet. — Byrna. Follow the Crowd. Don't dance with the same girl twice."

Two months later on June 18, 1925, Walter and Alameda graduated from Pratt Institute with BA1 degrees in a grand commencement exercise at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. At that time, Pratt was a technical training school with a three-year curriculum, so instead of a college diploma each graduate received a certificate of course completion. Walter Baumhofer received a Certificate in Drawing, Engraving and Illustration, while Alameda Leach received a Certificate in Ceramic and Commercial Illustration.

#### OFF TO WORK

After graduation, Alameda moved to Greenwich Village to live at 47 Greenwich Street, where she pursued a professional career as a graphic designer in a Bohemian community of artists, illustrators, sculptors, writers, and actors. Walter returned home to live with his parents, who had moved to 544 Forest Avenue in Forest Hills, Queens. In July of 1925, he looked for work as a freelance-commercial artist by posting the pavement of NYC with a portfolio of prospective examples. His first stop was a visit to the editorial offices of his "old" acquaintance, the art editor at *Adventure* magazine Laurance Baratta. He showed him two samples of story headings with hand lettering, which he had designed to reflect the style of the magazine. The editor preferred to use more experienced artists, but he recognized Baumhofer's talent and was charmed by his persistence. At that time, *Adventure* had a policy to commission a single artist to draw all minor story illustrations for each issue. The featured artist was given printed credit on the table of contents, alongside a separate credit for the cover artist. This convention made it difficult for the editor to buy individual illustrations, so instead of buying Baumhofer's samples, the editor commissioned him to draw all the story illustrations for a future issue of *Adventure*. This was a dream come true. According to the artist, "This was rather like having a gold nugget fall right into your pocket." The world's first pulp magazine with art by Walter Baumhofer was the December 20, 1925 issue of *Adventure* magazine. According to the artist, "After that first sale to *Adventure* I gave up all thoughts of poetry and devoted myself to illustration."

After a few months of struggling to work from home, Walter and Alameda decided to jointly rent a commercial art studio in Manhattan. To lower their costs they invited two other classmates from Pratt, Eugene Brashberg (1903-1991) and Arthur Pollock (1904-1988), to join them as a foursome of studio-mates. In January of 1926, they found a cheap space



# STRANGE FELLERS

by  
Alan LeMay



# OUT OF THE FOG

by  
Captain Dingle

Above: Story readings for *Adventure*, December 26, 1925. Walter Baumhofer's first published pulp magazine illustration.

# THE PRIVILEGE OF THE GODS

by  
Arthur H. Little



They heading for Advertiser, December 1916, 1916

on the top floor of an old five-story brick building at 400 West 23rd Street, on the southeast corner of Ninth Avenue. It was a "cold-warrr walk-up," which meant there was no elevator and the bathroom had only a toilet and sink with no hot water. The monthly rent was \$13. The gear was squatted with a daylight and a radiator. They also had access to the roof, where they could photograph costumed models in brilliant sunlight. It was perfect for four hungry young artists to seek fame and fortune in New York City.

At that time it was improper, as well as illegal, for a young woman to set up shop with three men in an industrial space with one communal bathroom. So instead of identifying the fourth partner in the group as "Marrisa Leach," she was identified on the lease as "Fritz Leach." Walter Baumhofer had given her the pet name in loving memory of his favorite childhood kitty cat. Marrisa was the love of his life, and she had a truly kitschish sense that gave him a whole new reason to laugh out loud. "For the love of Fritz!"

Baumhofer was able to raise his share of the rent by continuing to sell illustrations to *Advertiser*, but to make ends meet he had to find more clients. His best prospects were other pulp magazine publishers, because they were the only periodicals that welcomed "entry-level" illustrators with an open-door policy. This practice helped young artists to fill their portfolios with examples of published works, and it also prevented older artists from demanding higher fees, because they could always be replaced by the next eager youngster that walked in the door. The average pay for a spot illustra-

tion was \$1, a one-page was \$6, and a two-page spread was \$11. Baumhofer was rather successful in this narrow field, and eventually produced over 700 pen-and-ink, waxy illustrations for pulp magazines. His drawings appeared in *Ace High Magazine*, *Advertiser*, *Air Trails*, *Clue*, *Cowboy Stories*, *The Danger Book*, *Five Fingers*, *Mystery Magazine*, *Over The Top*, *Spear Story*, and *Honors Story*. The artist documented this production by keeping a collection of almost every proof sheet.

According to the artist, he was finally convinced to think more ambitiously about painting covers for the pulps by a suggestion from his former art teacher, H. Winfield Scott. Scott was a colorful character, a veteran of the Great War, a popular teacher, and Fritz's youngest faculty member. He had only recently graduated from the school himself, and had been recruited as an art instructor when the staff was faced with an overwhelming increase in new students. Even after Scott's students had graduated, he continued to stay to teach with his friends. Several of his star pupils got their first big break by his personal introduction to an art editor. In July of 1916, he visited Baumhofer at the crowded 13rd Street art studio. He studied the situation and summarily suggested, "Why fool around with these black-and-whites? Why not try color? They pay all of 175." Baumhofer followed his advice and soon produced several prospective cover paintings that were added to his portfolio and shown to his mentor list of interested editors. It worked. In September of 1918 he sold his first pulp cover painting to Clayton Magazines Publishing Company.



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T H E G A T E W A Y O F T H E C I T Y

Robert Lawson (copyright) Wadsworth, 25 x 14.25", The Dogue magazine, May 1928

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The Danger Trail, November 1926

The image appeared on their November 1926 issue of *The Danger Trail*, a magazine that was, in Baumhauer's confidential opinion, "only a crummy imitation of *Adventure*." The editor at that company was Harold Hersey (1895-1966), who was another sensational character in pulp history. Hersey admired Baumhauer's work, and continued to use his cover paintings, as well as his interior story illustrations, for *Ace High Magazine* and *The Danger Trail*. Their association thrived even after Hersey left Clayton a year later and joined Magazine Publishers Inc., where he selected dozens of Baumhauer covers for *Western Trails*, *Under Fire*, *Five Fighters*, *Eye Service*, *The Golden West*, and *The Desert Magazine*.

In the spring of 1927, Amanda Luch covered an elaborate display for the children's department at Frederick Lozier's Department Store, which at that time was the most popular shopping center in Brooklyn. She decorated the walls, floors, ceiling, and furniture of the sixth floor Infant's Department to resemble an enchanted forest in fairyland. Her charming installation was warmly praised in NYC newspapers. This exposure helped to establish her reputation as a graphic designer. In fact, her art career progressed more rapidly than her fashion business reputation was firmly established in the narrow field of pulp magazines, she had painted several covers for the stylish literary magazine *The Golden Book*, and the fashion magazine *Le Bon Ton*. She illustrated several books,



Ace-High Magazine, May 1927

such as *Easy Steps to Playtime* by Marjorie Cobb Garrison, *Good Companions* by Ross L. Hardy, and *The Last Troopers* by Danette West. In 1928, she decided to study advanced "graduate level" classes at the Grand Central Art School. This was the most important commercial art school in America at that time. The art instructors were famous practicing professionals, and the enrollment was limited to young practicing professionals. The school was located at 42nd Street and Park Avenue, on the top floor of the impressive landmark railroad terminal. Her teachers included Stuart Carter and Gordon Don Witt (1903-1979), both of whom had a significant influence on popular tastes in graphic design. In September of 1928 she was hired to teach Fine and Industrial art at Newark, New Jersey. She continued to work from Penn Station.

In 1928, Walter Baumhauer got his first big break by selling several cover paintings for *Western Story* to Street & Smith, which was the most prestigious publisher in the pulp magazine industry.

Another big break that same year was to receive several assignments to illustrate stories for McClure's magazine. He drew pen-and-ink story illustrations for "The Garden" by E. E. Buckley and Tom Carey in their January issue, and "Alibi" by William Stevens McVane for the March issue. This was a significant showcase for his talent, so the artist made an extra effort to do his best job. In a private letter to McClure's art



NOTE: For more information on this illustration, see the book "The Art of the Sketch" by the author.



ABOVE: Preliminary sketches and final illustrations for Miller's, October 1908





Fire Fighters, April 1933

often, he wrote, "I like sincerity and authenticity in pictures. Lots to learn yet, but being young, lots of time I hope to learn it in." His supportive parents acted as models for an unusually large number of sketches. He produced so many detailed studies for these jobs that he later recycled several of them as pen-and-ink story illustrations for pulp magazines. Such an instance of an artist working for multiple genres reflects the amorphous nature of an art career in 20th century American illustration. Almost all artists at that time supported themselves by working simultaneously for different venues, such as newspapers, books, advertising, public murals, or industrial design. Regardless of the fact, art history tends to classify artists in only one narrow category. Nothing could be further from the truth in Walter Dumbold's experience.

In the summer of 1924, Alameda and Walter attended Boothby Studios Summer School of Art in Boothby Harbor, Maine. It was operated by several Pratt alumni and teachers, including the director, Frank L. Allen. The pamphlet for the summer school was illustrated by Walter Dumbold. Alameda had spent most of the summer of her childhood at camps in Maine, so she was eager to attend.



Walter and Alameda, June 1924



The Dragnet, August, June 1933

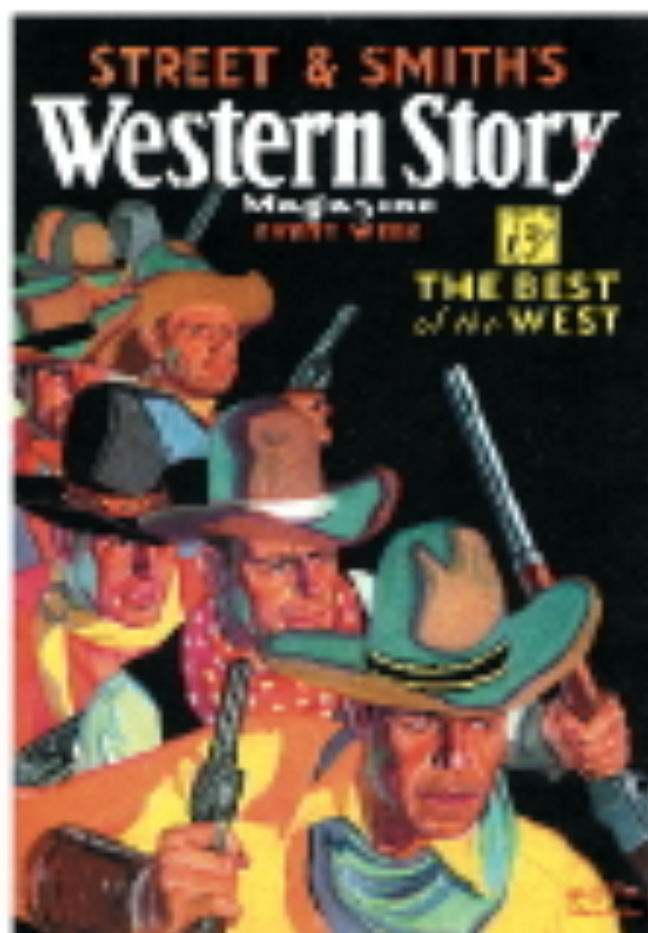
By 1930, Oswald Dumbold had left Magazine Publishers, Inc., and started his own firm, Good Story Magazine Company. Many of Hersey's new pulp had covers painted by Dumbold, such as *Outlaws of the West*, *Riders of the Range*, *Quick-Trigger Westerns*, *Flying Stories*, *Front Page Stories*, *Continuum Stories*, *Prison Stories*, *Gunpowder Stories*, *Backdoor Stories*, *Murder Stories*, and *Spookhouse Stories*. During this period the artist developed a distinctly graphic style of painting. His covers for Good Story Magazines have high contrast, bold shapes, negative-white spaces, large areas of new flat colors, and stunning compositions based on a central iconic image. These are the typical design elements of 1930 billboard advertising for soft drinks and cigarettes. It is tempting to attribute this personalized graphic quality to the artist's persistent teenage dream to become a celebrated poster artist. It is also likely his interest in formal design at this time in his life was influenced by his relationship with Alameda Leach, who was studying graphic design at the Grand Central School. According to Walter, "My favorite reverse critic is Alameda. Who did she a one-hill of an artist in her own right. We have some peachy type borders over pictures."



Complete Gang Novel Magazine, November 1931

On June 28, 1938, Walter Burnholter married Harold Alice Litch in Manhattan Civil Court. The married couple moved to an apartment at 112 Mervyn Place, which they rented monthly for \$13. It was a small apartment in a five-story brick building. As the Great Depression brought hard times, they could not afford the second rent, so they gave up the shared studio on 23rd Street. Their apartment was small but it had high ceilings and tall windows in the living room, so they used it as a studio. Although they both continued to find sporadic assignments, most industries were suffering economic devastation, which caused a reduction in advertising budgets, which caused a reduction in publishing, which caused a reduction in jobs for illustrators. By 1932, it was nearly impossible to make ends meet. Their landlord reduced the rent by \$15, but it was still a challenge for the young artists to raise \$100 every month in a time when most people would have been happy to earn two dollars a day.

In June of 1932, according to the artist, "During the Depression, by which time my wife and I were living in the Village, and down to our last month's rent, like any sensible young couple, instead of paying the landlord I took a chance and borrowed \$50 to hire a model, in the going rate of one dollar an hour, and painted a rather more detailed speculative cover for Street & Smith. They were crazy about it. It was a single figure of a Western highwayman, a 'Stand and Deliver' type thing. It was in a yellow slicker with a Winchester at



Street & Smith Magazine, September 1932

the ready, against a black background with rain." Burnholter took his painting to the offices of Street & Smith at 79 Seventh Avenue on 15th Street, where the doors were open to him without appointment as he had previously sold them six covers and dozens of illustrations. He showed his new cover to the art editor, William Houghton Jones (1888-1971), who immediately purchased it for \$100. Besides his steady job of choosing the best paintings for Western pulps, Mc H. Jones was also an artist, although not to be confused with the legendary Western artist Will James (1892-1942). Mc H. Jones illustrated Street & Smith's *The Popular Magazine* and had a keen eye for excellent work. After the usual turn-around time of three months, the stagrooch hunt in the yellow slicker appeared on the September 3, 1932 issue of *Western Story*. The general reaction from the top brass at Street & Smith was overwhelming. It suddenly seemed like prosperity was "just around the corner" for Walter Burnholter.

#### THE RISE OF THE SUPERHERO PULPS

At that same hectic moment in pulp history, Street & Smith was adjusting their production schedule to capitalize on the emotional public appetite for a futuristic new crime-fighting superhero, *The Shadow*. This monthly magazine was selling so well, the company decided to release a new issue every two weeks instead of every four. This was a brave marketing strategy, but Street & Smith could afford to take some risks since

STREET & SMITH'S  
SEPT. 3, 1932  
**Western Story**  
Magazine  
EVERY WEEK

15¢

FIGHTIN' FOOLS  
OR  
**WALT  
COBURN**





Doc Savage, March 1933



Doc Savage, April 1933



Doc Savage, May 1933

they were flush with cash and giddy with success. According to *The Shadow's* author Walter Gibson (1887-1965), "The Shadow was going so good, it kicked hell out of everybody. Klotter wanted to start another adventure magazine, but for a long time he didn't even have a title." Henry William Klotter (1881-1968), the Managing Editor at Street & Smith, had numerous conferences over several months with John Leonard Kanasis (1888-2001), the editor of *The Shadow* magazine. They were carefully planning a new line of pulp magazines in the familiar genres of Detective, Adventure, and Western, but each title would be devoted to a single heroic character. The editors were eager to explore this lucrative but still-uncharted market for pulp's most sophisticated. Unlike most aspects of the fast-paced pulp industry, Street & Smith moved cautiously on this new venture, and spent a comparatively long time planning prototypes. They wanted to make sure the products were as appealing as possible before proceeding. In August of 1931, they finally decided to produce *Nick Carter*, *Doc Savage*, and *The Rice*. Thanks to the general acclaim for Burnham's recent cover of *Blowdown*, he was assigned the first six covers of *Doc Savage*. According to the artist, "That pretty much ended the Depression for me."

The artist had not read the stories or even met the author, but the editors gave him a written description of Doc Savage and each of his five recurring allies, which he generally followed. Burnham's again hired for the same model he had used for the impressive "yellow sticker" painting, *Bill Galt* (1896-1945). After paying for several hours, the artist had captured enough of the figure to move on to other areas of the



Doc Savage, June 1933



Doc Savage, July 1933



Doc Savage, August 1933



Doc Savage, September 1933



Doc Savage, November 1933

painting, and he was ready to let the model go, but first he snapped a few photos of the pose in case he later needed to do more work on the figure. Each reference photo was a practical tool in the process of painting from a live model, as it saved time and money. Bill Cuff also posed for other artists, such as Rudolph Belarick, Emory Clarke (1911-1991), and Richard Lyon (1943-2002). Cuff's popularity was based on his impressive acting skills, dramatic stage postures, and riveting facial expressions. Walter Baumhofer happened to have thick hair like Clark Gable, which flipped back and forth in response to his animated personality. He and his editors envisioned Doc Savage with the same slightly hairstyle, but unfortunately Bill Cuff had rather thin hair, so the artist made reference photos of his own hair to use for Doc. According to the artist, "Bill Cuff was the absolute antithesis of a model's image. His hair had retreated pretty far back on his head, his eyes were too small, and he had a rather pronounced almost hump on his back, but he had the best hands I've ever had the good fortune to draw. He could take a pose instantly from a rough sketch. Could hold any pose, noting the part of his body I want's working on. He was a disappointed artist, afraid to draw the his drawings.



Doc Savage and his model, Bill Cuff

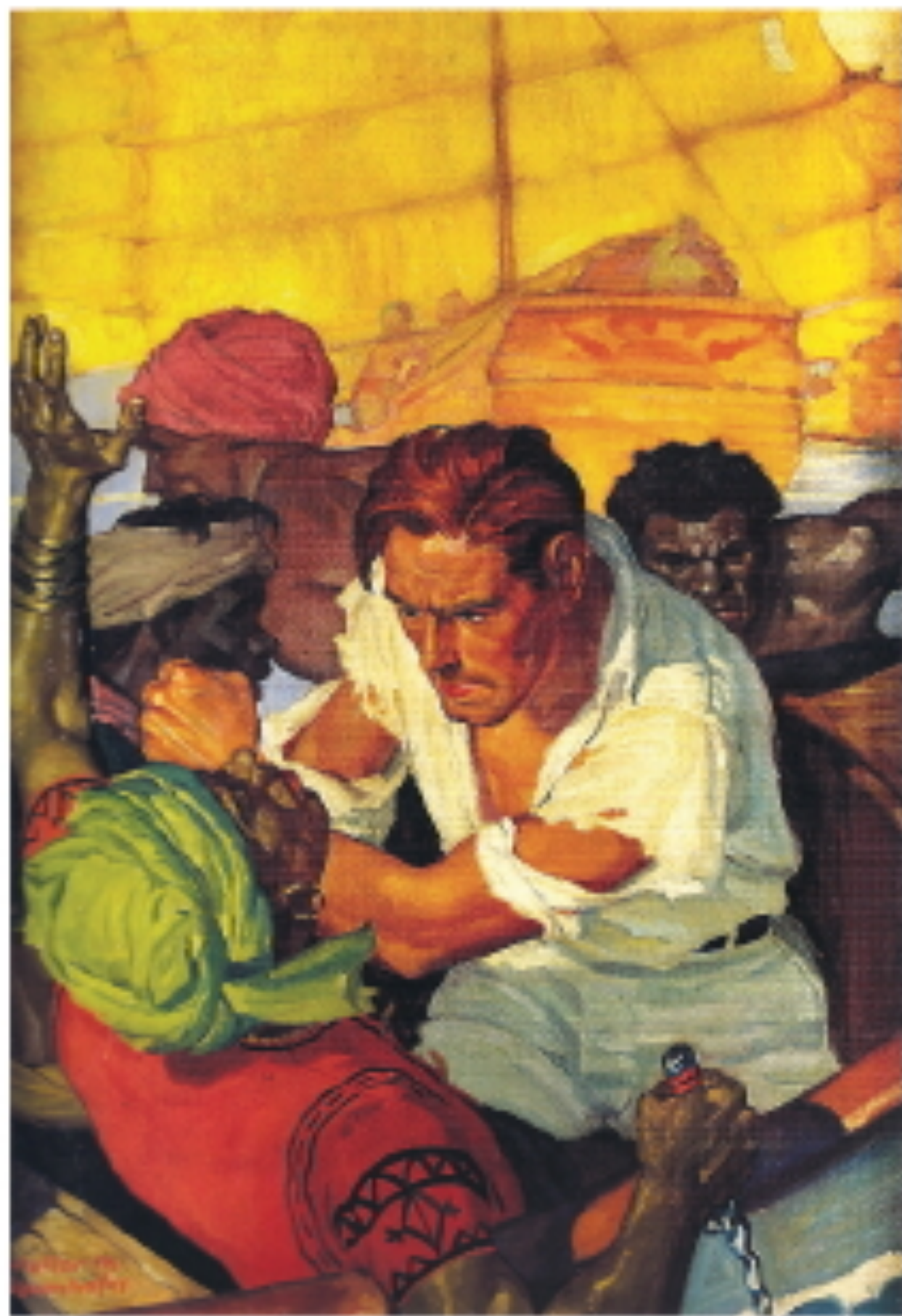


Doc Savage, November 1933

He was a great model!"

Although the occasional stories of Doc Savage were credited in public to "Knox's Robinson," the company had avoided that name for business reasons. The actual author was Lester Dent (1904-2004). He was born in La Plata, Missouri, on October 11, 1904, which is only 19 days before Baumhofer's birthday. Dent's editor at Street & Smith was John Nisovic, born on October 7, 1906, in Palermito, Pennsylvania, so he was two years younger. His parents were working class immigrants from Cambodia. He had graduated in 1928 from the University of Notre Dame, where he had been Editor-in-Chief of the yearbook and a member of the Frazz Club. He was handsome, single, brilliant, and witty. Nisovic was told to work closely with them during the first few issues of *Doc Savage*, in order to calm the nervous uncertainty of launching a new magazine about a hero with no pre-existing audience—unlike *The Shadow* and *Nick Carter*, who were both familiar names to readers. John Nisovic lived in Jackson Heights, Queens, at 1536 75th Street. Oddly enough, at the same time Lester Dent and his wife, Florence Corning Dent (1901-2000), happened to move a few blocks away from Nisovic, to 1904 74th





Original cover for *Doc Savage*, July 1933. Oil on canvas



Doc Savage, January 1934



Doc Savage, February 1934



Doc Savage, March 1934



Doc Savage, April 1934





Doc Savage, Feb. 1933



Doc Savage, Mar. 1933



Doc Savage, September 1933



Doc Savage, December 1933



Oil on canvas, 26.70" x 20.00". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Dallas

Ames in Jackson Heights, Queens. This coincidence suggests Street & Smith may have arranged a temporary residence for the author at the convenience of his editor during those heady autumn months of 1932.

The first issues of *Doc Savage* and *Flash Carter* were both "put to bed" one month after Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) was elected President by millions of disgruntled Americans in search of a New Deal. Over the next few months, while the rest of the world held their breath waiting for the new administration, the brain centers at Street & Smith also remained on high alert. They studied early scenarios on sales of these first issues to figure out whether the experimental magazines were hits or flops. Rabson, Nanovic, Dent, and Baumhofer continued to work like mad behind the scenes on the next five issues of *Doc Savage*, but the company was only committed to the first six issues, so everything was on a probationary status until *Doc Savage* had a proven sales record.

In June of 1933, the fourth issue of *Doc Savage* was on the newsstands and the verdict was "all systems go!" The experiment had worked. Street & Smith had two more winners, and they were ready to commit to long-term production. The editors sat up meetings with Dent and Baumhofer, to make sure everything was nailed down for their required tasks. Baumhofer and Dent were both 24, and Nanovic was only 26, but Rabson was 32 and had been working at Street & Smith since before any of them were born. He was intelligent and had already conducted several private business deals that had made him a wealthy man. Rabson was completely in com-

mand of the situation. Nanovic had already experienced *The Shadow's* success, but Dent and Baumhofer were young men with spinning heads on their first ride in a limousine. John Nanovic, William H. Jones, and Walter Baumhofer got together in July of 1933, and everything went smoothly. They agreed on a coordinated vision for *Doc Savage*, and Baumhofer expressed his commitment of loyalty to the company.

Alfreda was accustomed to her summer vacations, but this year her husband was too busy for a retreat to the lakes of Maine, so instead her mother and step-father rented a cottage in Sag Harbor, on Long Island in Easthampton Township. According to Walter, "This was a working vacation, but a lot of time was spent in and on the then happily unspoiled waters of Long Island."

During this adventure in the Hamptons, Walter and Alfreda explored the sights and enjoyed several fishing trips. While renting a boat at a local marina, the artist was startled to meet a handsome mariner that looked a lot like *Doc Savage*. He was Carl Hovin (1895-1967). According to the artist, "I met Carl while sunbathing in Depression raddles Sag Harbor. He had magnificent muscles, with not a hair on his body, apparently. And what a tail! He was a real idea of *Bronco*. Carl was the perfect type for *Doc*." He was a geminal with muscular body



Carl Hovin, July 1933



**Circus Boys**  
Leslie Thrasher  
Oil, 30" x 20", 1914



**Circus Elephants**  
Leslie Thrasher  
Oil, 30" x 20", 1914

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Pete Rice Magazine, November 1938

populares, strong boys, broad shoulders, and a raring wit. The artist asked him about modeling and discovered he was not only willing to model, but was interested in studying art. Hewitt worked with his father at the Bolowa Watch factory in Sag Harbor, but during the summer months earned extra money as a screen-on rental fishing boats. He wanted to move to NYC and study at the Art Students League, but he could not afford it. Baumhofer heard Hewitt's praise for *The Savage* for an inspired painting session on Hither Beach, Sag Harbor Bay. That first cover with Carl Hewitt appeared on the September 1936 issue (vol.2, no.1).

On August 28, 1938, the artist was summoned to another meeting at Street & Smith, where he was told the company had decided to go ahead with the fourth teen pulp, five-five-a-month Western magazine. The good news was that they wanted every issue to have a cover by Walter Baumhofer. Street & Smith expected to make a fortune on these new projects, and for the profits to flow smoothly they needed to lock the artist into a legal agreement for a flat fee of \$100 each. They promised to buy as many as 24 covers a year, and the artist happily agreed to their impressive offer. As it happened, he never actually produced that many covers for them in a single year, but at that moment all that mattered was that he had his work cut out for him. He was sober, and he was suddenly the top cover artist at Street & Smith. The following



Pete Rice Magazine, February 1938

day he received a written confirmation of all aspects of their verbal agreement, with the request for notification if he was not in certain areas.

The first thing Walt and Pete did with their new wealth was to move out of the small apartment on Waverly Place and into a bigger one, five blocks away at 49 East 9th Street, near West Street. This new apartment was a duplex on the top floors of a five-story building, and featured high ceilings and a skylight. They had plenty of room for a shared art studio, kitchen, living room, and even a guest room.

Baumhofer was now faced with the joyous prospect to produce 24 covers for *The Gang-Up* and *Pete Rice* in the next 12 months. He was grateful for the miraculous serendipity of having discovered Carl Hewitt, so he generously offered him a steady job with a weekly salary and invited him to move to NYC and live in the guest room of their new apartment. Hewitt would first be able to afford his art education by modeling, and Baumhofer even offered to give him extra art lessons for free. The offer was too good to refuse. According to the artist, "Carl was the perfect type for *Disc*, his only drawback, if you can imagine an inalterable plus, was that he was quite short, which of course, I took care of in the painting. You understand in those days I painted directly from life. Of course, I used other models too. He lived with us for about a year, while I taught him what I know about lettering,



Original artwork from *Peter West* magazine, December 1955 (ill. on pages 23-27). Photograph by James Flann



Original cover for *Blue Western Magazine*, March 1934. 18 cm x 25 cm, 20" x 26". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Waco

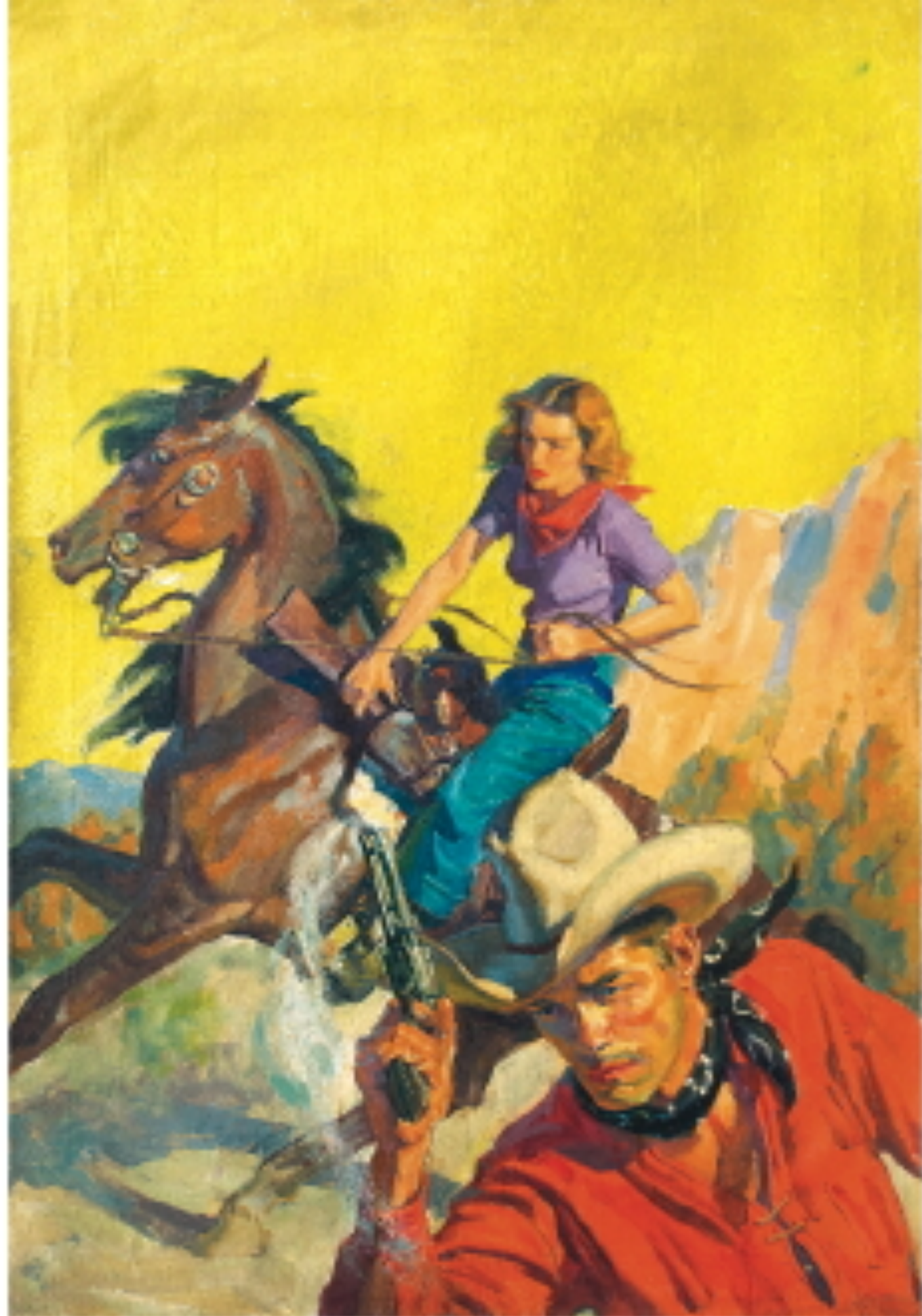


Original cover for *Blue Heaven Magazine*, April 1935. 36 in. across, 24" x 24". Photograph courtesy of David Bomberg



Original from the Pan Am magazine, April 1934. Oil on canvas, 36" x 20". Photograph courtesy of Illustration House, Inc.





Original cover for *The Blue-Headed Wagoner*, January 1938. Oil on canvas, 36" x 24". Photograph courtesy of David Saunders

A page from Beaudouin's ledger

which was considerable. I was paid in a letter long, long ago. Even did a whole damn architectural diploma in pseudo-book binding, designs, and all like that then. Carl became a commercial artist and then tried selling other artist's work. Eventually he disappeared from my life.

Since Carl Hewitt was living with the artist, he was obviously the most convenient model. For the sake of variety, however, Beaudouin had to use other models as well. To far as I can remember, Bill Caff also posed for *Styx River*, and his pals Murray and Terry, too. He also posed for *Dan's* five models. I don't know how I turned out the volume of paintings that I did, except I was young and horny. There was one month when I was pretty rushed and *Doc Savage*, *Doc Broc*, and a character did regularly for *Styx River* *Money Magazine*, *Miss Luck Book*, all bore a striking resemblance to each other. After a short talk with the Art Director, I never repeated that mistake!

Walter's older brother, Richard Beaudouin, had followed their father's original profession as an accountant. He worked for a Brooklyn branch of the Standard Oil Company. That same family trait of efficient record keeping is reflected in the artist's habit of maintaining a detailed logbook of business transactions. His ledger was composed of numbered notes in chronological order, divided into separate columns for magazine title, publisher's name, price, date of delivery, as well as date of receipt of payment. Although most professional artists did not keep such thorough accounts, this was a



Letter of agreement with Street and Smith Publications, August 24, 1933

practical way to keep track of payments in an industry with a reputation that was notoriously unreliable. Most fans of pulp magazines would be amazed to see Beaudouin's logbook entries for Street & Smith in 1934, with itemized payments of \$100 for every *Doc Savage* cover. Over the next 45 months, Walter Beaudouin painted the first 45 covers of *Doc Savage*.

### HARRY STEGER AND POPULAR PUBLICATIONS

While under his first annual contract with Street & Smith, the artist was approached by the owner of Popular Publications, Harry Steger (1883-1990), with a request to paint covers for his magazines *Doc Western*, *Doc Detective*, and *Doc Mystery*. Steger offered him \$100 for each cover. This new opportunity was a blessing as well as a burden. There was no exclusivity clause in his agreement with Street & Smith, so he did remain a freelance artist, but in order to compel him to maintain high standards he had promised that, "The artist will, on his part, not burden himself with extra work to such an extent that work done for us will suffer." According to the artist, "Steger used his advice down to my studio in Greenwich Village to try to evade me—do covers for Popular. I told him I'd have to take it up with Street & Smith. The office there was very down about it and said, 'Sure, as long as you work in a different cycle,' which I did—somewhat less detailed and splasher and lower than for Street & Smith."

Perhaps the most striking example of Beaudouin's use of an alternate style for Popular Publications is the cover he



Wild West Weekly, October 1923



Wild West Weekly, November 1923



Wild West Weekly, March 1924



Preliminary study for Wild West Weekly, March 1924. Graphite on paper



Dime Mystery Magazine, February 1934



Dime Mystery Magazine, March 1934



Dime Mystery Magazine, April 1934



Dime Mystery Magazine, May 1934



10 Dime Detective Magazine, November 25, 1938



10 Dime Detective Magazine, March 25, 1939



10 Dime Detective Magazine, May 25, 1938



10 Dime Detective Magazine, February 1, 1938



Original artwork for *The Edge of Tomorrow*, May 1988. Oil on canvas, 36" x 48". Photograph courtesy of Illustration House, Inc.



The Spider, January 1934

printed in 1931 for the first issue of *The Spider*. This classic pulp cover has a curious mixture of traditionally narrative painting with powerful elements of graphic design. It features a gigantic clenching hand against a solid purple background, with a stylized "web" of fat white lines entrapping four important characters—the cop, the dame, the villain, and the hero. This innovative pulp cover is a hybrid mixture of graphic design and representational painting, which reflects the striking quality of poster design that never so pronounced in the artist's earlier cover paintings for *Black Cat*.

Harry Steger fell in love with the art of Walter Baumhofer. In Steger's own words, "He was scintillating head and shoulders above his talented colleagues." According to John Gould, "In Harry Steger's eyes, Walter Baumhofer could do no wrong!" Although there may be a note of fraternal jealousy in his statement, Gould had also benefited by an exceptional long-term agreement with Harry Steger, who promised him a guaranteed annual income in exchange for exclusive loyalty. Over the next four years, Baumhofer painted over 81 covers for Popular Publications. His work appeared on *Dime Novels*, *Dime Mystery*, *Dime Detective*, *Detective Tales*, *13-Story Novels*, *New Western*, *All Mystery*, *Adventure*, *Sat Mystery*, and *Big-Sixty Mystery*. According



Baumhofer, writer pose



10 Dime Detective Magazine, January 1934

to Baumhofer, "Harry Steger was a very charming man. Every time I did not do a cover we would play ping-pong. I thought I was a pretty fair player, but he beat me practically every time, which I ascribe to his having an education at university. It wasn't a case of me losing on purpose, either. He was just damn good. Steger was able to clobber me into doing work for gratis. I know just how he did it....he knew I liked it. He paid me \$150 for *Adventure* covers when he was paying me \$275 for all the *Dime Detective* covers, but he could get away with this because he knew I liked doing them."

One of his most memorable paragraphs popular appeared on *Dime Detective* and featured a sinister gang leader of the "Ma Barker" type sewing up the lips of a tortured victim. This astounding image is both horrifying and humorous. But the greater significance of its playfulness is revealed by the fact that the artist based the "Gangland Gremlin" on a reference photo of his own mother.

This arrangement of his mother's pose for a macabre reference photo points out another interesting part of his creative approach to illustration. Unlike most other pulp artists, Walter Baumhofer intentionally composed his scenes with the theatrical flair of a Hollywood cameraman. He retained the role of the illustrator in the pulp industry was somewhat analogous



Adventure July 1934



Eschelte poses for reference photo

to the graphic role of the cinematographer in Hollywood. The same action-packed literature that inspired pulp magazines was also used in Hollywood movies, serials, and radio shows. In fact, the same authors worked for all four venues. Artists faced special challenges in visualizing stories of action and suspense. Finding a camera shot that would translate a movie audience required a directional skill that was similar to composing a successful pulp cover.

Beunhofer was born with a natural talent for showmanship. In his earliest photographs, he saw himself as "a child prodigy" playing his violin under a spotlight on a concert hall stage. That theatrical spirit of his youth was finally realized in his intense staging of costumed actors in dramatic scenes for reference photos. He shot hundreds of such photos, and most of them were carefully preserved. While studying this archive it becomes clear that he was his own most successful model, because he is the star in most of the photos. He enjoyed posing in costume with props and theatrical lighting, but more importantly, he made a genuine effort in each photo to impersonate a dramatic character with an evocative facial expression that makes the imaginary scene come alive. That is good acting and good directing.



Walter Beunhofer poses

While painting pulp covers for Popular Publications in his free time from Stead & Smith, there was little time to waste on blind models. So instead he used his wife, parents, friends, and neighbors to pose for reference photos. According to the artist, "Anything to save money!" He also used professional stills of famous Hollywood actors such as Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi for examples of sinister villains. He used a publicity photo of Ramon Novarro in the role of The Justice Doctor in *March* for his July 1934 cover of *Adventure*.

By comparing reference photos with preliminary sketches and final paintings, it becomes clear that there is no one-to-one correlation between the photos and his final works. If there were, it would be a sure sign of having mechanically transferred or traced the photograph. Instead, Beunhofer used photos as basic structural guidelines for his interpretative drawing skill. Every person seems in a distinctive way that is just as unique as their own handwriting. For this reason, many artists prefer to draw live-hand in order to cultivate a unique style, rather than rely on mechanical means to transfer lifeless design info from a photograph. According to the artist, "Someone once said about my work, and they put it so beautifully, that I was painting a scene that came from





Original from the *Illustrated*, January 1, 1918. 18 in. x 24 in. Photograph courtesy of Illustration House, Inc.



Complete Stories, April 1937



Adventure, March 1931



Dime Mystery Magazine, April 1931



Doc Savage, April 1933



10¢ Mystery Magazine, May 1938



Adventure, May 1938



10¢ Detective Magazine, June 1, 1938



Doc Savage, July 1938



Detective Tales, August 1938



Dime Mystery Magazine, August 1938



Dime Detective Magazine, September 1938



Dime Mystery Magazine, September 1938



Doc Savage Magazine, October 1931



Doc Savage Magazine, November 1931



Doc Savage Magazine, December 1931



Doc Savage, December 1931



Doc Savage, March 1934



Doc Savage, June 1934



Doc Savage, July 1934



Doc Savage, August 1934



Star-Weekend Magazine, June 1933



Star-Weekend Magazine, August 1933



Star-Weekend Magazine, January 1933



Adventure, April 1933



Cover of *10 Dime Western Magazine*, July 1938



Study for *10 Dime Western Magazine*, July 1938. Engraving on paper



Study for *10 Dime Western Magazine*, August 1938. Engraving on paper



Cover of *10 Dime Western Magazine*, August 1938



"make one's eyes hurt and consciousness." They were quite right. I wanted a feeling rather than an exact location."

Another outstanding quality in Baumhofer's work is the authenticity of his details. If he occasionally wrote that he'd read a Winchester, he would find one and make careful studies. A second-rate artist might simply swipe a generic "rifle" from some other pulp cover. In his pursuit of authenticity, Baumhofer visited locations that were featured in his paintings, such as hospitals, cafés, ships, and prisons, to make sketches and sketches as reference material. Although pulp covers were mainly designed to be striking images, the detail in Baumhofer's work was grounded in his sincere visual curiosity, which gave his work substance. In fact, his details were so convincing they were probably a big reason why so many other pulp artists copied his work. All art is based on an accumulated tradition of visual language. Baumhofer was always ready to admit his great admiration for the work of N. C. Wyeth (1881-1945), Dean Cornwell, and Frank Carter. But he would have never been satisfied to make lazy paintings that were only based on recipes of other artists' work. His mind was too inquisitive and his hand was too expressive.

According to Norman Saunders (1907-1989), "I have admired Walt for many years. I think he was one of the greatest pulp artists that ever existed. He was one of the very first to request the pulp magazines and his own product to the extent that he always painted from live models. Prior to Walt, the average pulp cover painter used old scraps and clips from pictures to produce a cover. There were a few exceptions, but

very few. Walt had a male model that he employed at a meager wage for a number of years. It was the magazine *The Savage* that gave him the opportunity to turn out a dozen 'K' covers, and he made the most of it. He really hit his stride when Sergio loved him for popular publications' features, mystery, and dime covers. He really turned them out, all good covers, along with a number of really excellent ones."

#### ON TO THE SUCCESS

In 1915, Walter Baumhofer began to sell black-and-white painted story illustrations to Liberty magazine for \$100, while Street & Smith had only raised his pay for covers to \$15. Harry Berger put his money where his mouth was, and paid \$25 for each Baumhofer cover. By the summer of 1914, he was getting so many higher-paying assignments from *Popular* and general interest magazines that he stopped working for Street & Smith. According to the artist, "In 1916, I was taking one leaf-let-ten-how-many illustrations for Liberty along with work for Street & Smith and *Popular*." As his backlog grew for 1916 alone, his total annual earnings from Street & Smith was only \$750, while at the same time Liberty had paid him \$900. By 1917, the artist had shifted his attention to the slick magazine market. Although his former editors in the pulps were happy to consider any further covers he might choose to offer, there was no logical motive or financial need for him to go back to working for the pulps. Nevertheless, it is interesting that Baumhofer continued to create several additional pulp covers for *Popular*. These later works suggest that

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Digital story illustration for library magazine, 2008. Oil on canvas, 20" x 42". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Illustration, HI.com



Digital story illustration for library magazine, 2008. Oil on canvas, 20" x 42". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Illustration, HI.com

his creative mind continued to invent fascinating compositions in the pulp "visuals," even after he had left the field, and apparently some of these ideas were just too inspiring to ignore. The artist said, "Illustrating pulp magazines was demanding work. Sure, it was demanding, but it was FUN. We were paid while we learned to paint. Was I happy with my work? You're damn right. I wouldn't want any other job. I usually did two paintings a week. Ten-hour days, seven-days a week. It was a splendid training ground."

Although freelance illustration in the pulp magazine field was inevitably competitive, many of the top artists forged lasting bonds of camaraderie. Along with Rudy Belavita, H. Walford Smith, Norman Saunders, Dave Berger, and John Gould, his friends from the pulps also included K. G. Harris (1911-2007), Tom LeVell (1909-1967), William Krossing (1901-1978), John Fuller (1910-1982), Rafael Dickson (1904-1982), Gustaf DeLano (1899-1972), and Nick Eggenbiller (1897-1985).

In 1930, Baumhofer joined the American Artists group, which was owned and operated by Edna Mendelsohn and her brother Sidney Mendelsohn at 47 West 48th Street in midtown Manhattan. They represented many important freelance artists, such as Tom LeVell, John Glynn (1887-1988), Walter Booth Humphrey (1892-1966), Robert G. Harris, and Bruce Chasicka (1911-2003). The Mendelsohns provided an important trustworthy middle ground between the conflicting needs of independent artists and their corporate clients. Over the next three decades they sold over 700 Baumhofer illustrations to national circulation magazines. His work appeared in *American Family*, *American Legion*, *American Magazine*, *American Monthly*, *Charities*, *Collier's*, *Compassion*, *Cosmo*, *Goodman*, *Grassy Home*, *Light*, *Longman's*, *Farm Journal*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Liberty*, *Life Story*, *Main Street*, *McCall's*, *Reader Digest*, *Rollback*, *The Week*, *Yody's*, *Woman*, *Woman's Day*, and *Woman's Home Companion*. He also illustrated advertisements for Lucky Strike, U.S. Steel, General Foods, Sagramin Whiskey, Maxwell House, Norel, and Frantz-Est.

According to the artist, "My favorite thing to do is painting. When I am not painting I spend my time doing things I also like to travel and make sketches and take photos. Photography is almost as much fun as painting, but even more work. My greatest ambition is to finish a picture far enough in advance of a deadline to see what it looks like before it appears irrevocably in print. Putting a my favorite work out there is also my favorite hobby. Where does a man go whose work and hobby are one and the same, for a nice quiet nervous breakdown?"

Although Yale and Rita remained extraordinarily playful for the rest of their lives, by 1958 they were no longer "promising youths." They left the Bohemian community of Greenwich Village and moved to the middle-class neighborhood of Washington Heights in upper-

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Digital story illustration for *The American Magazine*, 1911. Oil on canvas, 12' x 12'. Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, [www.ha.com](http://www.ha.com)



Digital story illustration for Liberty magazine, 1918. 100 as canvas, 107 x 107. Photograph courtesy of Heritage Illustrations, 100.com



Digital story illustration for Liberty magazine, 1918. 100 as canvas, 107 x 107. Photograph courtesy of Heritage Illustrations, 100.com



Original illustration for *Woman's Home Companion*, 1948. Oil on canvas, 27 1/2" x 44 1/2". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, TX, USA

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ment Manhattan at 78 Park Avenue West, which is near 216th Street and Broadway. They both pursued their respective professional careers, but by this time their roles had reversed. The AA Dose style of Alrodis work had gotten out of fashion and Walter was the major breadwinner in the family. They had no children. Alrodis' mother died at the age of 68 on February 25, 1939. Walter's mother died at the age of 68 on June 30, 1948.

In 1941, when asked by a reporter whether the author or the editor suggested how he should illustrate a story, Baumhofer explained, "I will be given a manuscript of a story and I may read it and re-read it a dozen times before I reach a determination as to the parts or characters to be portrayed." The artist's criticism for this profession is reflected in a further comment, "I think that despite the fact we have had magazine illustrations in color for several years, the industry is still in its infancy."

Twenty years earlier, as a promising teenager, he told a reporter, "I haven't made up my mind whether I will follow art or writing. I think I will probably be an. I'm very much interested in poster advertising. One seems to have accomplished so much when his work is displayed throughout the city." By 1941, he had indeed accomplished his dream and was a celebrated commercial artist. Unfortunately, he arrived at this pinnacle at the very moment when the industry had begun to decline. Instead of basking in public acclaim, he was constantly challenged to outshine more established competitors.

In the past, when he worked for the pulps, Baumhofer faced overwhelming pressure from the demanding production schedule. He survived this pressure by exercising an instinctual dramatic flair that sprung naturally from his heart and soul, which helped him reach to meet under such conditions. He also faced high pressure in the studio, but it came easily from not-picking editorial overnight. This sort of pressure could not be alleviated by an instinctual, barbed-wire spontaneity. If anything, it required the opposite skill—extreme diplomatic patience, and a supernatural foresight to anticipate possible objections from a team of marketing



Josef Kessel Kessel poses for a reference photo, 1938



The American Magazine, February 1938

reports. There was plenty of room for individuality among slick magazine illustrators, but there was one thing they all had in common: they had to design their work for a market that was entirely led by the national advertising industry. This meant that slick magazine illustrators had to help readers to visualize a subject in a way that would not offend anybody, because high-paid representatives of touchy advertisers were watching all the time to protect their client's good name from anything that anyone might find offensive. As Picasso once said, "The only thing in the world that is not offensive to anybody is mediocrity." Slick artists were inhibited from spontaneity by the fundamental criteria to avoid any hint of offensiveness. This was not the case in the pulps, which may explain why they were so sensationally expressive.

When Baumhofer worked as a pulp artist, he was only required to invent an exciting scene in a generic setting that reflected the genre of the magazine, such as "Detective," "Western," or "Horror." A slick magazine illustrator had to depict the specific location, characters, and details described

in a story. So his work for the mainstream media was more carefully researched, thoughtfully composed, and meticulously painted. This was partly why slick illustrations were better paid.

Baumhofer began each project with several pencil sketches drawn on transparent paper, which were shown to the client by the branch office, after which a written response of constructive suggestions was mailed to the artist. He then drew the suggested revisions on additional overlapping layers of transparent paper that were all taped together. To reach an approved design, the artist might accumulate a stack of ten layered revisions. This approach to creating an illustration was generally decided as "let by committee."

After winning approval of his preliminary design, Baumhofer would stage an elaborate photo shoot. His biggest budget permitted him to hire professional models and scenes, such as James Garner and John Forsythe, who gave his characters a more sophisticated theatrical quality. He shot many photos, and drew many studies. During this stage of



Digital Illustration for Women's Wear Corporation, 1948. Oil on canvas, 47 x 37. Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, M.com





Original story illustration for *Life* (Black magazine), 1942. Oil on canvas, 32" x 22". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, [www.ha.com](http://www.ha.com)



Digital illustration by Walter Baumhofer, June 1948 (ill. on cover, *JCP* 1:247). Photograph courtesy of Walter Baumhofer, Wisc.edu

the process, the artist might be asked to make minor changes or several small refinements. Even after the final painting of a fully approved design was delivered, there was still an unpleasant tendency of art directors to demand additional revisions. The *Illustrator* mediated this dialogue through correspondence, such as the following typical example: "Dear Mr. Baumhofer, The completed painting has been inspected by the committee and they would like to have a few corrections. Move the gun down slightly. Remove the smoke around the dog's head and install three steam sprays next to the bear's head. Add an upper canine tooth in the dog's mouth. Shorten the bear's jaw by removing some of the extra lower lip. The bear cub on the ground should have a more animated expression. The smoke on the cliffside should be grayed up a little. That's it. The art director would like you to make these few changes and have it back in ten days. Thank you." Commercial artists needed to tolerate such intrusive micromanagement by anxious middlemen and marketing experts if they wanted to survive the brutal business world of slick magazines.

By 1942, Baumhofer was a genuine hero in the big league

of American illustration art. He was competing for jobs with the best in the business. The only difference between him and artists like Norman Rockwell, Drew Carey, and M. Dore (1944-1965), was they were all more experienced, more accomplished, more celebrated, and commanded higher prices. Nevertheless, he held his own and established a significant reputation in the marketplace of American master illustrators. He joined the Society of Illustrators, which is still located in the same charming townhouse at 118 East 63rd Street, on the posh Upper East Side of Manhattan, where he rubbed elbows with the most celebrated artists, and perhaps even more important, the most powerful art directors in the industry.

During the month of December 1940, Walter Baumhofer had a one-man show at the Society of Illustrators. According to the artist, "Over a hundred people attended, and the punch was marvelous. I particularly remember Otto Soglow (1906-1971) being there, but he was present almost as much as Arthur 'Brosnan' Brown (1901-1968). Duke Goddard (1883-1974) I also remember the Broadway impresario Billy Rose, of the 1939 World's Fair Aquacade fame, coming to the opening—in a club, yet! He made me feel swell of the event.



Original color illustration by Theodor van Dijk, October 1951. In color, 20" x 20". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Dallas



Original story illustration. 38 columns, 14 1/2 x 14 1/2. Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Houston



Original work illustration. Oil on canvas, 22" x 26". Photograph courtesy of Artspiegel.com, 2015.



1942: Charcoal portraits of servicemen making Radio Boatswain during WWII



Digital story illustration. Oil on canvas. Photograph courtesy of Illustration House, Inc.

I often wonder whether he saw any of the paintings. Over time Eleanor Helen, the famous Olympic swimmer and watercolorist, was his wife at that time, so she must have perceived his involvement up. He wore a chain like "the Shadow" before it or me. It was a smothering success, if I do say so myself."

During WWII, he was 18 years old and missing parts of three fingers on his left hand, so he was exempt from military service. Thanks to the patriotic leadership of Charles Dana Gibson and James Montgomery Flagg (1877-1960),

the Society of Illustrators organized a nationwide program in conjunction with the U.S.O. to mobilize 400 volunteer artists to visit veterans hospitals to draw portraits of wounded servicemen. This program was a miraculous and heart-warming success. Doctors and nurses discovered that the wounded soldiers experienced improved self-esteem after posing for a portrait sketch by a famous magazine artist. A free photo-static copy of each drawing was mailed home to the serviceman's grateful family, so the program did wonders for wartime morale. Thane Brambleton was proud to serve in this program, and drew hundreds of portraits during his visits to recovery wards in several NYC hospitals, as well as a trip to the Marine Corps Hospital at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina. It is

estimated that U.S.O. artists drew over four million portraits of recovering servicemen.

On September 1, 1944, Walter and Thelda bought a 50000 house at 26 School Street in Montpelier, VT, on Long Island. It was a Dutch Colonial home, built in 1898, surrounded by trees, where they lived for the rest of their lives in the comfort of upscale suburbia. According to the artist, "Sometimes I like to lie in my hammock in the back yard. It might seem like I am loitering around, but I am concentrating on painting.

Although there is no painting, no mud, no brushes, no paints. What I am doing is THINKING, the toughest part of the whole creative process. After recharging my batteries in this manner, I go back to work."

After WWII, everything changed while civilization underwent critical reconstruction. Along with politics, commerce, labor relations, and civil rights, norms in popular culture also changed. The post-war years saw a consolidation of worldwide industrial interests. Increased mass production demanded more efficient mass marketing. At that time, magazines were still the major mass media for delivering national brand advertising.

Walter's father died at the age of 78 on July 11, 1948. Alameda's stepfather died at the age of 62 on November 15, 1952.



Thane Brambleton, 1944



Digital story illustration for "The Black" 1940. Oil on canvas, 31" x 37". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, [www.ah.com](http://www.ah.com)



Digital story illustration for "The Black" 1940. Oil on canvas, 31" x 37". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, [www.ah.com](http://www.ah.com)



In 1940, Walter Baumhofer earned \$10,000 with the American Artists agency. This was his highest annual income. The artist playfully attributed his success in this field to the fact that he "finally learned to do a pretty girl." His covers for *Illustrated Day* paid \$1000, minus 20% for his agent.

In 1956, the Kerper-Thomas Company hired Walter Baumhofer to replace the 80-year-old Arthur Lecher (1877-1960), who had painted calendars for the company for 13 years, but whose production level was slowed by old age.

In 1958, the McClary-Cumming Calendar Company fired Walter Beach Humphrey, age 46, who had been under contract for many years, because he refused to accept a 30% reduction in fee. They replaced him with Walter Baumhofer, who painted a calendar entitled "The Yellow Wallpaper" that was based on his impressive 1932 Henry Sey cover.

The scarcity of illustrations during the 1970s eventually made it more attractive than magazines as the major media for high-priced advertising. In response to these social changes, the budgets of magazines began to decline. When the top illustrators were forced to accept lower fees, there was hardly enough work in the field for all 12 of the founding fathers of the Famous Artists School.

By 1980, Baumhofer began to receive fewer assignments from high-class publications, and more jobs from men's adventure magazines such as *Argosy*, *Gunfire*, *Overland Life*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *True*. Oddly enough, these were published by some of the same companies that had produced pulp magazines, such as *Avon* and *Popular Publications*. So in some

ways his career had come full circle. His logbook from 1980 shows that he was paid \$300 for a *Cavalier* magazine painting, while in 1930 he was paid \$275 for a *True Detective* painting. Although the cost of living had soared during the interim, working much had changed in his deposit slips. Times were tough in the magazine industry. In cut costs, some publishers began to re-use old paintings without the artist's approval—or payment, Baumhofer said. "Sometimes my work has been reprinted, which does nothing to line my pocket—only thins. Nevertheless, I would like my work to have the widest distribution possible. Does this sound like an ego trip?"

#### THE FINAL YEARS

Throughout his long career, Baumhofer received fan mail and patiently replied to every letter. While illustrating men's adventure magazines, he received a fan letter from a young artist who asked what it was like to be a famous *Sports Illustrated* artist. Baumhofer wrote back, "I myself have worked, and do work, in a variety of capacities. I like some variety, you see. Some people wonder if the illustration profession is overcrowded; this is a moot question—crowded, yes, but it's not over-crowded if you have what the magazines want. Some magazines prefer photographs, but they lose something when they switch from illustrations to photographs. A photographer snaps a fisherman when he's holding up the fish. An artist captures the moment before that, before you know if the fish got hooked, or the dirt got snagged. It is a lost thing. As to whether this is a rewarding field, that depends upon



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Original cover for *The American Magazine*, September 1941. Oil on canvas, 30" x 30". Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, Houston



Illustration for The Thomas D. Murphy Calendar Company, 1940.

on what is meant by 'rewriting.' If one means in a financial sense, I must in all honesty say that there are other areas of endeavor that pay a good deal better. You have to remember that the number of publications in the field is rather limited, and the price scale in outdoor adventure magazines is lower than in the general appeal "lifestyl" magazines, or in the field of women's magazines. If, on the other hand, one is looking for work that's hot for someone with an interest in such things, this is your meat. If a young person were planning to enter the field of illustration, my advice to them is DON'T! It doesn't exist all one knows it. It only exists in a few specialized magazines. The field is much narrower than when my illustration career was at its height. There is no special formula for how to get started. You just have to submit your samples to the Art Directors, and if you know your stuff and can paint and draw realistically and ENTHUSIASTICALLY, believe me, they don't care whether you're a neophyte or an old hand."

Other fan mail came from readers that were old enough to recognize Kramlich's signature from his earlier work in the pulp. The artist responded to one such inquiry, "Thanks for remembering—the Savage and the '80s were a long time ago, but a time of fun and excitement. Maybe we were all a bit more innocent, perhaps even naive then, as was the whole world. Whatever it was, I look back on it with considerable

nostalgia. As for myself, in the intervening years my stuff has appeared in almost every 'slick' magazine in the field. I went through a protracted period when I was particularly in demand for my he-and-she romantic glamour girl stuff. Being now somewhat long in the tooth for that sort of thing, I've come back to my first love—outdoor stuff, wild animal pics, etc. I do a lot of calendars, including historical subjects, horses, hunting dogs, etc. By the way you may not know that, but Robert W. Hays, the Art Editor at *Outdoor Life*, was on the staff at *Savage & South* during the *Doc Savage* days. The original cover paintings of the *Doc Savage* series had a way of disappearing, but I did manage to get hold of three or four, including the very first one, which I'm understandably sentimentally attached to." The four *Doc Savage* cover paintings he owned were March 1933 (vol. 1, no. 3), April 1933 (vol. 1, no. 2), April 1934 (vol. 1, no. 1), and June 1934 (vol. 3, no. 4).

By 1938, he had painted five annual calendars of fabulous scenes for the Thomas D. Murphy Company. He also painted for that same company a variety of calendars with wholesome themes, such as Americana, Will Rogers, Tolly Roosevelt, horses, hunting dogs, outdoor sports, and the 4-40 Club. His work for this company was guided by the (dame's) advice, "We want a happy subject. You know a calendar hangs 365 days, and no-one wants to look at something frightening, vicious or



Original cover for *Loggins*, May 1953 (68 as cover, 307's 207). Photograph courtesy of Heritage Auctions, [www.ah.com](http://www.ah.com)



Colin Bantfoote (aged 40) With Father's Old Horse (1961)

depressing—especially in a small country store. So would you mind doing a calendar that is happy?" The artist was willing to oblige, but as time went on he preferred to sign such works with the alias "Martin Wilbur."

By 1963, his commercial assignments had slowed to a trickle. The classic era of illustration art was over. That same year, Norman Rockwell was fired from the *Saturday Evening Post* after having painted 321 covers for them. On November 15, 1963, Colin Bantfoote wrote, "Dear Walter, All I can say is this is the worst year we have ever had in the history of our business, and I have never worked harder, so hard, in fact, that even with staying at work until I was ready to drop I just couldn't manage to get this written to you until now. I'm sorry. But I was still trying to get you a job, which unfortunately did not materialize. Anyway, the committee studied the new color sketches you submitted and decided to commission Mr. Bantfoote, under the name Martin Wilbur, to proceed with the painting of the one marked No. 2. They hope you can get busy on this at an early date. For the love of Pete, do a great picture because I simply had to say that your final painting would be as close as the dickens. I'm going nuts in this business."

Traditional narrative painting had grown unprofitable

and was replaced by a Pop Art graphic style, which in a sense was closer to his initial interest in poster design, but more pointedly had retained the chosen style of Albrecht Dürer, whose career began to experience a renewed vigor during the 1960s. Once again her work became more popular than his. She designed dozens of beach towels, kitchen towels, bath mats, and linen calendars that were manufactured for Ganson by the Hockley Brothers, Inc., a NYC screen printing company.

In 1964, Bantfoote commissioned a younger artist to invent a new look for their series of Doc Strugg paperbacks. According to Bantfoote, "The fact is, Len Lyons, Art Director at Bantfoote Books—and supposedly an old friend of mine—never considered me, as far as I know. Apparently they wanted more of a Science Fiction approach from the adventure approach, which I used. Hence, the 85-year-old Doc with a pointed head. I don't like this portrayal of Doc, but it was probably dictated by Bantfoote."

In July of 1963, Colin Bantfoote retired from the art agency she had founded 25 years before. Business was terrific, but without her special talent and charm it just grew worse. Bantfoote struggled to remain loyal to the family-owned agency for another 10 years, but eventually sent a formal resignation to the American Artist Agency: "As of this date, you



Original illustration for *Outdoor Life*, September 1934. Illustration and sketch for artwork, *Life*'s 24<sup>th</sup>. Photograph courtesy of the artist, Wilson

no longer represent me. I'm sure this comes as no surprise to you, as in the last five years you haven't gotten me one job that wasn't laid in your lap. Please have all of my samples ready for retrieval. With some fond memories of the past. Sincerely, Walter M. Baumhofer."

After leaving the agency, he tried to stir up his own freelance side. He wrote personal appeals to his past clients in an effort to find assignments. "Dear Bob, I'm writing to you because I feel I know you. I would like to find out whether there is any market for *Home and Hunting* Day paintings...also perhaps *Winners*, if Murphy puts out any of these novelties. As to the 48 Calendars, they were fun at first, when the subjects were real, but when the client insisted on a combination of real and fabric, with every face represented, it was rather like trying to hit a single target with a handful of arrows, instead of one direct to the bull's eye. I enjoyed working with you, but I had to give up on 48, the way it became. By the way, I'm no longer represented by American Artists Representation, a thing I should have done long ago. I hope you can be of help to me. Sincerely, Walter M. Baumhofer."

By 1978, without any clients, he was forced to return from freelance illustration. His style of painting was out of fashion, and the taste

of popular culture had passed him by. According to the artist, "Today most illustration is dead. It was killed by photography. It's sad, but true. Editors now prefer photography to illustration, but it has its fruits. In the old days, the pulps were escape reading, but nowadays people's escape reading has become television." He kept busy painting portraits, landscapes, and scenes of the Old West for exhibition in fine art galleries nationwide. Here again, his prices were low and royalties were low and far between.

In 1978, he was shocked to be "rediscovered" by another slice of pulp magazine. He was a guest speaker and the Guest of Honor at several conventions, where he was mobbed by fans and autograph hounds. He was also discovered and interviewed in several features.

He received his mail and passed along news to several of his old pals from the pulp era, such as the following letter to Norman Saunders in December 26, 1980: "Dear Norm, How about you? What're you doing these days? Harry Sogor tells me he met you at several Pulpcons. I've only been to one, in 1978, and they presented me with a plaque, inscribed, TO WALTER M. BAUMHOFFER IN APPRECIATION OF HIS MAJESTIC ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS, PULP/3250-4 JUNE 28, 1978 BOSTON, OHIO. Very flattering. I must



Plaque commemorating plaque, 1978

up. Delle's day in touch. Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. Wilt."

In 1983, he received a rare freelance assignment to create a cover painting in his classic pulp style for a new edition of *The Spide*. His proposed variations (compositions) until one design was selected for further development. But before he was able to paint the approved design, he suffered a serious riding accident in August of 1984, when he was thrown by a horse. His back was broken, and his left arm and right hip were fractured. Besides the pain, the hardest part was to remain inactive while he recuperated, which he had not done since his childhood accident in 1915.

In one of his last letters, the artist reflected on his art and life. "These works represent my whole life. They bring back so many memories—memories of times long past, of music, assignments, stories, editors, and long hours of work, of days when illustration was alive and vigorous. As my friend R. G. Harris says, 'We had the best of it.' The time I spent in the pulps, about 10 years, was I think the most fun of my whole life. Sure, I enjoyed the slicks, particularly enjoyed the money. But I enjoyed the pulps more. Those were good, exciting times. I've always felt the same in that I've been able to do something. I really enjoyed doing it. Maybe art is immortal, but I wasn't painting for posterity. I just tried to do the best damn job I



March to the Spide, 1983

was capable of. I liked to paint action, and still do—action and men in action. I intend to go on painting for the rest of my life. It's too much fun to quit. Besides painting, my favorite things in life are cats, water skiing, and flycatching. My wife and I live with two cats who don't get along, and who boss us around tremendously. Hope you're interested in this junk."

Walter H. Baumhofer died at the age of 93 on September 15, 2007. His studio mate, confidant, best friend, and wife, Alanda Baumhofer, died on July 11, 1999.

It might be some kind of miracle, but many artists seemed to preserve a glimmer of their creative spirit within their work. Somehow that spark continues to captivate and fascinate after in some clear or quiet way to anyone who loves art. Although Walter Baumhofer has been gone a good many years, his art has captured for all posterity an inspiring glimpse of his charismatic personality, and his energetic soul that was larger than life. ♦

—by David Saunders, 2014

Interviews were conducted with the artist, his family and friends. Special thanks to Paul Lantz, Walt Hunt, Neil Wang, John Gannon, Walker Martin, Phil Stephenson-Pearl, William Contents, William Lumpkin, Chris Barb, and Jack Clarfield. Archival research was conducted at the Pull Institute Archives, the New York Society of Illustrators, the New York Public Library, the U.S. Census Bureau, the New York Times, and the Library of Congress.

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### JOHN SLOAN DRAWING ON ILLUSTRATION

BY MICHAEL LABEL  
240 PAGES, COLOR & BLACK AND WHITE  
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WILEY-INTERSCIENCE, 2014

The American realist artist John Sloan (1873–1951) is best known for his portraits of daily life in early 20th-century New York and as a member of The Eight and the Ashcan School, alongside peers like Robert Henri, Everett Ruess, and George Luks. Sloan's artistic approach was shaped by his experience as a commercial illustrator, a type of work that inaugurated his professional career—at newspapers like the Philadelphia Press and later for mass-market magazines—and which he pursued even after he turned his focus to painting. In *John Sloan: Drawing on Illustration*, Michael Label explores the impact of Sloan's illustrating on his wider output, including his paintings, his drawings for the radical journal *The Masses*, and his response to the watershed 1911 *Jamaica Store* illuminating the interaction between art and popular culture; this book provides an important new framework for understanding the modern genre of illustration, and is a doing teacher on major 20th-century artworks, including the rise and expansion of the mass media and the visual legacy of European modernism.



### JOHN VAN HAMMERFELD—COOLHAUS STUDIO: 58 YEARS OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

BY JOHN VAN HAMMERFELD  
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WILEY-INTERSCIENCE, 2014

The cutting visual art of John Van Hammerfeld's long and varied career is encapsulated in *John Van Hammerfeld: Coolhaus Studio: 58 Years of Graphic Design*, which features the artist's illustrations, graphic design, and photographs. In the early 1960s while attending Art Center College of Design by day he began his professional career as an director of *Soyuz* magazine. By the mid-'60s, Van Hammerfeld's ground-breaking promotional posters for the cult rock film *The Beatles Summer* was making the rounds, and a name for its creator is the process. Eventually Van Hammerfeld derived his talents toward creating exciting concert posters promoting shows by the likes of Jimi Hendrix, Jefferson Airplane, The Who and more. By the late '60s, John was hired as an art director for Capitol Records when he went on to design over 100 album covers, including *The Magical Mystery Tour* by The Beatles, *Gold on the Move* by the Rolling Stones, *Galaxy from the Clouds* by the Grateful Dead, and *This is What We Saw* by Public Image Ltd. To name a few. Van Hammerfeld's psychedelic renderings, whether for posters or albums, are widely regarded as some of the best of the form, but what readers may be surprised to discover is just how dynamic the rest of his work is: his output as a draftsman, designer and photographer continues to be impressive and compelling.



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BONO'S BOOKREFERENCE PRESS, 2014  
WWW.BONOPRESS.COM

The second volume in a series of books on one of Benicio's best and most prolific illustrations, *Benicio*, has just been released. If you were lucky enough to snag Volume One, then you will be eagerly awaiting this new release. Its rare availability in the United States will be limited, so check the Reference Press website for more information.



### CANNON

BY WALLACE WOOD  
208 PAGES, BLACK AND WHITE  
\$30.00 HARDCOVER  
WILEY-INTERSCIENCE, 2014

*Cannon* is by the legendary Wallace Wood (1914–82), DC Comics, Danbury. The strip appeared every week for two and a half years in *Overton Weekly*, a newspaper distributed nationwide U.S. Military bases around the world. Unconcerned by commercial editorial restrictions, Wood pulled out all the stops—producing a thrilling and subversive Cold War spy serial run amok with brutal violence and titillating sex, all in an effort to boost morale and support the troops. The character John Cannon was the perfect agent, and America's answer to James Bond. Initially brainwashed by the terrifying, voluptuous, and always half-naked Madame Toy to be the perfect assassin for the Red Forces, Cannon was eventually rescued and brainwashed (again) by the CIA, and he had no choices whatsoever. Under the employ of the Central Intelligence Agency, Cannon experienced action like no other agent in literature. Undercover and under the covers, Cannon valiantly made tortures by beautiful women, explosive gunplay, nail calipers, bone-crunching plastic surgery, nudity, Hitler, nuclear leveling, Wiesel the spy, naked women, death from above, and more naked women! Take that, OR! Together with the Wallace Wood Team, and working from newly unearthed source material, Fantagraphics Books has produced the biggest, best, and best-looking collection of Cannon ever assembled.



### PERFECT NONSENSE: THE CHAOTIC COMICS AND GOOY GAMES OF GEORGE CARLSON

BY GEORGE CARLSON, TEXTS BY DANIEL HEZBERG  
100 PAGES, FULL COLOR  
\$40.00 HARDCOVER  
FANTAGRAPHICS, 2014

*Perfect Nonsense* tells the complete story behind one of the most innovative and under-rated Golden Age artists, classic



children's illustrations, and numerous parts in American history. For more than 50 years, George Carlson created thousands of distinctive and dynamic cartoons, comics, middles, and games that thrilled both children and adults with their lacerating quip and nonverbal humor.

Carlson's inspired cartoons — ranging from the intellectual to the carnal — place him among not only acknowledged masters of American humor like George Herriman, S. I. Feynman, Will Gross, Bill Holman, and Jack Frost, but also globally celebrated absurdist like Robert Rauschenberg, and his life-long inspiration, Louis Carroll.

Carlson also made his mark as an accomplished designer of movie screenplays including magazine covers, political cartoons, advertisements, book covers and novel illustrations, and most famously, the original book jacket for the first edition of Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*. This new book offers a meticulously researched critical introduction, key examples of original art and unpublished projects, and a biographical timeline of Carlson's first three decades as a commercial artist drawing on recently unearthed artifacts from the Carlson family estate.



**THE BLIGHTED EYE: COMIC ART FROM THE GLENN BRAY COLLECTION**

BY VARIOUS  
 168 PAGES, FULL COLOR  
 \$45.00, HARDCOVER  
 FOR INFORMATION, VISIT

*The Blighted Eye* is the most copious, the most diverse, and the most lavish compilation of original comic art ever published—all from the mind-boggling collection of Glenn Bray. Bray was an enthusiast of marginal or outsider American pop culture when he started to collect original comic art in 1983—a time when very few people, including the artists themselves, truly valued the original art. Bray has, over the last nearly 30 years, amassed the most eclectic collection of original comic art in private hands. *The Blighted Eye* is not only the greatest collection of original art ever produced, but a testament to Bray's dogged and visionary commitment to preserving the work by the greatest artists working in an art form habitually scorned or by cultural gatekeepers throughout most of the 20th century.

The book features work by a pantheon of cartooning masters, including Charles Addams, Carl Barck, Charles Burns, Al Capp, David Clowes, Jack Cole, E. Crumb, Jack Davis, Kim Deitch, Will Elder, Al Feldstein, Virgil Finlay, Drew Friedman, Chester Gould, John Green, Rick Griffin, Bill Griffith, Matt Groening, George Gross, Y.T. Hander, Jaime Hernandez, George Herriman, Al Hirschfeld, Graham Ingels, Keweenaw Knight, Harvey Kurtzman, Gary Kuster, Virgil Swartz, Sergio Pons, Steve Rude, Charles Rodriguez, Spain Rodriguez, Charles Schulz, Gilbert Schar, Iwan Szwarc, Stanislav Szelestak, Irving Tapp, Chris Ware, S. Clay Wilson, Paul Willman, Wallace Wood, Jim Woodring, Ian Young, and—it should go without saying—many more. ♦



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# EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

## **Drew Friedman: Old Jewish Comedians**

March 5 through May 3, 2014  
The Society of Illustrators, NY

Drew Friedman's *Old Jewish Comedians* was a recent trilogy of books of portraits, lovingly celebrating the greatest Jewish comedians of the 20th century, from the famous (The Marx Brothers, Three Stooges, Jack Benny, Milton Berle, Jerry Lewis, Don Rickles, Mel Brooks, Joan Rivers, etc.), to the more obscure, (Shmucka Wladnick, Bert Gardner, Al Kelly, Ben Blue, Billy Barth, etc.).

The Society of Illustrators will present a 2-floor gallery show of "Old Jewish Comedians," showcasing Friedman's original artwork from all three books, as well as early rough sketches and additional Jewish cartoonist art created by Friedman for book, print and DVD covers. Short biographies of each comedian will accompany each portrait. This will represent the most comprehensive display of original Drew Friedman artwork to date, containing over 100 illustrations.

For more information, visit [www.societyofillustrators.org](http://www.societyofillustrators.org)

## **Stark Reality—An Exhibition and Sale of the Caricatures of Bruce Stark**

July 11 through August 2, 2014  
The Illustration House, NY

Born in New York in 1935, Bruce Stark attended the School of Visual Arts, and obtained steady work at the *New York Daily News* where his "Stark Impressions" could be seen on its pages for 21 years. Stark went on to do sports cartoons, TV Guide covers, and he even produced his own animated television special for ABC, *The Mad Mad Mad Comedians*, in 1979.

Curated by Zedick Longbeck, the show will include two dozen watercolors and ink drawings from his best-known projects and of his best-known victims, including Martin Brando, Jonathan Winters, Richard Nixon, as well as his high-profile appearances of threats of *Hill Street Blues*, *Son of a Gun* and *Jan and Cheryl* from *TV Guide*, and many more.

For more information, call 212-980-8104

## **Baseball, Budweiser, and Automobiles: The Art of Murray Tinkelman**

March 20 through June 15, 2014  
The Norman Rockwell Museum, NY

Murray Tinkelman is an award-winning artist who has received illustration's highest honors from the Society of Illustrators, The New York Art Directors Club, and the Society of Publication Designers. His beautifully con-

ceived and rendered pen and ink drawings have appeared in many publications including the *Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and more. An exceptional educator, he has inspired generations of illustrators at Syracuse University and at the Harvard School of Art, among others. Baseball, soldiers, clowns, cars, and other themes will be reflected in the works on view.

For more information, visit [nm.org](http://nm.org)

## **Harvey Dunn and His Students**

November 7, 2014 through May 30, 2015  
The Norman Rockwell Museum, MA

An exceptional illustrator of America's Golden Age, Harvey Dunn (1894-1952) was a prodigy of legendary artist Howard Pyle who became an admired teacher in his own right. Born in a claim shanty in Manchester, South Dakota, he took classes at the Chicago Art Institute before studying with Pyle and opening his own studio in Wilmington, Delaware. This first major exhibition of Dunn's art, organized in conjunction with the South Dakota Museum of Art, will feature his stunning painterly illustrations for the prominent periodicals of his day, including *Kodak's*, *Harper's*, *Godey's Monthly*, *Courier*, *Congreg.* and the *Saturday Evening Post*. It will also feature powerful works created for the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I in which he revealed the unforgettable realities of war, as well as the artist's prairie paintings, inspired by his life-long love of South Dakota's landscape and history. Original artworks by Dunn's prodigious students, including Oscar Greenwell, Harold von Schmidt, Saul Tupper, John Clymer, Lyman Anderson, James E. Allen, among others, will also be featured. ➤

For more information, visit [nm.org](http://nm.org)

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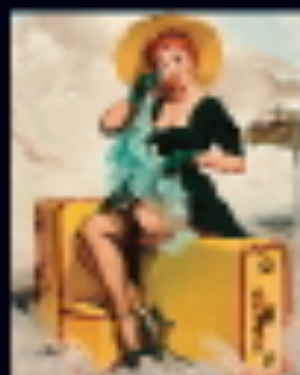
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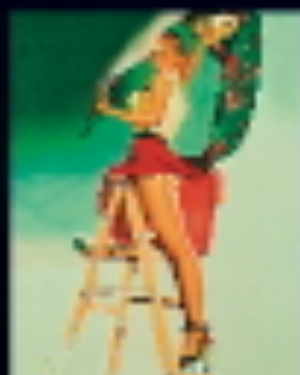
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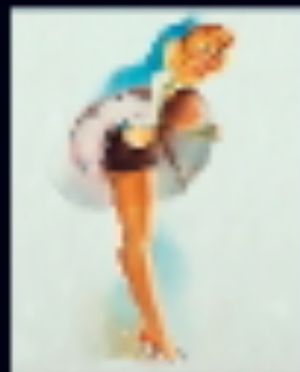
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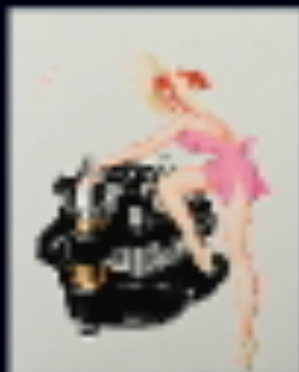
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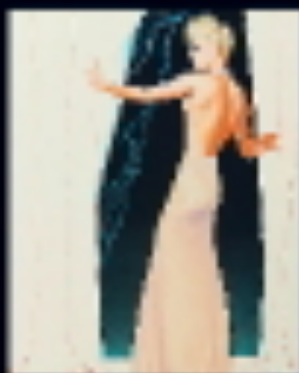
**GEORGE PETTY**  
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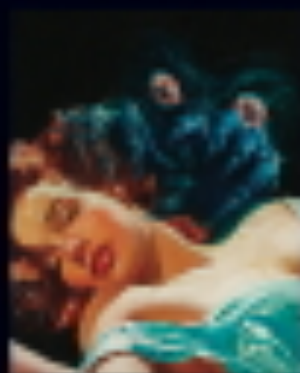
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The Illustration and the dress about  
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