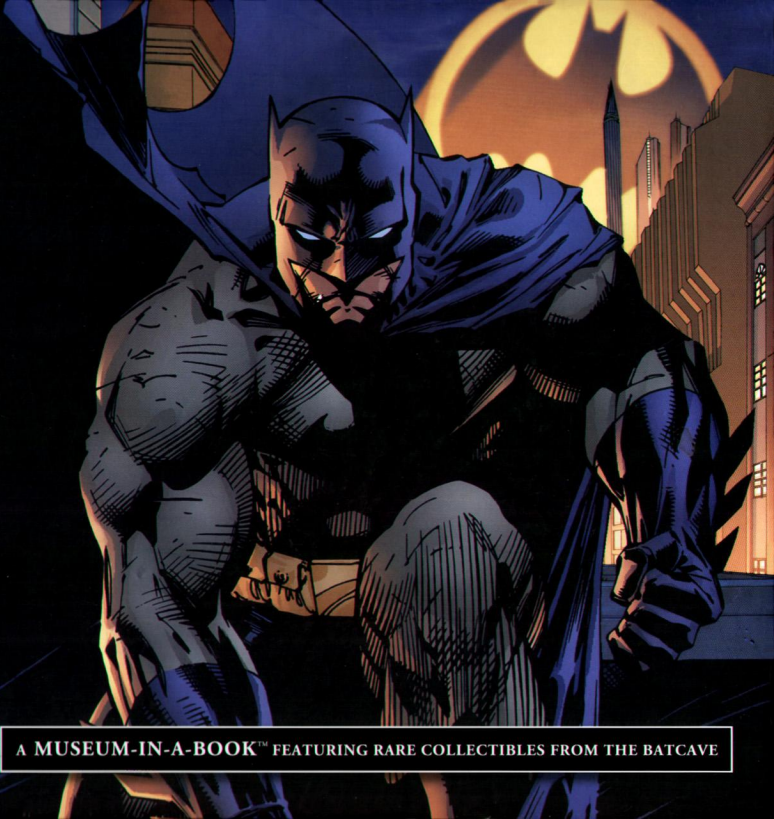


# THE BATMAN VAULT

ROBERT GREENBERGER  
MATTHEW K. MANNING  
*Foreword by Jerry Robinson*

A MUSEUM-IN-A-BOOK™ FEATURING RARE COLLECTIBLES FROM THE BATCAVE



**BATMAN**

With **ROBIN** THE BOY WONDER

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

WITH **Robin**  
THE BOY WONDER

**BATMAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN**

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**BAT MAN**

**ROBIN**

**BAT MAN**

Don't miss it!

**THE BATMAN!**



This new  
thrilling-adventure  
strip

starts in

the May issue of

**DETECTIVE COMICS!**

## **THE BATMAN VAULT**

A Museum-in-a-Book™ Featuring Rare Collectibles from the Batcave

by Robert Greenberger and Matthew K. Manning • Batman created by Bob Kane

Foreword by Jerry Robinson

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Printed in China through Legend Color Ltd., Hong Kong

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Digit on the right indicates the number of this printing

Library of Congress Control Number:  
2009920797

ISBN-13: 978-0-7624-3663-7

*The Batman Vault* is produced by becker&mayer!,  
Bellevue, Washington  
[www.beckermayer.com](http://www.beckermayer.com)

Archival photography by  
Geoff Spear

Cover Design: Georg Brewer  
Design: Samantha Caplan  
Editorial: Meghan Cleary  
Image Research: Chris Campbell  
Licensing: Josh Anderson

Production Coordination: Leah Finger & Tom Miller

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Running Press Book Publishers  
2300 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

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PAGE 1: Batman made his first printed appearance in this ad from Action Comics #12 (May 1939). LEFT: A gorgeous lithograph produced in 1996 by veteran Batman artist Dick Sprang, whose artistic style was the best recognized Batman art from the 1940s through the late 1950s.

## FOREWORD

### THE BIRTH OF THE JOKER

Seventy years ago, while a journalism student at Columbia University, I joined the team of Bob Kane and Bill Finger on the new Batman series for Detective Comics. His popularity growing, Batman was given his own book the following year, 1940. Four more stories for the new Batman quarterly, together with a monthly story for Detective Comics, was a challenge to the team, especially Bill Finger. Bill's dynamic scripts were the best in the fledgling genre, but he was not prolific. As an aspiring writer myself, I eagerly volunteered to pen one of the four new stories. Bob and Bill took up my offer. They were aware of my creative writing courses, had read some of my short stories, and knew of my career ambitions in journalism. What began as a job to pay for college turned into an incredibly exciting opportunity to write and draw a Batman story!

The thirties were the era of the gangsters Dillinger, Machine Gun Kelly, Pretty Boy Floyd, and Bonnie and Clyde—hijackers, embezzlers, and bank robbers. They were the models for most of the villains in the comics. I knew from my studies that the greatest heroes in literature had memorable antagonists—from David's Goliath to Sherlock Holmes' Moriarty. So my first idea was to start with a striking villain, one who would be a true test for Batman. Some argued that a too-strong villain would overpower the hero in terms of the story, but I disagreed. Heroes can be dull—they have to be good and well, heroic. With their essential flaws, villains are more interesting, and the more formidable the villain, the stronger the hero.

So I set out to dream up a villain worthy of Batman. A memorable character has an internal contradiction—as would a villain with a sense of humor—albeit a deadly one. I found a deck of playing cards with the classic jester image I wanted, and then

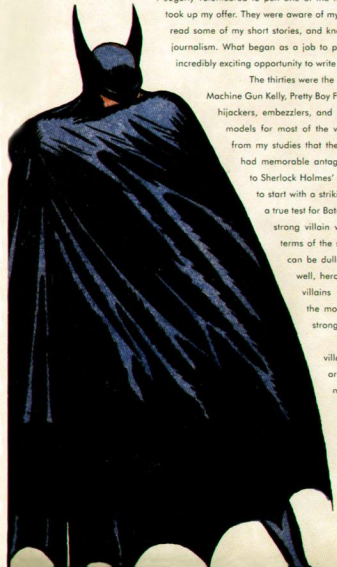
I knew I also had the name! "That's it!" I shouted to myself in a eureka moment. Immediately, I drew the first concept sketch based on the Joker card. I kept the white face and red lips from the card and added the green hair—I wanted him to be bizarre. I spent the rest of the night writing a character profile to round out his persona and M.O. for the story. With the genius of Bill Finger's script, the Joker turned out to be the first super-villain in the comic books. I still have that drawing—it's currently part of an exhibition of rare original comic art on a museum tour of the United States and abroad.

Seventy years is a long time for a crime-fighter to be prowling the streets of Gotham City—even one as heroic as Batman—and many writers and artists have come along since Bob Kane and Bill Finger and I contributed our stories.

I've seen many inspired interpretations of the Joker, from the brilliant artwork of Neal Adams and Frank Miller, to the tour de force performances of Jack Nicholson and Heath Ledger—even the TV camp of Cesar Romero! Sadly, there will be no Ledger encore, but I am proud knowing that the Joker will be back someday to torment Gotham City and challenge Batman.

The *Batman Vault* is a trip down memory lane for me. It's gratifying that the Caped Crusader and supporting cast that we developed so long ago—among them, Robin, Penguin, Two-Face, Scarecrow, and Alfred—are as popular today as they were in 1939. Here's to the next seventy years!

— JERRY ROBINSON



## INTRODUCTION

I first met Batman in 1989. But to be fair, he was pretty hard to avoid. With Warner Bros.' summer blockbuster hijacking every movie theater in town, Batman's logo was plastered on everything from coffee mugs to music videos. The country was being hit with a new wave of Batmania, and I was at the perfect age to get swept away with the tide.

It wasn't long before I found my way into a comic shop. A relatively new innovation at the time, comic book stores carried with them a sense of mystique, concocted from the mingling scents of aging books and freshly lacquered trading cards. To a new reader, each curious cover provided a glimpse into a seemingly bottomless world of inside information—a universe only meant for a chosen few to discover and later daydream about during math class. And right there at the top of every rack was Batman, my personal guide to this strange new medium.

I came into comics at about the perfect time for a novice Batman fan. Frank Miller had recently shocked the industry with two masterpieces, *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, and the four-issue origin story, "Year One." Writer Alan Moore had just penned the ultimate Joker tale in *Batman: The Killing Joke*, and Grant Morrison had followed the Joker into the depths of the criminal mind with his own special, *Batman: Arkham Asylum*. Robin's gruesome and shocking demise had just been conveniently reprinted in trade paperback form, and in the current issues a new kid was wearing the familiar yellow cape and swinging off the Gotham City rooftops. I had little choice in the matter. I was hooked.

And I wasn't alone. Batman was an institution by 1989, collecting generation after generation of fans since his creation fifty years prior. Never once falling off the radar of pop culture, Batman had been reborn time and time again years before I discovered him. He'd been a remorseless avenger, a happy-go-lucky father figure, a science-fiction vehicle, a swinging icon a go-go, and a dark creature of the night. Something about the natural makeup of the Dark Knight Detective allowed him to be reinterpreted and remolded to match the times or perhaps contrast with them. Whatever his interpretation and whatever his meaning, Batman had taken his seat up by Elvis and McDonald's as an eternal piece of Americana, and he refused to relinquish his status to any passing fad.

I saw the most recent Batman film in 2008, director Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight*, and while I loved it from start to finish, it still wasn't "my" Batman movie. My Batman film was a morbid fairy tale, a dark trip into the fantastic brought to life by Michael Keaton and Jack Nicholson with the guidance of visionary director Tim Burton. True, it could be argued that my Batman film wasn't as close to the source material or nearly as realistic as its later incarnations. But in the end, that's not what truly mattered. When Tim Burton's *Batman* was released, I was at the perfect age and had experienced

just the right amount of the subject matter to transform that film into what it was for me: an event.

But that's just me. That's just my treasured Batman era. The astounding truth is that this year, as *The Dark Knight* continues to break record after record, millions are being introduced to the Batman for the first time. A new generation is experiencing its own Batman movie "event"—and quite possibly beginning to feel the tug of the undertow pulling them deeper into Gotham City.

For you longtime collectors and fans who, like me, have read thousands of Batman comics, dating back to before your parents were even an idea in your grandparents' minds, this book will still show you images you've never seen, give you bits of trivia and history that you didn't even know existed. For those of you new to Batman, this book will serve as a nice introduction and help you get your feet wet.

So go ahead, crack open *The Batman Vault*, and get better acquainted with the Dark Knight. After all, Batman is seemingly everywhere once again, and he's going to be quite difficult to avoid.

— MATTHEW K. MANNING



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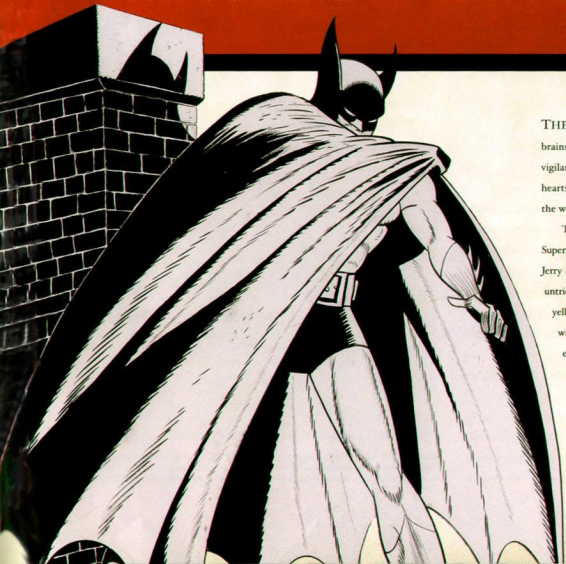


No. 8  
**BAT-MAN**  
DEC. JAN.  
**BAT-MAN**

EMERGING FROM GOTHAM CITY'S INKY BLACK SHADOWS WHEREVER VILLAINS DARE TO TREAD, THE DARK KNIGHT DELIVERS JUSTICE, PROTECTING THE INNOCENT FROM THE SUPERSTITIOUS, COWARDLY CRIMINALS.

# BATMAN:

## *THE COMING OF THE CAPED CRUSADER*

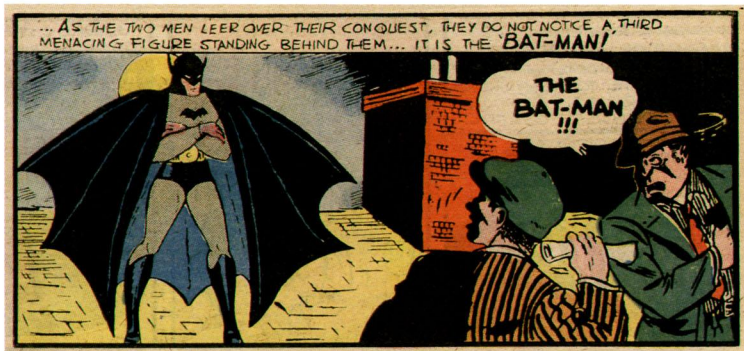


THE YEAR WAS 1939. A young cartoonist named Bob Kane was brainstorming in his Bronx home. His intent was to create a super hero, a vigilante crime fighter with a dual identity who could somehow capture the hearts and imaginations of America's youth. The result was the Batman, and the world of comic books and pop culture would never be the same again.

To be fair, most of the blame can be placed squarely on the shoulders of Superman. Just one year prior, in the pages of *Action Comics* #1, Ohio residents Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster had created what would be the blueprint for all untried super heroes to follow: a man from another planet, blessed by Earth's yellow sun with strange and wonderful powers, who could leap tall buildings with a single bound, outrun speeding bullets, and challenge the might of even the most powerful locomotive. Superman was constantly battling evil scientists and preventing natural disasters, all the while single-handedly saving the fledgling comic book industry with his title's landmark sales. And he did it all in style, wearing brightly colored tights and a cape.

OPPOSITE PAGE: A detail from the cover of *Batman* #8 (April–May 1942), designed by Fred Roy, illustrated by Jerry Robinson, and colored by George Rossos. LEFT: This rare piece of original art was drawn by Bob Kane in 1941, just two years after Batman's debut.





ABOVE: The Caped Crusader made his first surprise arrival on a rooftop to thwart a crime in this panel from *Detective Comics* #27 (May 1939).

Bruce Wayne wasn't revealed until the final page of the adventure. Also featuring the first appearance of Batman's lifelong ally Commissioner Gordon, the issue depicted Batman as a ruthless avenger of the night. When a fight ended with Batman's opponent plunging to his death into a vat of chemicals, the Caped Crusader, appearing almost heartless, dubbed the man's gruesome demise as "a fitting ending for his kind."

Indeed, during his debut year, Batman would take a cutthroat approach to his war on crime. He would often make use of a gun, and his foes normally would not last more than one issue as a result. Not that his villains weren't shrouded in dark and Gothic undertones as well. From facing the disfigured Doctor Death to the vampiric Monk, Batman had no qualms about ruthlessly dispatching his foes, even going so far as to shoot a silver bullet through the heart of the latter.

As the comic continued successfully, Batman came more and more to resemble the hero we know today. Unlike Superman, Batman had no extraordinary powers to speak of, so the hero began to rely on his wits, his fists, and, when all else failed, the Wayne family fortune. As early as his second appearance, Batman was making use of his fabled Utility Belt, and by his third, he was stocking it with more gadgets than a Boy Scout could ever dream of. Vehicles like the Batgyro followed, the first in a long line of bat-themed mobiles that Batman would employ to speed him from one end of Gotham City to the other. But by *Detective Comics* #33, Batman was granted arguably his most important innovation: an origin story.

It was all spelled out in a two-page introductory scene. Millionaire Thomas Wayne was escorting his wife and son, Bruce, home from a movie when their night was shattered by the intrusion of a petty thief. After a robbery at gunpoint gone awry, the thug shot and killed the boy's parents, dooming a shocked young Bruce Wayne to the life of an orphan. Swearing by candlelight at his bedside





## MEET THE ARTIST!

**R**EADERS, meet Bob Kane, creator of **THE BATMAN!** Realizing that people like to know something about the men who draw their favorite cartoon-strips, we induced Bob to sit down at a typewriter and dash off a few pertinent facts about his life. He complained that a drawing-board—and not a typewriter—was his natural means of artistic expression, but he did manage to hammer out a sort of synopsis about himself.

On top of that, we felt that we should have a picture of Bob to grace this page. We asked him to bring us one. "Sure," he said, "I'll take care of that." But as the days went by, and publication date came nearer and nearer, we still had no picture. Finally we had to sit Bob down at a drawing board, hold him there until a photographer could be called in from another floor of the building—and we finally got our picture!

Bob Kane was born twenty-four years ago in New York City, and has spent most of his life in the big town. As you might expect, his primary interest has always been in drawing. His work has appeared in a long list of national magazines. For some time Bob was a straight "comic" artist, specializing in drawings of a humorous nature. When the trend swung toward the adventure type of drawing, Bob was quick to see that therein lay his future, and though the abrupt change in drawing technique necessitated plenty of hard labor on his part, the phenomenal success of **THE BATMAN** is proof enough that Bob was capable of making the transition. It hasn't been easy, and it isn't easy even now. Anyone who thinks a comic artist has an easy life should take a look at Bob Kane's working-schedule. It's an unusual week which doesn't find Bob at the drawing board on seven consecutive days. The saving grace about it all is the fact that he enjoys his work, though he does admit that he might like to have a



little vacation come summer—three days in a row, or something like that.

Bob has spent a good deal of time in the North woods, hunting and fishing (before **THE BATMAN** took up all his time, of course). He loves outdoor life in all its phases. For a time he worked as seaman on a boat plying South American waters, and he says that he feels that this contact with all sorts of people, plus the satisfaction of seeing parts of the world absolutely foreign to the environment of New York, has been of great help to him in humanizing the characters which he draws.

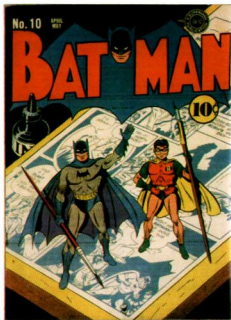
Bob is certainly not a copyist; his work shows a definite originality and freshness which has attracted many fervent fans. He studies

constantly, striving always to improve his work. If he has a free hour or two, he is very likely to spend it at one of the local medical colleges studying anatomy, for he well realizes that only by a thorough knowledge of bone and muscle structure is an artist able to inject into his drawings the true expression of action and motion which is so necessary to this type of art.

Bob Kane has worked hard, and will continue to work hard to give you just the sort of thing which you have come to expect in **THE BATMAN**. We predict ever-increasing success for both the artist and the creation of his facile pen. And they both deserve that success!

—THE EDITOR

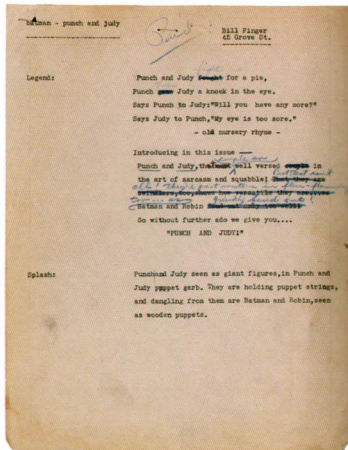
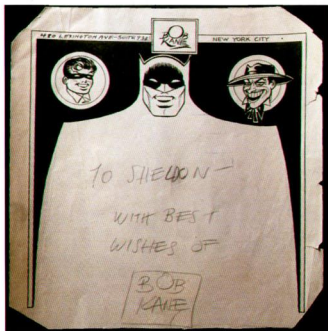
Robin's introduction succeeded in capturing more attention from the youth market, providing a character kids could identify with, and soon Batman and company was proving too popular to simply be contained in one comic title. So, in the spring of 1940, DC Comics released the first issue of a new quarterly comic, the second after *Superman* to feature a single character. *Batman* took a different approach from its sister title *Detective Comics*, and instead of showcasing several characters with Batman as the lead feature, *Batman* contained four new stories all focused on the Caped Crusader himself. *Batman* #1 introduced the legendary archfoe known as the Joker and also featured a separate



LEFT: This Bob Kane biography appeared in *Batman* #1 (Spring 1940). In the early days of comics, writers and artists rarely received such recognition. ABOVE: Batman and Robin ink their own comic book page on the cover of *Batman* #10 (April-May 1942) by Jerry Robinson.

story with a female thief called the Cat, a villain whom audiences would soon know as Catwoman. The series proved to be another hit for DC, and its creators quickly realized they had bitten off much more than they could chew.

Promptly following Batman's inception, Kane had enlisted Bill Finger to aid him in the writing chores for his creation, but the duo would not work alone by any means. Soon high school student Jerry Robinson was added to their creative stable, an artist who would come to be known for the signature giant moons he would add to Gotham's skylines; he also



ABOVE LEFT and ABOVE: Splash page and Bill Finger's original script from *Batman* #31 (October–November 1945). LEFT: Sheet of Bob Kane's stationery autographed to Sheldon Moldoff, one of the creator's regular art assistants during Kane's thirty-year tenure.

often stated that he was the actual cartoonist behind the look of the fiendish Clown Prince of Crime, the Joker. Robinson was first called upon to ink Kane's pencils, but his role continued to grow as Kane realized the high quality of the young man's work. Gardner Fox was asked to provide some scripts for the comic, and his was the mind behind the creation of the Monk. Other artists like Sheldon Moldoff and George Roussos soon joined the fold, and Batman's appearance evolved to a more polished and solidified look as a result.

The Batman staff's already taxing workload would increase further when DC had the inspired notion to place both of their major cash cows, Batman and Superman, together in one title. The result was the 1940 edition of a ninety-six-page annual called *New York World's Fair Comics*, designed to support the event of the same name. The sales figures on this special inspired DC to expand the title into an ongoing series, and soon *World's Finest Comics* debuted on newsstands in 1941. The title was an instant hit, showcasing Superman, Batman, and Robin on the covers, even though the heroes did not cross into one another's stories in the interior pages until much later in the series.

During this time, Batman and Superman would also serve as honorary members of the Justice Society of America, the first super-team in the history of comic books. The group's roster, comprised of characters like the Amazonian princess Wonder Woman, the super-speeding crime fighter known as the Flash, and the magic-ring-bearing hero Green Lantern, was an immediate hit with the readers from its debut in the pages of *All Star Comics* #3 (Winter 1940-1941), and they solidified the concept of a shared universe between all the heroes of DC Comics' stable. Batman and Superman remained in the background for most of the stories so as not to overshadow the exploits of characters that lacked their own solo comic titles.

As Batman and Robin's fame continued to grow, so too did their list of imitators. Many other comic book super heroes suddenly adopted young sidekicks of their



BELOW LEFT: In 1940, Batman and Robin shared the cover with Superman for the very first time on the cover of the *New York World's Fair Comics*, drawn by DC staff artist Jack Burnley. The success of two *World's Fair* one-shots led to the creation of *World's Best Comics*, although its name was altered to *World's Finest Comics* with the second issue. ABOVE: The Dynamic Duo deliver blows in the name of justice in this panel from *World's Finest Comics* #7 (1942).

own. Captain America immediately paired with young patriotic hero Bucky; Mr. Scarlet adopted Pinky; and Green Arrow debuted with a youngster in tow, the boy archer Speedy. The increased popularity of DC's winning formula made them want to rein in the leash on their prized property; and they even hired Robinson and Rousson on staff, where the two were charged with supplementing whatever work Kane and Finger could produce. Soon the young Dick Sprang and Jack Burnley were added to the fray, each owning a slicker style than their contemporaries, a quality that began to mature the visual appearance of Batman's world. Sprang would become one of the most influential artists in Batman's long and storied career, giving the Dark Knight and his Rogues a signature look that would last throughout the 1940s and 1950s.

With his fame rising to new heights, it finally was time for Batman to hit the big leagues. During the 1930s and 1940s, a syndicated newspaper comic strip artist was held in the highest regard. Seen as the gold standard of cartooning, comic strips had



captured a level of prestige to which comic books were unable to rise. Oftentimes, comic books were viewed as being filled with inexperienced artists, or cartoonists who lacked the skills needed to make it into the daily and weekly newspaper strips. When Batman was given the opportunity to follow Superman into the arena of the daily strip, his creator, Bob Kane was justifiably thrilled.

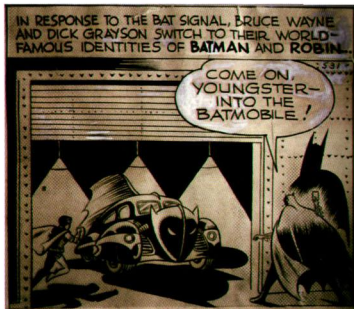
On October 25, 1943, the first "Batman and Robin" daily made its way on to the funny pages. Working closely with Jack Burnley, Kane kept his strip in the paper for three years. It was even supplemented by a color Sunday edition that told longer, unrelated Batman tales. Batman's transition from eight-page comic stories to four-panel comic strips was a smooth one, and the daily cliffhangers kept readers coming back time after time.

So began the first wave of what would later be dubbed Batmania. Suddenly, Batman's image was popping up on games, belt buckles, and statues. Although still not as popular as his red-caped ally from Krypton, Batman held a special place in the heart of the populace and began to make frequent guest appearances on Superman's own radio show. However, Batman failed in an attempt to net a radio

program of his own, and a script involving a different take on Robin's origin, a seal tapping out a special secret code with his flippers, and a Batman who spoke in an English accent in order to disguise his dual identity, was believed to have been recorded before being scrapped by its producers.

Although Superman quickly conquered the world of radio, Batman managed to win the race to live-action stardom on the silver screen. In 1943, the fifteen-chapter serial entitled simply *Batman* was released by Columbia Pictures. Starring Lewis Wilson in the title role and Douglas Croft as his not-so-boyish sidekick, Robin, the film featured the two foiling the schemes of Japanese spy Daka, played by J. Carrol Naish. Unfortunately, Daka's character was not much more than a two-dimensional stereotype, a characteristic obviously fueled by America's participation in World War II.

As the Second World War came to a close and *Batman* covers switched from encouraging readers to buy war bonds to the more traditional images of colorful villains



ABOVE LEFT: An unidentified tryout artist submitted this page of art illustrating the script for *Batman* #11 (June-July 1942). ABOVE: Original art for a 1946 panel from the "Batman and Robin" newspaper strip, written by Bill Finger and drawn by Bob Kane and Charles Paris.

**BATMAN**  
With **ROBIN THE BOY WONDER**

**ROBIN SKETCH (1942)**

Bob Kane's 1942 rendering of Batman's "boy friend" on the back of a Yiddish Theatre District Playbill for *The Rich Uncle*.

**DETECTIVE COMICS #60 (FEBRUARY 1942)**

This original cover art for *Detective Comics #60* was designed and pencilled by Fred Roy and Jerry Robinson, and inked by Robinson.

# THEATRE

Phone: Glenmore 2-9388

## דער רייכער פעטער

מוזיק פון פרודאקשאן אין 2 אקטען און 8 בילדער

יצחק פרידמאן און לואיס פריימאן

טעניז פון ליליען שאפירא ליריקס פון אויזדאָר ליליען

אויפגעפירט פון מנשה סקולניק

— פ ע ר ז א נ ע ן —

מאקס (סאָשעל דירעקטאָר אין א זומער האַטעל)..... ווילי סעקונדע

שמחה שאפירא..... יעקב זאנגער

סאָסעל ברען..... יעטא צווערלינג

וויקי..... שלמה'לע מילמאן

לילי (א יתומה'לע)..... מלכה'לע ביעלער

מאָריס לאַזאַראָוו (א יונגער חזן)..... מיכל מיבאַלעסקאָ

העלען (זיין פרוי)..... פאולא לובעלסקא

א מאַרשאַל..... מעקס פאַרל

סעם (העלענ'ס ברודער)..... מנשה סקולניק

א וועיטער..... איזדאָר שוכאט

סטעלא..... פרעדא הימעלשטיין

ראַלף (אייגענטימער פון א נייט-קלאָב)..... אייב גראָס

א פאָליסמאן..... מישא צוויבעק

מידזשי (סאָסעל'ס זון)..... סימאָר רעכצייט

סוזי (זיין כלה)..... גאָלדי אייזמאן

דזשייקאָב וואָלדמאן..... איזדאָר פרידמאן

גלאָריא (זיין טאָכטער)..... פעני לובריצקי

וויקטאָר (איר חתן)..... יאקאָב סוזאַנאָוו

א באַטלער..... דזשייקאָב הימעלשטיין

לילי (וויקטאָר'ס עלטערע)..... מרים קרעסין

מעדעם בראַו (אייגענטימערין פון א

בראידעל גאון סטאָר)..... סערע בי

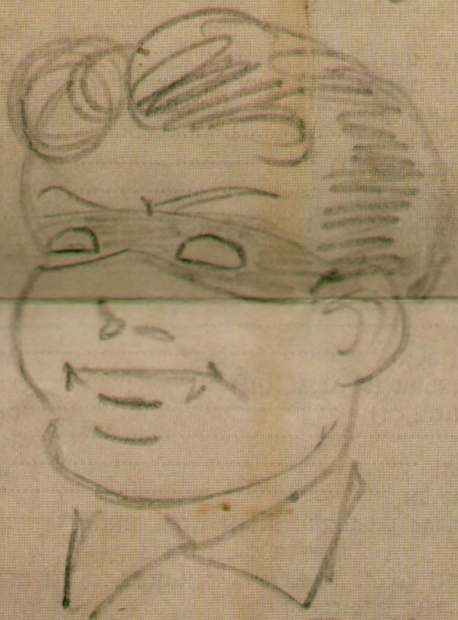
ווילי ס

מישא צווינג

זנוועזנער אָפּערא וינגער)..... אויזדאָר טוריא

לי און וויקטאָר'ס מידעלע)..... מערעליז אַזע

SEE YOU IN BATMAN  
ADVENTURES, BILLIE



BOB  
KANE

YOUR BOY FRIEND  
ROBIN-

1942



No. 60



The BATMAN

# Detective

# COMICS

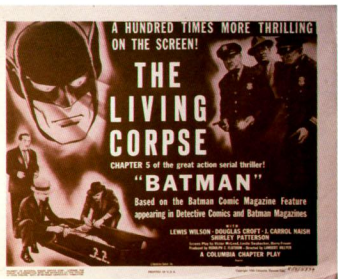
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engaging in crime sprees, Batman's origin was reexamined in 1948's *Batman* #47. In this story, Batman's parents' killer was given a name, Joe Chill, before the foe met his untimely end in a hail of bullets. (Chill's death would later prove to be altered time and time again, depending on the era and the writer's fancy.) The following issue of *Batman* was also a landmark, because it treated readers to their first real exploration of Batman's hideout known as the Batcave. The tour given in that issue solidified the visual appearance of Batman's lair for the decade to follow.

In 1949, Batman and Robin once again fought their way to the box office with their second and last fifteen-chapter serial, this time titled *Batman and Robin*, starring Robert Lowery and John Duncan as the title characters. As the times had shifted, so had their adversary; this time the two battled the masked mystery man known as the Wizard, while Bruce Wayne tried to maintain his romance with Vicki Vale, his girlfriend in the comic books of the time. Although given an even smaller budget than the Caped Crusader's last attempt at movie stardom, the serial still proved to be fairly entertaining. Each chapter provided viewers with an impossible cliffhanger to keep them coming back to theaters to see just how the Dynamic Duo managed to ward off certain death that particular week.



LEFT: This rare 35mm promotional slide was mentioned in the 1943 pressbook and could be purchased for fifteen cents. ABOVE: These two lobby cards from the movie serials advertised each chapter with images taken from the movie. In the top card, Batman appears to have some sort of super-vision—a power he did not possess in print or on film.

As Batman entered the 1950s and the era known as the Golden Age of Comics slowly came to a close, the Dark Knight Detective began to face off against one of the most intimidating opponents of his career: the U.S. Congress. Determined to unearth the origins and causes of juvenile delinquency, psychiatrist Dr. Fredric Wertham had published his misguided opus *Seduction of the Innocent*. The book, declaring comic books as worthless corruptors that preached violence and sexual deviance, caught nationwide attention and the concern of thousands of parents and PTA groups. After a congressional inquiry, comic publishers were forced to cease production of their more mature horror and violent titles, and work under the strict guidelines of the Comics Code Authority, a self-created institution that imposed certain standards and rules for all comic books to follow. Though not hit as hard as other publishers that were nearly driven out of business, DC Comics was quick to adopt the Code to appease the inquiry. To this day, the misinterpreted sexual undertones between the father-son relationship of Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson that were brought to light in Wertham's book remain prevalent in American popular culture. Also a victim of the Code were members of Batman's familiar Rogues Gallery, most taking a hiatus from the comic pages, as their hijinks were somehow considered too bizarre for the tender minds of young children.



LEFT: The second serial, *Batman and Robin*, which pitted the hero against common gangsters, didn't arrive until 1949. Batman's uniform fit so better this time than in the 1942 edition. ABOVE: Movie marquess show what was playing on a typical weekend in the 1940s: a feature film, short subjects, cartoons, newswreets, and a chapter from the latest Batman serial. The cardboard display inside the lobby is one of the rarest Batman collectibles ever.

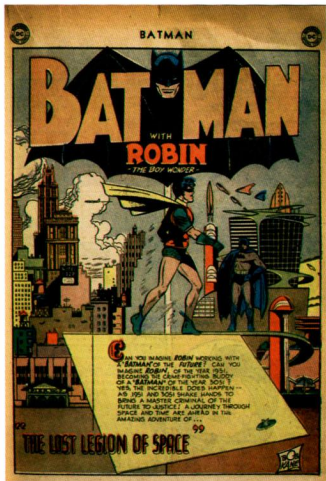
## BATMANIA SPREADS ITS WINGS

Without a familiar brand of misfits to match wits with, it was time for Batman to get a little weird. In the mid-1950s, Batman's fairly commonplace struggles solving mysteries and battling the occasional well-dressed thug took a turn toward the unexplained with the coming of editor Jack Schiff. With the rising popularity of science-fiction movies and television shows, Schiff attempted to force this new genre into the Caped Crusader's world. But the square peg of time travel, giant alien monsters, and flying saucers didn't quite fit into the round hole of Gotham City, so Schiff started to borrow concepts from fellow DC editor Mort Weisinger, who stood poised at the helm of the successful Superman titles.

With stories revolving around visual oddities such as an infamous zebra-striped costume, Batman's cast began to expand as quickly as his wardrobe. Just as Superman had his faithful flying helper Krypto the Superdog, Batman gained Ace the Bat-Hound, a canine who wore a mask in order to cover up his distinct coat of fur and therefore keep his identity secret. Since Superman's cousin Supergirl proved to be a hit for Weisinger, Batman soon met Batwoman and Bat-Girl. And as Superman was constantly plagued by the imp from the fifth dimension, Mr. Mxyzptlk, Batman gained his own diminutive magical pal, Bar Mite.

In all his creative frenzy, Schiff overlooked the major fact that these elements that worked for Superman, a character whose very roots stemmed from a science-fiction background, failed to mesh with the dark and moody realism that had spawned Batman. Batman's comic sales were weakening.

Wise enough to keep its namesake title afloat, DC shifted its editorial staff around, placing legendary editor Julius "Julie" Schwartz in charge of the denizens of Gotham City. Known for his brilliant revival of the Flash in 1956, Schwartz didn't have too much interest in Batman and his new cast, a fact that freed him to take as many liberties with the characters as he saw fit. Players like Bat-Girl and Batwoman disappeared without so much as a passing mention, and a firm emphasis was placed on Batman's mystery-story background. Plot became the main focus of the comics as Schwartz brought two of his Flash cohorts, writers Gardner Fox and John Broome, on to his team. Schwartz replaced the Martian Manhunter backup stories (which told the



ABOVE: As early as 1951, as the public's attention turned away from war and toward the future, Batman's stories began to feature science-fiction elements. This *The Last Legion of Space* splash page, depicting Gotham in the future, appeared in *Batman* #47 (October–November 1951), pencilled by Dick Sprang.

tales of an alien police detective with a vast array of superpowers) that had decorated the pages of *Detective Comics* since #225 with a more science-based mystery fiction slant, employing a stretchable hero called the Elongated Man. Also of note, Schwartz killed off Batman's longtime loyal butler, Alfred Pennyworth, and replaced him with Dick Grayson's Aunt Harriet, possibly in an attempt to appease the odd implications of three men living together, as was first suggested in Wertham's book.

Perhaps the biggest change brought on by Schwartz was Batman's appearance. Schwartz was now free to employ many of his favorite artists from past collaborations. Roping in artist Carmine Infantino, the illustrator who drew the classic costume for the Silver Age's Flash, Schwartz had his prized penciller tweak the appearances of both Batman and Robin, most notably giving Batman the famous yellow oval around his bat-symbol. Infantino also brought with him an emphasis on crisp storytelling, using large, stretching panels that allowed readers to really dive right into Gotham City.



ABOVE: The cover of *Detective Comics* #327 (May 1964) advertised Batman's "new look," which made its debut on this splash page, written by John Broome and drawn by Carmine Infantino and Joe Giella.

Interestingly enough, this wasn't the only time Schwartz had added a major chapter to Batman's life. In 1960, a couple years before he had started working on Batman's core titles, Schwartz had revitalized the Justice Society of the 1940s. Along with writer Gardner Fox and artists Mike Sekowsky and Bernard Sachs, Schwartz debuted his concept in the showcase title *The Brave and the Bold*, calling his new creation the Justice League of America and believing the alteration to the team name had a bit more of a modern flair to it. The idea—teaming Batman and Superman with Martian Manhunter, Flash, Wonder Woman, Green Lantern, and the sea king Aquaman—was an instant hit with the readership. The Justice League of America quickly earned its own title, greatly increasing Batman's impact throughout the rest of the DC Universe. The title proved to be such a success that, in the pages of *The Brave and the Bold* #54 (June–July 1964), the same formula was applied to DC's youngest stars, as Robin united with Kid Flash and Aqualad to battle the sinister Mr. Twister. Another runaway hit, the team quickly added Wonder Girl, and the ongoing series *Teen Titans* was born.

But despite working with the character of Batman before, Schwartz still remained relatively unfamiliar with Bruce Wayne and his cohorts. In fact, in *Detective Comics* #327 (May 1964), the landmark first appearance of the "new look" Caped Crusader, Schwartz showed that he might need a bit more transition time to warm up to the character, making a large editorial mistake. He had Batman hold a villain at bay with a gun, an action Batman's character would never take, as the no-gun editorial rule of the 1940s had quickly given birth to the idea that Batman actually held a deep psychological distaste for the weapon that took his parents' lives.

Even with the learning curve, Schwartz was on to something. Legend persists that it was his vibrant commissioned cover to *Batman* #171 (May 1965) that sparked the interest of television producer William Dozier in creating a television series. In fact, Dozier only became attached to the project after ABC had purchased the rights. On January 12, 1966, Batman reached new heights of fame and awareness in the public eye as ABC debuted the live-action *Batman* television show. A bright and campy romp through Gotham City, *Batman* starred Adam West as the title character and newcomer Burt Ward as Robin. The show was a huge hit with viewers across the globe, and as such, attracted such luminary actors as Cesar Romero, Vincent Price, and Burgess





ABOVE LEFT: Fans writing to the Gleem toothpaste company received this mechanically autographed still from the series. LEFT: Neil Hefti's chart-topping "Batman Theme" was the highlight of the *Batman* and *Robin* soundtrack, which also included many instrumental pieces by Dan & Dale. The local artwork is by Gil Kane and Murphy Anderson, supplemented by pick-up art from the comics along the left side. ABOVE: A promotional photo from the third and final season of the live-action series, capturing Adam West with guest star Milton Berle, who portrayed the villainous Louie the Lilac.



ROBIN

BAT-MAN



would like to include Batman's butler, Alfred, in their program. So after two short years of being "dead," Alfred was resurrected by way of the character known as the Outsider, a science experiment gone wrong. Also, in order to increase the ratings of the third season of the show, ABC decided they wanted to include a Batgirl to add a bit of romantic tension to the mix, a formula that always seemed to score with the viewers when Catwoman made her occasional guest appearances on the program. Schwartz, along with writer Gardner Fox and artist Carmine Infantino, set out to create an entirely new Batgirl, one with ties to the already established Batman universe.



LEFT: Movies and television shows knew they had "made it" when *MAD* magazine parodied them on the covers. Norman Mingo's original cover painting for *MAD* # 105 (September 1966) effectively captures Batman's colorful camp feeling. ABOVE: A rare advertisement from Harvard's 1966 reunion for the class of 1941, featuring Carmine Infantino and Joe Giella's artwork.

This new Batgirl (now with a non-hyphenated name) was Barbara Gordon, the daughter of Gotham's own commissioner, James Gordon. Barbara, a shy librarian who wanted to prove her independence from her father, sewed her own female Batman costume to wear to a policeman's ball. En route, Barbara stopped to save Bruce Wayne from the nefarious Killer Moth, deciding to keep her identity as Gordon's daughter secret and start a new life as Batgirl. Debuting in *Detective Comics* # 359 (January 1967), her character was warmly welcomed by the readership, and even more so when she later appeared on the TV series, portrayed with youthful enthusiasm by actress Yvonne Craig.

**BATMAN**

With **ROBIN THE BOY WONDER**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN COLORING BOOK PAGES (1966)**  
These pages of original art were prepared for a *Batman Color By Number* book published by Whitman.

**Robin**  
WONDER

**BATMAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN**

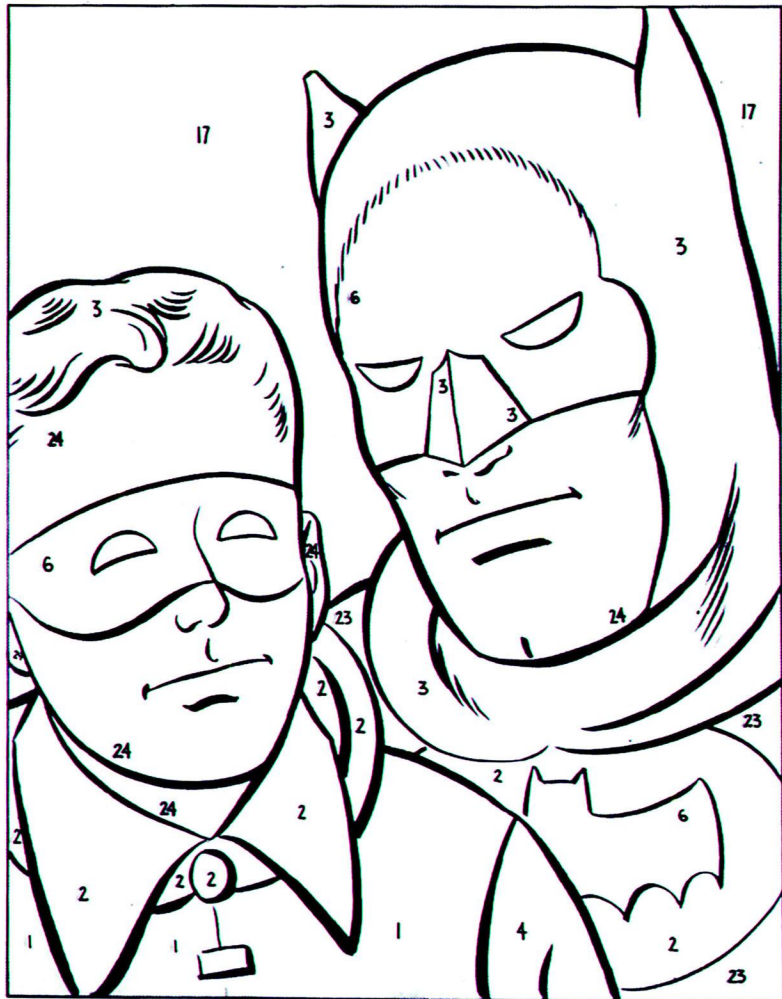
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**BAT MAN**

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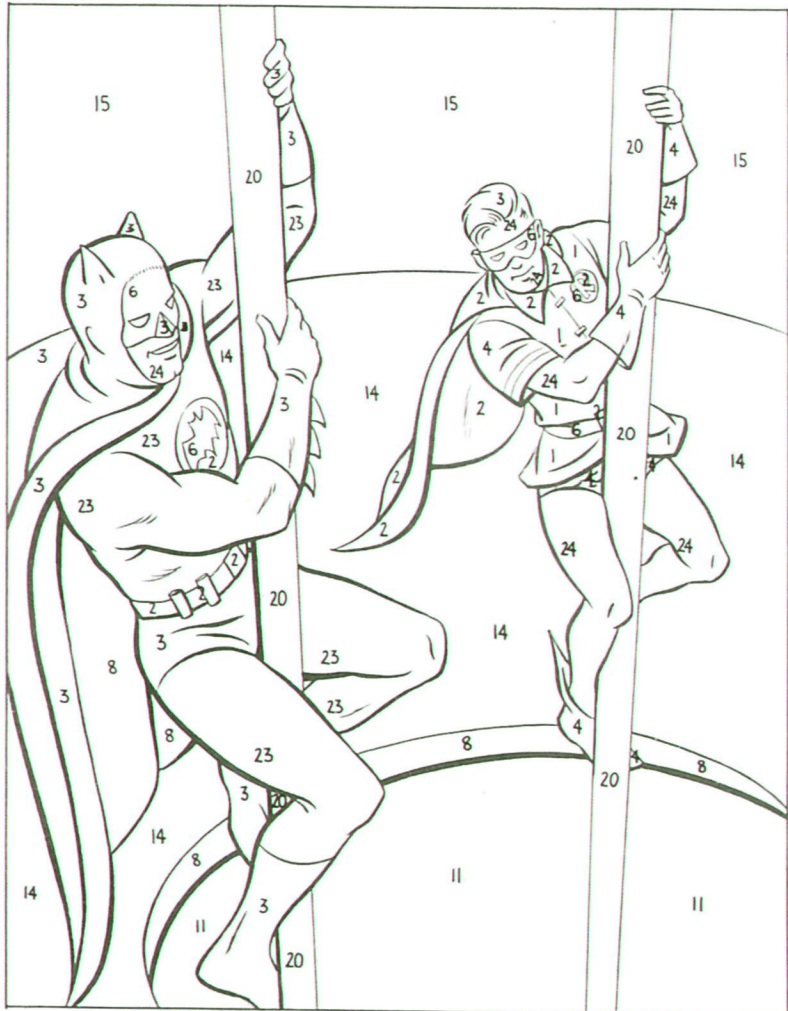
**BAT MAN**













From the start, Schwartz's changes on the Batman books were well received, but the popularity of the show sent sales figures skyrocketing. In an attempt to keep pace with the show's massive cast, Schwartz once again put the focus of his comics back on the hero's infamous Rogues Gallery. Soon, in addition to his two regular titles and monthly appearances in *World's Finest*, Batman began to hog the spotlight in *Justice League of America* as well. Over in *The Brave and the Bold*, Batman was given a permanent recurring role, the title switching from a showcase of various characters in DC's stable to simply a Batman team-up comic. But around 1969, as the show's popularity faded, so did that of Batman's comics, and from past experiences, Schwartz knew he would once again have to mix up the status quo. He decided it was time to return Batman to his roots.

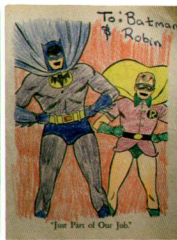
## THE DARK KNIGHT DETECTIVE

In *Detective Comics* #395 (January 1970), a macabre tale entitled "The Secret of the Waiting Graves" by writer Dennis O'Neil and artist Neal Adams presented Batman as a creature of the shadows once again. Editor Julius Schwartz had decided to darken the character's world to further distance him from the camp

environment created by the 1966 ABC show. Bringing in the talented O'Neil as well as the innovative Frank Robbins and showcasing the art of rising star Neal Adams, who had gained quite a fan base in the pages of *The Brave and the Bold*, Schwartz pointed Batman in a new and darker direction, a path the character still continues on to this day.

The sophisticated storylines and realistic artwork attracted many readers and encouraged numerous imitators, and Schwartz upped the ante as he and his staff began to introduce a new host of villains for Batman to face off against. The first was the brainchild of Neal Adams himself. Doodling a half-human, half-bat hybrid in one of his sketchbooks, Adams showed the character to writer Frank Robbins, and soon *Detective Comics* #400 hit the stands, debuting the tortured sometimes-hero, sometimes-villain, Man-Bat.

The next major addition to Batman's world came about in *Detective Comics* #411 (May 1971). Talia, a mysterious and seemingly innocent bystander, was rescued by Batman, only to reappear in the landmark issue *Batman* #232 (June 1971). In that issue by O'Neil, Adams, and legendary inker and artist in his own right Dick Giordano, readers met Talia's nefarious father, the terrorist Rā's al Ghūl,



FAR LEFT: Batgirl makes her print debut in this ad from *Batman* #169 (February 1967). ABOVE LEFT: Batman and Robin cheer patients at a Texas Children's Hospital event in 1979. ABOVE RIGHT: A coloring-book page drawn by an aspiring child-artist at the event.

a character whose background, as well as his international scope, added a whole new dimension to what it meant to be a foe of the Batman.

Schwartz continued his fresh approach by hiring other new talents such as Irv Novick and Bob Brown. To further establish Batman as a lone threat of the night, he sent Dick Grayson off to college to take part in his own solo adventures in various issues' backup features. Batgirl journeyed to Washington, D.C., where, cloaked in her secret identity of Barbara Gordon, she became a U.S. congresswoman. Meanwhile, as Batman delved into mystery after mystery in his own two books, battling familiar faces and robe-garbed newcomers, writer Bob Haney and artist Jim Aparo furnished the hero with a constant supply of team-up partners from every corner of the DC Universe over in *The Brave and the Bold*.

Batman was now a true creature of the night, and every artist and writer team worth their creative salt wanted a piece of him. One of the greatest of such pairs consisted of writer Steve Englehart and artist Marshall Rogers. Already the scribe of *Detective Comics*, Englehart had been menacing Batman with such notable threats as the radioactive Dr. Phosphorus with the help of the young artistic talent of Walter Simonson. But when Rogers joined Englehart in *Detective Comics* issue #471 (August 1977), their styles meshed with such ease that the result gave the impression of years' worth of collaboration. Although their run only lasted six issues, the pair still managed to make quite an impact on Batman fans, telling classic tales of longtime Batman foes the Joker and the Penguin, while bringing back minor villains from the Dark Knight's past, such as the subversive Batman-obsessed Professor Hugo Strange and the redesigned sharp-shooter Deadshot. Writer extraordinaire Len Wein then took Englehart's place behind the typewriter, teaming with Rogers to introduce a twisted take on Batman's longtime foe Clayface, giving his version of the character a mad depth rarely seen before in a Batman villain.

As the constant Batgirl and Robin backup features became more and more popular in the various Batman titles, DC decided to try out another, larger anthology comic in 1975 dubbed *Batman Family*. Starring new adventures of Batman's sidekicks, reprints from older stories, and features spotlighting characters such as Man-Bat and Alfred, the title proved so popular that when sales on *Detective Comics* lagged, DC actually considered terminating



ABOVE: This unused cover sketch by artist Neal Adams is from the 1960s. In the 1950s and 1960s, the cover concept often came first, inspiring the writer to pen a tale to match the scene.



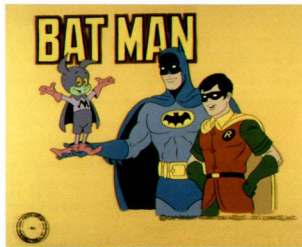


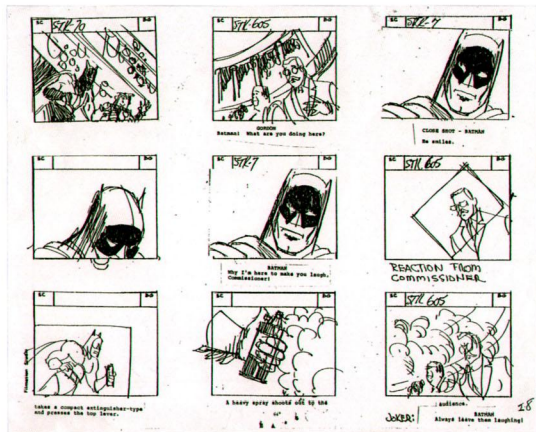
**ABOVE:** Original splash page art for an issue of DC's *Super Friends* comic book, which was based on the popular Saturday morning cartoon. For the comic book, artists Ric Estrada, Joe Orlando, and Vince Colletta replicated Alex Toth's designs from the cartoon. **RIGHT:** In 1977, Adam West and Burt Ward reprised their live-action roles as the voices for the Dynamic Duo in a solo Batman animated series. Bat-Mite also made an appearance—albeit looking a little different than his comic book incarnation.

the flagship title in favor of the new upstart. Wisely, the editorial department thought better of the decision and instead cloned *Batman Family's* format into *Detective Comics*, canceling *Batman Family* after only twenty issues.

Another supporting player who often made appearances in the pages of *Batman Family* was the brainchild of writer Paul Levitz and artist Joe Staton. On a parallel world called Earth-2, Batman and Catwoman fell in love and had a child named Helena. That child grew up, and after witnessing her mother's tragic death, joined forces with the Justice Society of America as the determined avenger known as the Huntress. A hit with fans, the Huntress was warmly welcomed into the Justice Society, fighting alongside Robin, who was an adult with gray hair at his temples in this alternative reality.

As Batman got back in touch with his darker roots in the pages of his various comic books and spin-off titles, television audiences were once again being introduced to his lighter side. In 1973, Hanna-Barbera premiered a new animated cartoon entitled *Super Friends*, a Justice League-like grouping of DC's most recognizable heroes. Not only did Batman stand among their number, but due to the character's fame from the not-too-distant ABC live-action show, Robin joined this





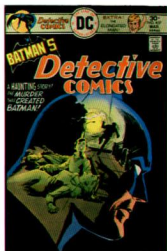
team as well. With the Dynamic Duo fighting alongside Superman, Wonder Woman, Aquaman, and the like, the cartoon aired with many incarnations, title changes, and brief hiatuses, before finally showing its last new episodes in 1986. All in all, the show produced a whopping 128 full episodes alongside sixty-six seven-minute shorts.

With a name too big for a mere team-up cartoon, Batman starred in Filmation's second attempt at a solo animated series in 1977. With most of its designs borrowed from its original animated look from 1968, and a few new-to-TV characters (such as Bar-Mite), *The New Adventures of Batman* lasted only sixteen episodes. What it lacked in longevity, it made up for in nostalgia, as the cartoon seemed to reunite the voice talents of Adam West and Burt Ward for the first time since their canceled ABC series.

Meanwhile, Superman was up to his old tricks. As the Man of Steel rejuvenated his fame as well as America's interest in the super hero genre as a whole with the 1978 blockbuster live-action film *Superman: The Movie*, Batman began to share in the wealth, once again seeing a rise in his own collectible merchandise. A darker and grimmer version of the Caped Crusader began to adorn record albums, coloring books, model kits, and children's puzzles. A new syndicated comic strip, entitled *The World's Greatest Super-Heroes* debuted, and in 1980, DC Comics' president Jenette Kahn announced the imminent release of a new Batman feature film. As it turned out, due to setbacks in production, she was off by nearly ten years.

Back in the comic pages, Paul Levitz had taken over the *Batman* editorial chores after Schwartz retired to living legend status. Under Levitz's watchful

eye, *Batman* and *Detective Comics* began to have more issue-to-issue continuity. After Levitz's brief tenure, Dick Giordano—already well known among fans for his past editorial work at the company as well as his impressive artistic contributions to *Batman* and his cast over the years—took up the reins on both comic books. It was Dick Giordano who, among many other similar feats, drew the March 1976 fan-favorite issue #457 of *Detective Comics* to illustrate the fabled Denny O'Neil yarn, "There is No Hope in Crime Alley." In the story, Dr. Leslie Thompkins made her debut as a motherly figure whose pacifistic voice helps serve as a foil to Batman's unyielding drive to avenge his parents' deaths. The issue not only retold Batman's origin, but it also established Batman's yearly



OPPOSITE PAGE: A storyboard sheet from an episode of Filmation's solo animated series. ABOVE: In *Detective Comics* #457 (March 1976), the location of the Waynes' slaying was named for the first time in "There Is No Hope in Crime Alley." RIGHT: A 1984 brochure from Licensing Corporation of America presents a full array of toys and merchandise, including the first series of the popular *Super Powers* action figure line from Kenner.



rendezvous with Leslie, as he honors his parents in the same alley wherein they gasped their last breaths.

As Giordano oversaw the *Batman* titles, both *Batman* and *Detective Comics* began to share a tighter, interlocking continuity with many developing subplots, creating an almost soap opera feel. The results boosted sales, as more readers felt it necessary to read both books to make sure they didn't miss any major plot developments. Writers Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, and Gerry Conway gave *Batman*'s supporting players larger roles, even going so far as to reform *Catwoman*, positioning the former cat burglar on the side of the angels for a time while she set her sights solely on stealing *Batman*'s heart.

Meanwhile, Robin was going through some changes of his own. In 1980, Marv Wolfman, along with detail artist George Pérez, launched *The New Teen Titans*, a revival of the 1960s series that had ceased publication two years prior. Wolfman depicted Dick Grayson as an independent young man, a quality that would serve him well in the near future; as Len Wein took Dick Giordano's

seat as the *Batman* editor, Bruce and Dick were separated and sent in their own directions. By 1984, Dick had changed his super hero identity to Nightwing over in the pages of *Tales of the Teen Titans* #44 (July 1984), leaving the Robin mantle up for grabs.

No sooner had Dick stepped down than newcomer Jason Todd tried out the yellow cape and pixie boots. Of course, editor Wein didn't have much say in the matter. Corporate thinking was that *Batman* needed a young Robin by his side, so Wein looked to writer Gerry Conway and artist Don Newton, instructing the duo to take the path of least resistance and create a virtual doppelganger of Dick Grayson. First appearing as a red-haired young circus performer in the pages of *Batman* #357 (March 1983), Jason Todd witnessed his parents' death at the hands of a new master criminal, Killer Croc. Before long, the youth dyed his hair black and moved into the *Batcave*, and the team of *Batman* and Robin was once again alive and well.

As the 1980s continued, new scribe Doug Moench began a long-term relationship with the Caped Crusader. He brought with him a variety of new characters, chief

among them being Natalia Knight, the pale femme fatale better known as Nocturna. Natalia would form a relationship with Bruce Wayne, creating a love triangle when Alfred Pennyworth's daughter, Julia, took up residence at Wayne Manor. *Batman and Detective Comics* were more intertwined than ever, but their sister title, *The Brave and the Bold*, wasn't doing quite so well.

It was time for Batman to play outside the lines. Deciding the Batman team-up format had run its course, writer Mike W. Barr and artist Jim Aparo introduced a new team of heroes led by Batman in the 200th issue of *The Brave and the Bold*. The team was called the Outsiders and consisted of established heroes such as the shifting element man Metamorpho and the electricity-charged Black Lightning, as well as newcomers to the war against evil, such as the female samurai Katana, the alien empowered innocent Halo, and the gravity-manipulating Geo-Force. *Batman and the Outsiders* #1 debuted in August of 1983, with a shocking cover bearing the image of Batman quitting the Justice League over political issues.

Batman's world had expanded, and so had the entire DC Universe. With several alternative realities and hundreds of contradicting stories, it seemed time for a change, a companywide simplification with the intent of making the entire line of books more accessible to new readers. And in 1985, during the 50th anniversary of DC Comics as a company, the powers that be did just that.

**RIGHT:** This never-published *Batman Super Powers* "tele-Peeper" from 1985 was designed to be folded and turned into an interactive story-viewer.



BATMAN

With ROBIN THE BOY WONDER

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BATMAN MASK (1966)

A Golden Book titled *Batman and Robin: From Alfred to Zowie!* featured a back cover that was printed as a kid-sized Batman mask.

PUBLICITY BROCHURE (1991)

DC's sister company, the Licensing Corporation of America, crafted a brochure to excite prospective licensees about *Batman: The Animated Series*. This pop-up is one of the pages in the eight-page maller.

BATMAN

BAT MAN

MAN

BAT MAN

ROBIN

BAT MAN



HERE IS YOUR  
AUTHORIZED  
**BATMAN  
MASK**

WEAR IT — AND  
HELP US STAMP  
OUT **CRIME!**

Signed :

*Batman*  
*Robin*  
*the Boy Wonder*  
*Commissioner Gordon*



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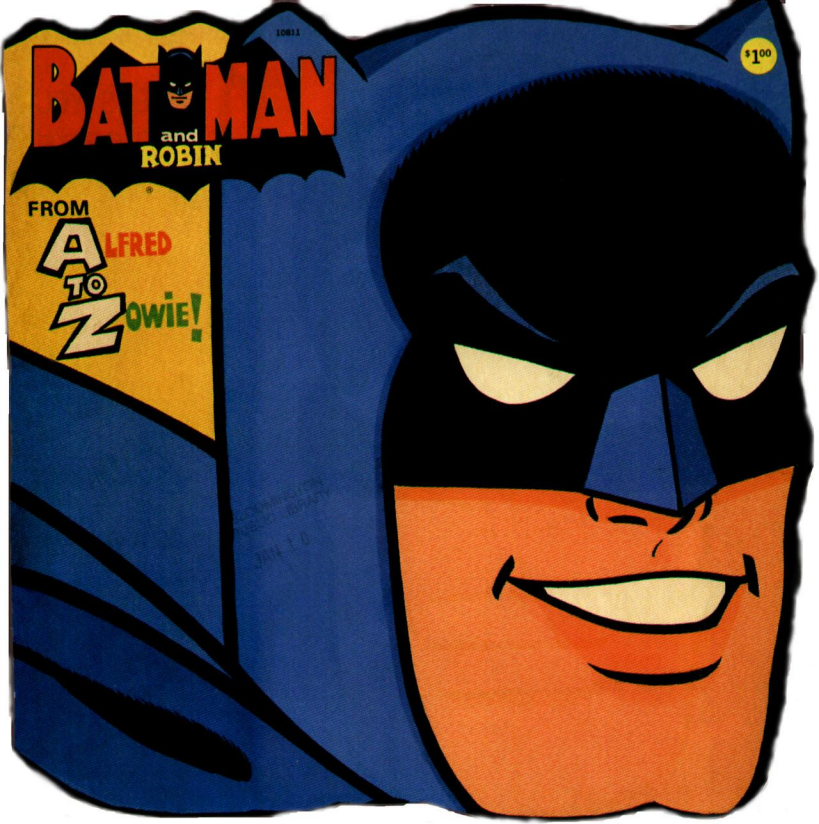
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# BATMAN

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International Headquarters: 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91522 (818) 954-7975, Fax (818) 954-6589

# BATMAN

*The Animated Series*





ABOVE: To celebrate the 500th issue of *Detective Comics* (March 1981), editor Paul Levitz conceived of a cover drawn by several artists that would commemorate the title's history. Each interior artist contributed stories and characters dating back to the very first issue in 1937. Production artist Bob LeRose carefully added the covers depicted across the back to complete this original artwork.

BAT MAN

## REINVENTING THE WHEEL

DC Comics was cleaning house. In order to tie up loose ends and streamline a convoluted continuity that spanned dozens of alternate realities, they looked to their stars Marv Wolfman and George Pérez, hot from their chart-topping title *The New Teen Titans*, to create a maxiseries, called *Crisis on Infinite Earths*. The twelve-issue limited series killed off hundreds of characters, including the popular Robin and Huntress from Earth-2, and welded all the multiple realities into one simple continuity. The stage was set for Batman's origin to be reimagined, but as it turned out, before fans would witness the hero's past, they would first read about his future.

Dennis "Denny" O'Neil had returned to Gotham City. After Len Wein ended his editorial duties with the blockbuster issue #400 of *Batman* in October 1986, a comic featuring an immense host of talent almost as large as the number of villains that escaped from Arkham Asylum in that same issue, O'Neil snapped his Utility Belt back on and set out as the new group editor of Batman's titles. As such, one of his first responsibilities was to oversee writer/artist Frank Miller's groundbreaking opus, *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*.

With the help of inker Klaus Janson and colorist Lynn Varley, *The Dark Knight Returns* took a look at a fifty-year-old retired Batman, living in a dystopian future where the gangs ruled the streets and his old ally Superman had become nothing more than a government shill. Forced to don the cape and cowl again, Batman took down old foes Harvey Dent and the Joker, as well as the leaders of the youth gang movement the Mutants. Alongside a new female Robin and a one-armed Green Arrow, Batman engaged in a climactic battle with Superman on the same street that his parents had been killed. The story ended as Batman triumphed over the Man of Steel, then suddenly faked his own death, only to go on to lead the former Mutants in an underground militia of sorts from his fabled Batcave.

Miller's piece proved to be an enduring work of fiction, celebrated among fans and literary aficionados to this day as perhaps the greatest overall work of graphic storytelling. Its only contenders seem to be Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' super hero epic *Watchmen* maxiseries and Art Spiegelman's holocaust tale, *Maus*. All three

works contain a trendsetting emphasis on mature and innovative storytelling and, coincidentally, all were released in the same year, 1986.

Frank Miller wasn't finished with the Caped Crusader yet. After teaming with the gritty, realistic art of David Mazzucchelli over at Marvel Comics in the pages of *Daredevil*, Miller returned to DC at editor O'Neil's request in order to tell the long-awaited reimagined origin of Bruce Wayne's descent into the world of the Batman. In a story entitled "Year One" and spanning *Batman* issues #404 to #407, Miller retold the entire first year of a twenty-five-year-old Bruce Wayne's return to Gotham City.



ABOVE: This image of Carrie Kelly appeared on the signed bookplate for the tenth anniversary edition of *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*.

After his parents' deaths, the youth had been traveling the globe, learning all of the various techniques and tools of the trade he would need to fulfill his vow of vengeance and begin his war on the criminals of Gotham. Now back in the city of his birth, Bruce soon draped himself in a cape and cowl and struck out on an unsure footing to battle the chaotic, as well as organized, criminal factions of his town.

Not only did "Year One" succeed in fleshing out Batman's character by showing the depth of his obsession in his personal war, but it also helped to give future commissioner James Gordon more of a three-dimensional personality. The story chronicled Gordon's arrival in Gotham from the police force in Chicago, and showed his hard-boiled struggle against the corrupt boys in blue of his newly adopted city. With shadowy art that captured the mood and feel of Gotham, readers got the chance to see an inexperienced Batman make mistakes and try to find his bearings on the rooftops he later grew to know so well. They were also introduced to mob boss Carmine Falcone, the corrupt Commissioner Loeb, the crusading young district attorney Harvey Dent, as well as a young streetwalker (and future Catwoman) named Selina Kyle. The story ended with the newly promoted Captain Gordon summoning Batman for the first time in order to inform him about the looming threat of some nutcase who called himself the Joker.

Focusing once again on the present, in 1987, O'Neil hired crime writer Max Allan Collins to give readers a new take on the second Robin, Jason Todd. Deciding to rewrite Robin's origin so that instead of being a Dick Grayson clone, he was a young street punk who met Batman when he attempted to steal the tires off the Batmobile, Collins' tenure on the title was fairly short, soon giving way to writer Jim Starlin.

A true storyteller with a career that continues to this day, Starlin created a few innovative tales for the Dark Knight, including the legendary "Ten Nights of the Beast" storyline that ran from *Batman* #417 to #420, wherein he introduced the cold war-inspired villain KGBeast. Starlin also paired with artist Bernie Wrightson for their epic *Batman: The Cult* Prestige format miniseries, in which readers got to see a heroic side of the often misused character of Jason Todd. But the most reprinted of Starlin's stories, as well as the one with the largest impact, had to be his pairing with then-regular Batman artist Jim Aparo, for a story titled simply "A Death in the Family."



ABOVE: David Mazzucchelli's submission sample to DC Comics, circa 1981.



ABOVE: Dave Mazzucchelli used colored paper and illustration board to create this original cover artwork for the *Batman: Year One* trade paperback (1987). RIGHT: Batman became the subject of several artist portfolios released by DC Comics in the 1980s, including a set of plates by Mike Zeck, who had drawn numerous *Batman* covers. Number six in the series, aptly titled "The Hero," shows the Gotham Guardian swinging high over his beloved city.



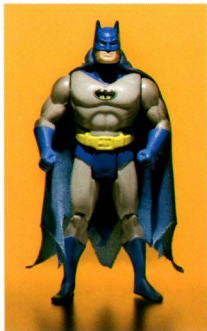
NO. 6 THE HERO



© 1987 DC COMICS, INC.

ROBIN

BATMAN



readers didn't like Jason Todd, and they were out for blood. The second half of the series saw Batman discovering the limp body of his former sidekick, then waging a furious war on the Joker, nearly killing him if not for the timely intervention of Superman.

As it turned out, the Joker was having a big year. Also in 1988, acclaimed writer Alan Moore's highly regarded prestige one-shot special entitled *Batman: The Killing Joke* was released, the product of a years-long collaboration with detailed artist Brian Bolland. Telling a possible origin of the Joker, this beautifully illustrated story proved to have a lasting impact on Batman's titles. In it, the Joker shot and paralyzed the former Batgirl, Barbara Gordon. Offering keen insight into both the minds of the Joker and Batman, this special is considered by most Batman fans to be the definitive Joker story of all time.

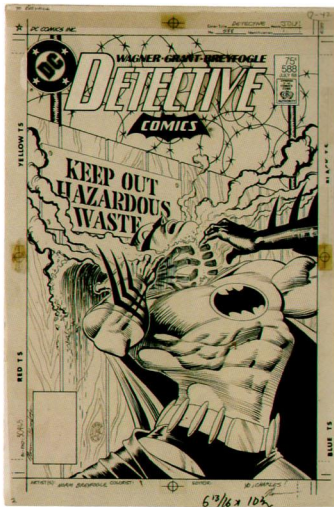
Meanwhile, despite Batman's personal world becoming more cohesive, his participation in the rest of the DC Universe had not diminished in the slightest. With the *Super Friends* animated show still producing new Batman team-up adventures until

The premise was simple. Readers themselves would choose whether Jason Todd would live or die. In this four-issue series (*Batman* #426 to #429), Robin began to track down his birth mother, only to be kidnapped by the Joker, beaten, and left for dead in a factory that was rigged to explode. Readers were given a 1-900 number to call in and cast their votes on whether the controversial hero would be given his permanent walking papers. After the numbers were tallied, the facts were clear:

out for blood.

1986, merchandising continued, and what is considered the first modern Batman action figure was produced in the Super Powers line from Kenner in 1984.

Since Batman proved to be such good friends with the super hero community in the pop culture world, it made sense that he switched back to the big leagues in the



ABOVE LEFT: A 1984 Super Powers Batman action figure, considered by most to be the first modern action figure of Batman. When its legs were squeezed, its arms would deliver a "power-action Bat-punch." ABOVE: Corrosive Man tussles with the Dark Knight on Norm Brynogle's original cover art for *Detective Comics* #588 (July 1988). OPPOSITE PAGE: This Toy Biz 14-inch Batmobile was one of the most successful Batman movie tie-ins.

comics themselves. He quit the *Outsiders* with issue #32 of that title in order to join the new comedic *Justice League* as the straight man to the antics of Blue Beetle and Guy Gardner in the premier of *Justice League* #1 (May 1987), by writers Keith Giffen and J. M. DeMatteis with artist Kevin Maguire.

Back in *Batman* and *Detective Comics*, the idea of shorter or limited series within a series proved to be a popular format, both in issue format and in the fledgling world of collected reprints in trade paperback form. Denny O'Neil stuck to this template, interrupting long story threads for self-contained stories including "Year Two," "The Many Deaths of Batman," "Year Three," and the epic five-part "A Lonely Place of Dying," which introduced a third Robin to Gotham City.

Actually making his first cameo appearance in *Batman* #436 (August 1989), the soon-to-be third Robin, Timothy Drake, was a die-hard fan of the Caped Crusader and therefore noticed that Batman's behavior had seemed a bit off lately. Deducing Batman's secret identity, as well as the death of Jason Todd, Drake came

to the conclusion that Batman needed a Robin to ground him and keep him from abandoning his moral code. After first trying to coax Dick Grayson back into the fold in order to take up his old Robin mantle again, Tim finally donned the costume himself in order to save his hero from the demented machinations of the split-personality villain Two-Face. Finally, Batman reluctantly took in the teen as his sidekick, but only after Drake agreed to undergo extensive training, so as not to repeat the tragic mistakes Batman felt he had made with Jason.

Perhaps the perfect book on the shelves at the time to catch the eye of new readers, "A Lonely Place of Dying" was released in the summer of 1989, a year in which *Batmania* would return to rival 1966 levels. Director Tim Burton, along with screenwriters Sam Hamm and Warren Skaaren, created the blockbuster Warner Bros. film titled simply *Batman*. The public that year was heavily anticipating the film's release, as it promised a darker take on the character, one fans had quickly embraced when seen in the works of Frank Miller and his contemporaries.

Batman merchandise was everywhere, and months before the film's debut, stores found it difficult to keep any related material in stock, especially the signature black T-shirt bearing the familiar yellow oval symbol. The mainstream public was once again primed and ready for Batman, a hunger that would be more than satisfied in the coming years.



59 CONTINUED: (2)

40.

59

Heck, they're not such bad guys.  
I say we give 'em a couple of  
days to come around.  
(thoughtful pause)  
We-a-ll... maybe one day.  
(then, casually)  
Aaah, screw it. Let's grease 'em.

CUT TO:

60 OMITTED

60 \*

61

61 \*

62 EXT. MUNICIPAL DISTRICT - DAY

62 \*

Amid the pedestrians we catch BRUCE and VICKI, all smiles,  
strolling down the sidewalks on the way to lunch. \*

VICKI

... To tell you the truth, I'd  
just about given up waiting.

BRUCE

I said I'd call you the minute I  
got free. And I did -- And here  
we are.

VICKI

(teasing him)  
Mm-hm. Lunch. Not even dinner.

He stops in his tracks, takes her by the shoulders.

BRUCE

Vicki. I wish I had more time to  
give you. I think about you every  
minute.

(grinning)

You. Are you going to waste this  
lovely afternoon being mad at me?

All this, of course, is delivered with devastating sin-  
cerity. VICKI finds herself totally disarmed.

VICKI

Okay, I'm a sucker. You sound so  
much like someone I used to...  
(stepping suddenly)  
Bruce? I know this is silly, but  
-- you're not married, are you?

He stops and laughs. She smiles crookedly, takes his  
arm.



ABOVE: A page from Sam Hamm's screenplay for the 1989 *Batman* film, directed by Tim Burton. TOP RIGHT: Bob Kane holding a treasury-sized *Batman* reprint collection on the set of *Batman* in 1989. BOTTOM RIGHT: An autographed promotional photo of Kim Basinger (Vicki Vale), Michael Keaton (Batman), and Jack Nicholson (Joker).

THE BATMAN: MICHAEL KEATON AND JACK NICHOLSON; BATMAN AND THE JOKER: WALTER BESS; VICKI VALE: KIM BASINGER; BATMAN AND THE JOKER: WALTER BESS; BATMAN AND THE JOKER: WALTER BESS; BATMAN AND THE JOKER: WALTER BESS

ROBIN

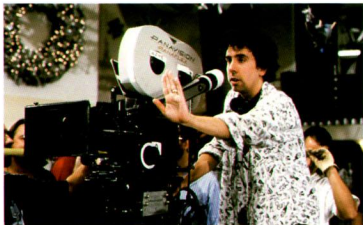
BATMAN

## BLOCKBUSTERS

Debuting on June 23, 1989, Tim Burton's *Batman* stunned theatergoers nationwide, surprising them with the very moody atmosphere that had lurked in the background of Batman comics since their inception. Starring the surprising choice of normally comedic actor Michael Keaton as Bruce Wayne and highly acclaimed Hollywood mainstay Jack Nicholson as the Joker, the grim Gotham City that Burton and company brought to life blew away audiences everywhere. From the amazing theme by composer Danny Elfman, to the lavish design of Gotham City by production designer Anton Furst, to the all-black rubber batsuit, fans embraced the film, making it the highest-grossing movie of its year. Nicholson and Keaton both impressed critics, and the film's soundtrack by Prince topped the charts, his song "Batdance" coming in at number one, a feat rare at the time for a tune from a movie soundtrack. All over the world, the dark origins of Batman's character had once again reached a mass audience, and the camp stylings of the ABC live-action show were finally pushed into the back of the populace's collective mind.

As toy companies Toy Biz and then Kenner took the Batman license and ran with it, creating hundreds of action figures of Batman wearing costumes that would make even the zebra Batman of the 1950s embarrassed, Batman's likeness also made its way onto video games, neckties, and trash cans. This collectible boom continues to this day, constantly reinvigorated by new big-budget feature films and animated series. Shortly after the 1989 feature, Batman even returned to the funny pages for a bit, in a comic strip by writer William Messner-Loebs and legendary artist Marshall Rogers. Lacking enough support from various papers to make it financially feasible, the new comic strip folded after two years, despite Carmine Infantino trying his hand at its art chores.

Back in the comics, editor Andrew Helfer played off the summer movie's success and released Batman's first new solo title in decades, *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*. Jump-starting with a five-part saga by Denny O'Neil that tied into the "Year One" story arc, this new ongoing series by a slew of rotating creative teams chronicled the first few years of Batman's career and was an instant hit,



**ABOVE:** Director Tim Burton had made his name with quirky and atmospheric films such as *Beetlejuice* before Warner Bros. handed him the keys to the Batmobile. Burton directed the first two feature films, setting an influential tone for subsequent films both in and outside of the super hero genre. Here he is pictured on the set of *Batman Returns*.

lasting for well over 200 issues and featuring such notable comics luminaries as writers Grant Morrison and James Robinson, as well as artists Gil Kane, Tim Sale, and Joe Kubert. When the DC marketing department noticed that Batman did not appear on the cover of its first issue, director Bruce Bristow opted to produce an over-cover with a bat-silhouette on it to gain more attention from the public. Creating these flashy covers in four bright colors with even production runs for each, Bristow accidentally created the variant cover market for collectors, a trend that continues to be popular to this day.

In the pages of *Detective Comics*, Batman screenwriter Sam Hamm took advantage of that year's ongoing writers' strike in Hollywood to write a three-issue story entitled "Blind Justice," which culminated in that title's 600th issue. This story served as the only brief interruption in the long and impressive run that writer Alan Grant and artist Norm Breyfogle shared on the title. While creative teams over on the *Batman* comic seemed to be in a constant state of flux, Grant and Breyfogle stayed the course on *Detective Comics* from issue #583 all the way through #621. During that time, the pair introduced villains such as Anarky, the Ratcatcher, Cornelius Strik, and the Ventrioloquist and Scarface, and reestablished the role of the various Clayfaces in Batman's Rogues Gallery.



ABOVE: *Batman Returns* artist Tim Flattery designed this movie prop of a penguin tuting a candy-cane striped comrade missile. RIGHT: A still from *Batman Returns* showing the vault where Bruce Wayne kept multiple versions of his Batsuit.

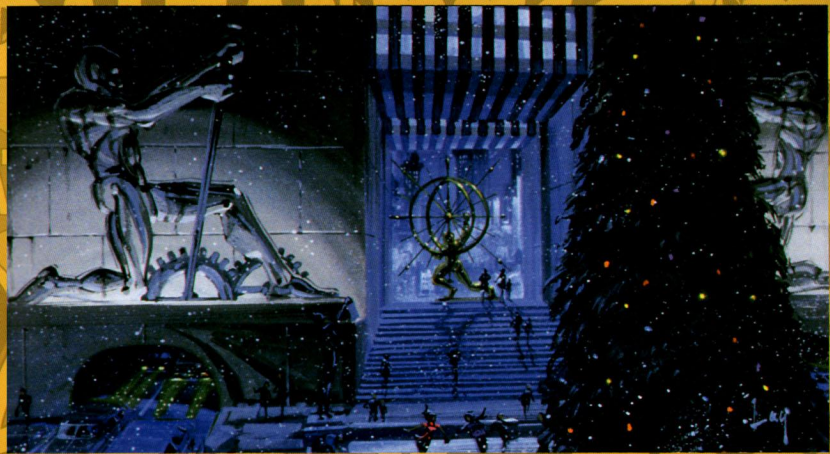
On June 19, 1992, just three short years after the success of its predecessor, *Batman Returns*, the blockbuster sequel to the first Burton film, was released. Again the highest-grossing movie of its year, *Batman Returns* saw Keaton reprise his famous role, this time opposite Michelle Pfeiffer as the sexy and emotionally disturbed latex-clad Catwoman. Danny DeVito stepped in for a grotesque portrayal of the Penguin, and even Christopher Walken supplied a supporting role as evil businessman Max Shreck. With an added bit of art deco flair to Gotham by production designer Bo

Welch, *Batman Returns* would go on to inspire the look and feel of Warner Bros.' other mainstream Batman project, *Batman: The Animated Series*.

The product of the imaginations of animator Bruce Timm, producer Alan Burnett, and writer Paul Dini among others, *Batman: The Animated Series* debuted on Fox TV on September 5, 1992. With moody deco background paintings by Eric Radomski that harkened back to the Fleischer *Superman* cartoons of the 1940s and character designs inspired by the work of comic art legends Alex Toth and Jack Kirby, the cartoon was an instant success, startling audiences with its sophisticated stories and winning several Emmy Awards in the process. The series lasted eighty-five episodes before moving to The WB network and producing another twenty-four episodes in a slicker and more streamlined animated style under the title *The New Batman Adventures*. The show's continued popularity led to several spin-offs within the same interlocking continuity, including *Superman: The Animated Series* and *Batman Beyond*. Consequently, the show also produced a straight-to-video movie special delving into Batman's origins entitled *Batman: Mask of the Phantasm*. The studio was so impressed by the effort, the film was granted a limited theatrical release on December 25, 1993, and insured the creation of several other direct-to-video projects in the future.



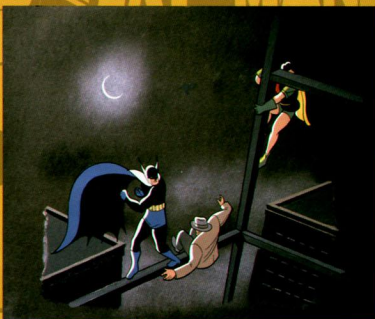
Batman was really branching out. Just as his exposure in other media continued to increase, so did Batman's number of comic book titles. Catwoman and Robin both found themselves headlining their own miniseries, Robin's even inspiring two sequels. Utilizing the same winning release formula that spawned *Legends of the Dark Knight*, Alan Grant and Norm Breyfogle found a new home on the fledgling ongoing title *Batman: Shadow of the Bat*, around the time



ABOVE: Set design art for *Batman Returns* by Tom Lay, depicting Gotham's version of Rockefeller Plaza at Christmas. The oversized statue to the left is a nod to the mammoth props that were a staple in the comics for many years.

ROBIN

BATMAN



**TOP and BOTTOM LEFT:** These rough action studies of the Caped Crusader were drawn by Dan Maskett in 1990 for *Batman: The Animated Series*. **TOP and BOTTOM RIGHT:** Cartoonist Chris Ware, the creator of the popular *Acme Novelty Library* comics, fashioned this *Batman* animation art in the style of the 1940s *Superman* cartoons from the Fleischer studio. A faux Fleischer stamp even appears on the bottom right corner of the drawing.

BAT MAN



ABOVE: A rough movie poster concept by Bruce Timm for the 1994 direct-to-video feature-length film *Batman: Mask of the Phantasm*. RIGHT: In 1991, DC's Special Projects department envisioned a line of DC "Junior" toys, including this pint-sized version of the Joker.

that *Batman Returns* was released. Meanwhile, Jim Aparo returned to *Batman* itself to illustrate the scripts of Doug Moench, who was back again for his second extended tenure on the *Batman* books. New writer Chuck Dixon took over the writing chores on *Detective Comics*, creating a host of new characters, not the least of which was the mysterious Spoiler, who turned out to be none other than Stephanie Brown, the daughter of longtime bat-villain Cluemaster. Debuting in *Detective Comics* #647 (August 1992), Spoiler left clues for Batman and Robin in order to sabotage her father's criminal exploits.

With such a large world and cast of supporting characters, fans began to pick and choose what to spend their money on—a decision DC Comics did not want them to make. Enter the crossover. Near the end of 1992, besides maintaining his editorial direction in the *Batman* captain's chair, Denny O'Neil found time to scribe the miniseries *Batman: Sword of Azrael*. Drawn by relative newcomer Joe Quesada, the series introduced Jean Paul Valley, also known as Azrael, a reluctant heir to a long lineage of zealot assassins. A bit later, Chuck Dixon and artist Graham Nolan created a new archfoe for Batman in the pages of the one-shot *Batman: Vengeance of Bane*. Bane, a brilliant mind trapped in a foreign prison and used as a guinea pig with the experimental enhancement steroid known as Venom, became obsessed with



the legend of the Batman and was determined to make a name for himself by defeating the Gotham Guardian. With these new characters firmly in place in the corners of Batman's universe, "Knightfall" was about to begin.

A successful attempt to boost overall sales by forcing readers to purchase all of the related tie-in titles, "Knightfall" officially began in the pages of *Batman* #492 (May 1993). The series in its entirety was a nineteen-part massive epic, dipping into the pages of *Batman*, *Detective Comics*, *Batman: Shadow of the Bat*, and even the limited series *Showcase* '93. In this well-planned saga, Bane traveled to Gotham and released all the inmates of Arkham Asylum, causing an already physically taxed and sleep-deprived Batman to be strained past his limits. Bruce Wayne at his weakest returned home from a particularly harrowing night only to find Bane waiting for him in Wayne Manor. After a dramatic fight, Bane succeeded in breaking the Batman, literally snapping the crime fighter's back over his knee.

As Batman lay unconscious in the manor in critical condition, Jean Paul Valley took up the mantle of the Batman, under tutelage from Robin. Valley altered the traditional Batman costume into a technological suit of armor, complete with vicious sharp claws and a light-projecting chest symbol. In the landmark 500th issue of *Batman*,

RIGHT: In this layout for a *Saga of the Dark Knight* trading card, Graham Nolan recreated the watershed scene from *Batman* #497, in which Bane snapped Batman's back.







garbed as a more violent and uncouth Dark Knight, Valley tracked Bane and his lackeys down and defeated them harshly, securing his place as Gotham's newest guardian, whether the city wanted him or not.

A smash sales success, "Knightfall" instantly gave way to another giant crossover, this one called "Knightquest." As Bruce Wayne struggled to find a cure for his shattered spine and psyche, Azrael/Batman slowly descended into madness, a by-product of the brainwashing he had endured since childhood. Finally, when Bruce was healed and ready to resume his role, the crossover "KnightsEnd" began, wherein the true Batman finally reclaimed his rightful position as Gotham's protector. Meanwhile, the lost and pathless Azrael was rewarded for his efforts and his popularity among the fans with his own ongoing series, penned by Denny O'Neil himself and drawn by artist Barry Kitson.

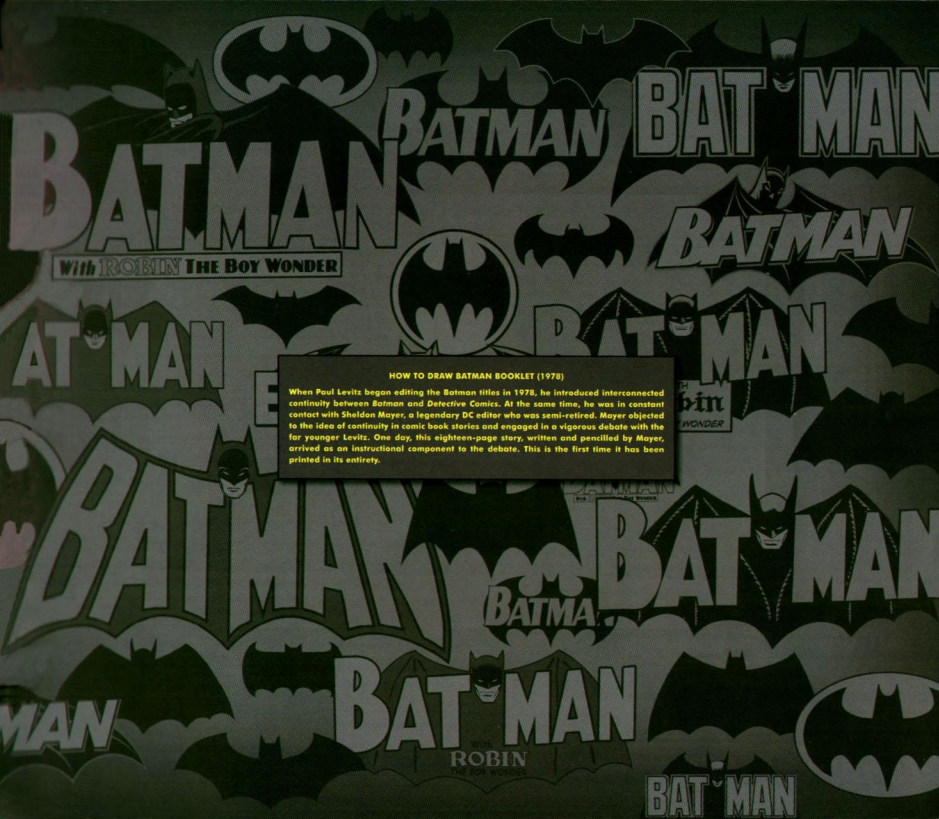
But Jean Paul Valley wasn't the only character to benefit from these major crossover tales. As "Knightfall" and "Knightquest" proved popular, both Catwoman and Robin received their own ongoing series. The maxiseries *Showcase* 92 headlined a Batman-related character in each of its oversized anthology issues and continued this trend in its sequel title, *Showcase* 94. Nightwing, who spent a brief time as Batman during the following "Prodigal" crossover, was finally granted

his long-awaited miniseries in 1995, complete with a new costume. And former Batgirl Barbara Gordon, now calling herself Oracle, was granted a new one-shot special. The story saw her teaming up with Justice League alumna Black Canary and was titled *Birds of Prey*, a special that would inspire many sequels and miniseries as well as an ongoing series in 1999.

Back at the box office, *Batman Forever*, the third installment of the Batman movie franchise, proved that three times was indeed a charm; its June 16, 1995, smash release made it, too, the highest-grossing film of its year. Director Tim



ABOVE LEFT: Dream Date Batman, Malibu Beach Batman, and Slicker Grunge Batman were Stan Shaw's spoof merchandise ideas printed in the summer 1995 issue of *Shop Talk* magazine. ABOVE: In the same issue of *Shop Talk*, Jerry Tomperton created this faux French Batman cover for a "Desert Island Five" article that listed his five favorite comics of all time.



# BATMAN

With ROBIN THE BOY WONDER

# BATMAN

# BAT MAN

# BATMAN

# AT MAN

# BAT MAN

**HOW TO DRAW BATMAN BOOKLET (1978)**

When Paul Levitz began editing the Batman titles in 1978, he introduced interconnected continuity between *Batman* and *Detective Comics*. At the same time, he was in constant contact with Sheldon Mayer, a legendary DC editor who was semi-retired. Mayer objected to the idea of continuity in comic book stories and engaged in a vigorous debate with the younger Levitz. One day, this eighteen-page story, written and pencilled by Mayer, arrived as an instructional component to the debate. This is the first time it has been printed in its entirety.

in  
WONDER

# BATMAN

# BAT MAN

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# BAT MAN

ROBIN

# BAT MAN

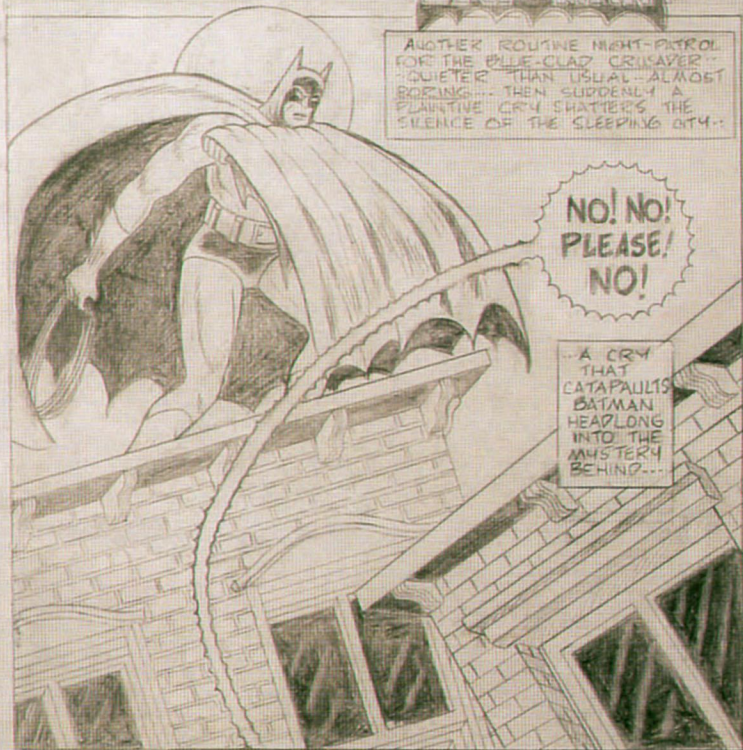


ORPHANED AS A CHILD WHEN HIS PARENTS WERE MURDERED BEFORE HIS EYES, BRUCE WAYNE HAS TRAINED HIMSELF TO WAGE RUTHLESS WAR AGAINST CRIME AS THE DREAD AVENGER OF THE NIGHT...

NO BORDERS, PROCT  
AS INDICATED

**BATMAN**

CREATED  
BY  
BOB  
KANE



ANOTHER ROUTINE NIGHT-PATROL FOR THE BLUE-CLAD CRUISER... QUIETER THAN USUAL--ALMOST BORING... THEN SUDDENLY A PLAINATIVE CRY SHATTERS THE SILENCE OF THE SLEEPING CITY...

NO! NO!  
PLEASE!  
NO!

...A CRY THAT CATAPULTS BATMAN HEADLONG INTO THE MYSTERY BEHIND...

# ...THE FACE OF THE GRIM REAPER!

SHELDON MAYER  
GUEST WRITER/ARTIST

INKER

ILLUSTRATOR

EDITOR

EDITOR

**The**  
**RIGHT**  
**Way**  
**to**  
**DRAW**  
**BATMAN**

By  
Sheldon Mayer



SEE? IT WORKED BEAUTIFULLY! HE WALKED RIGHT INTO OUR LITTLE TRAP!

YEAH, BUT DON'T WE HAVE TRAPPED HIM BEFORE HE CLOBBERED US?

YEAH! THAT GUY GOT A KICK ON HIM LIKE A DANG MULE!

DUH! DICKING AND TAKE HIS MASK OFF. I'VE GOT TO PHOTOGRAPH HIS FACE!.. THAT'S WHAT WERE BEING PAID FOR!

RIGHT!



HUH? WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HIM?

I--I KIN SEE RISHT THRU HIM!

HE HES STARTING TO--ZULP!-- DISAPPEAR!

HE'S GONE!! UNASHED!

RIGHT BEFO OUR EYES!

THIS IS CRAZY! I'M GETTING OUTA HERE!

Color  
None  
5-  
Pica  
Over  
an  
inch  
wide  
-  
Metric  
Color  
Over  
10cm  
wide  
-  
4 color  
Black  
and  
white  
only

THE TWO MEN LEAVE HASTILY; THE GIRL WAVERS, LOOKS AGAIN AT THE SPOT WHERE BATMAN DISAPPEARED, THEN NERVOUSLY FOLLOWS HER COHORTS.

AS THE SOUND OF RETREATING FOOTSTEPS DIES AWAY, THE BLUE CLAD FIGURE OF BATMAN SLOWLY RE-APPEARS.

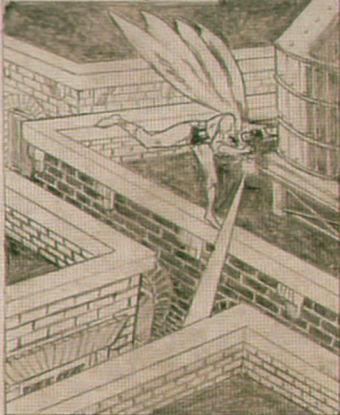
WHOO! WHAT'D SHE HIT ME WITH?

HER PURSE - IT PROBABLY HAD A SUN IN IT. THAT BLONDE IS ONE MEAN LADY.

HUH? WHO ARE YOU? AND WHAT'S A LITTLE GIRL LIKE YOU DOING OUT HERE SO LATE?



A THIN BEAM OF INFRA-RED LIGHT, BARELY VISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE, CUTS THRU THE BLACKNESS. AS.....



BATMAN'S INFRA-SCOPE SCANS THE UNLIT ALLEYS BELOW...UNTIL...



NOT NOW, ALFRED... HELP ME PULL OUT ALL THE BOOKS WE HAVE ON MAGICIAN'S TRICKS, PARTICULARLY ON VANISHING ACTS.



NO-- I JUST WANT TO KNOW HOW A PERSON CAN DISAPPEAR IN PLAIN VIEW OF AN EYE WITNESS!



LATER WE'VE BEEN OVER EVERY KNOWN VANISHING STUNT, SIR-- THE SUBJECTS ARE ALWAYS IN A BOX OR BEHIND A SCREEN BEFORE THEY



NO! NO! IN PLAIN VIEW-- THEN-- POOF! GONE! IT MUST BE A TRICK!

DISAPPEAR!

OF COURSE THERE IS HYPNOSIS, SIR-- A PERSON COULD BE MADE TO IMAGINE ALMOST ANYTHING!

NOT IF THAT PERSON HAD BEEN TRAINED TO RESIST HYPNOSIS-- TAKE ME FOR INSTANCE--



--HM-- YES-- BUT EVEN YOU COULD HAVE A TRAUMATIC HALLUCINATION, SIR-- A FEVER-- A BLOW ON THE HEAD--

--HM-- A BLOW ON THE HEAD-- I HAD BEEN KNOCKED OUT-- COULD I HAVE IMAGINED I SAW MIRANDA?



NO! IMPOSSIBLE! THAT CHILD WAS REAL! I SAW HER PLAIN AS DAY! I KNOW, I DID!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SIR?

FINE! FINE! --JUST NEED SOME REST-- --NIGHT, ALFRED!



WHY AM I OUT SO LATE? LISTEN BAT-PERSON, I PROBABLY JUST SAID YOUR LIFE! IS THAT HOW YOU SAY THANKS?

LOOK MONEY-- SOMEBODY CHASED THOSE BADGUYS AWAY-- BUT YOU'VE ONLY A



DON'T SAY IT AGAIN! ACTUALLY I'M VERY BRIGHT FOR MY AGE AND I'M QUITE CAPABLE OF HANDLING PRACTICALLY ANY PROBLEM!

WATCH THIS--

NOW YOU SEE ME-- RIGHT?

RIGHT.



--AND NOW YOU DON'T.

HUH? SHE'S GONE!

THAT CHILD VANISHED!

COMPLETELY VANISHED!



OH, BY THE WAY, BATMAN-- MY NAME IS MIRANDA-- MARVELOUS MIRANDA!

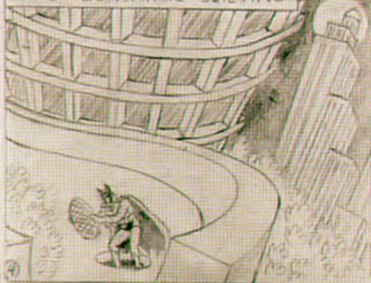
BYE!

BYE!



AND BATMAN HEARS A RHYTHMIC PATTERN OF SMALL FEET-- THE UNMISTAKEABLE SOUND OF A LITTLE GIRL SKIPPING MERRILY AWAY.

LONG PAST MID-NIGHT, A DISTURBED, SOMEWHAT THOUGHTFUL BATMAN USES HIS SECRET ENTRANCE TO THE WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING.



-- RIDES THE HIDDEN ELEVATOR TO THE ROOF-TOP PENTHOUSE OF MILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPIST BRUCE WAYNE AND --

GOOD MORNING, MASTER BRUCE, COFFEE'S READY.





MEANWHILE...  
IF WE DON'T SHOW UP  
LIKE WE PROMISED THE  
JOKER, HE GONE FIND  
US, AN WE DAID MEN!

WITHOUT PHOTOGRAPHS OF  
BATMAN'S FACE, HE RE  
DEAD MEN EVEN IF WE  
DO SHOW UP!... YOU  
KNOW THE JOKER!



OH, QUIT WHINING!  
WE'LL HAVE THE PICTURES  
WHEN WE GET THERE!

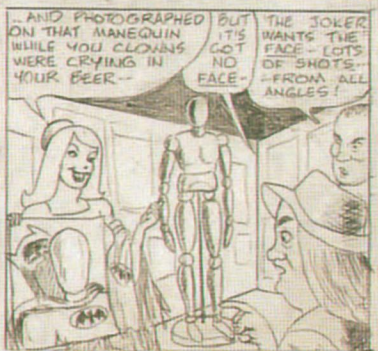
YEN GONE  
LOCO  
LIL?  
YEN DIN  
TAKE NO  
PITCHAS!



BUT THE JOKER DOESN'T  
KNOW THAT-- ALL WE  
HAVE TO DO IS BRING  
HIM PICTURES OF  
SOME OTHER GUY--

--WEARING  
THIS  
BATMAN  
STUFF--

-- WHICH  
I JUST  
MADE--



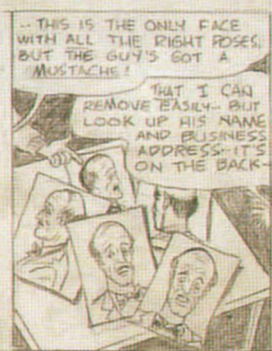
AND PHOTOGRAPHED  
ON THAT MANEQUIN  
WHILE YOU CLOWNS  
WERE CRYING IN  
YOUR BEER--

BUT THE JOKER  
WANTS THE  
FACE-- LOTS  
OF SHOTS--  
--FROM ALL  
ANGLES!



OKAY! SO I'LL USE TRICK  
PHOTOGRAPHY! I RENTED  
THIS STUDIO FROM A POR-  
TRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER--  
HE'S GOT  
LOTS OF  
FACES HERE  
TO PICK  
FROM--

-- YOU GO  
THRU THOSE  
FILES-- I'LL  
TAKE THESE.



-- THIS IS THE ONLY FACE  
WITH ALL THE RIGHT POSES,  
BUT THE GUY'S GOT A  
MUSTACHE!

THAT I CAN  
REMOVE EASILY-- BUT  
LOOK UP HIS NAME  
AND BUSINESS  
ADDRESS-- IT'S  
ON THE BACK--



HIS NAME IS ALFRED  
PENNYWORTH-- A  
VALET-- WORKS FOR  
A GUY NAMED  
WAYNE!

VALET--  
GOOD! AS LONG  
AS HE'S NOBODY  
IMPORTANT!

2

NEXT DAY--SOME  
WHERE IN GOTHAM--

THIS TIME, BATMAN  
I'LL BE THE  
WINNER!



THUNK!



HA' HA!  
GOTCHA!

BOSS IF YOU WANT ME TO KEEP  
BRINGING BACK YOUR DARTS--



--AIM FOR HIS  
LEGS,  
PLAST IT!

--ALL THIS  
CLIMBING  
IS  
KILLING  
ME!

IT'LL ALL BE OVER  
SOON, MY LITTLE PRANKS!  
--BATMAN'S DAYS ARE  
REALLY NUMBERED!



'DHO' SOUNDS  
LIKE  
YOU'VE GOT  
ANOTHER  
STUNT  
COOKING!  
RIGHT, BOSS?

A BEAUTY! I HAVE  
ARRANGED TO GET  
PHOTOS OF BATMAN'S  
REAL FACE!



AND THAT WILL  
FINISH HIM?

COMPLETELY--FROM PHOTOS, I CAN  
MAKE A SILICONE MASK--AND COMMIT  
THE MOST BIZARRE CRIMES  
WHILE WEARING HIS FACE--



--SOONER OR  
LATER, THE  
COPS WILL  
PICK HIM UP.

FUNNEE?  
HA' HA!  
HA!

THE SPEAKER MOVES OUT OF THE  
SHADOWS, AND NOW WE SEE --



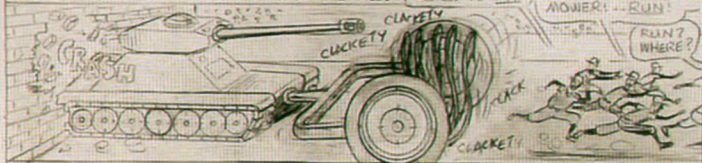
WHA! THEY DON'T  
CALL YOU 'THE  
JOKER' FOR  
NOTHING, BOSS!







SUDDENLY A WEIRD CONTRACTION CRASHES THRU THE STADIUM WALL AND LUMBERS ONTO THE FIELD! WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THAT? IT'S A TANK--PUSHING A TREMENDOUS LAW-MOWER!--RUN!



AN AMPLIFIER BROADCASTS A LOUD MESSAGE FROM THE TANK...

BASEBALL FANS, ATTENTION! THIS IS THE 'SCUM REAPER' SPEAKING! I HAVE BOTH TEAMS CORNERED! IF YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE THEM TORN TO BITS, DO EXACTLY AS I SAY...

...THROW ALL YOUR MONEY AND JEWELRY UP INTO THE AIR-- NOW!!!



THE VAST AUDIENCE IS STUNNED...



...THEN GRADUALLY THE FANS OBEY THE ODD INSTRUCTIONS...



SUDDENLY AN ENORMOUS VACUUM HOSE EXTENDS FROM THE REAR OF THE TANK, UN-



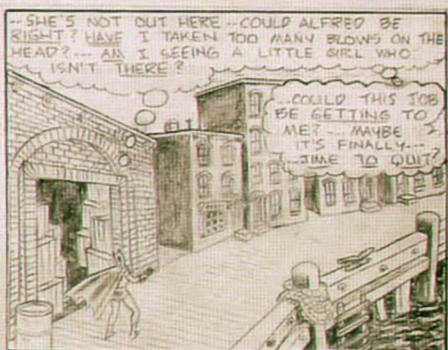
ALL THE MONEY AND JEWELRY IS SUCKED INTO ITS POWERFUL VORTEX.

THE TANK APPROACHES THE NEAREST TV CAMERA AND A MAN'S HEAD EMERGES FROM THE TANK'S TURRET...



IT'S ALMOST AS IF HE WANTS THE WHOLE WORLD TO SEE HIS FACE!







YOU'RE REAL CLEVER WITH THAT THING... HERE'S A LITTLE TOY OF MY OWN I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU... IT'S CALLED A LASSO...

...AND THIS IS CALLED A PAPER AIRPLANE...



OH, NO! GAS! TOO LATE TO PUT ON MY GAS-MASK-- MUSCLES FEEL STIFF-- CAN BARELY MOVE--

CHEERIO, CAPED CRUSADER! SORRY TO PLAY AND RUN, BUT YOU STILL HAVE LOTS OF COMPANY--

COUGH  
COUGH

LOOK BEHIND YOU! WAH!!



OH, MY! GUESS I SHOULD'VE HIT THOSE THINGS A LITTLE HARDER WHEN I HAD THE CHANCE--

--FEEL TOO WOOZY TO HANDLE 'EM NOW!



HUH? AM I DREAMING OR DID THEY JUST FLOAT UP INTO THE AIR?



OH, THEY'RE FLOATING ALL RIGHT-- BUT THEY DON'T KNOW IT-- THEY JUST THINK YOU'RE OUT OF REACH!-- FUNNEE?

MARVELOUS MIRANDA! YOU'RE BACK! --UNLESS-- --AM I-- HALLUCINATING?



HALLUCINATING MY TOE! I'M AS REAL AS YOU ARE! HOLD STILL WHILE I ZAP YOU WITH MY ANTI-PARALYSIS BEAM!

OW!



THERE! FEEL BETTER NOW?

IT'S INCREDIBLE!-- I FEEL FINE! FINE!

15  
WE PUT THIS MAKE-UP TAPE OVER IT... JUST TO SEE IF IT COULD BE HIDDEN...



SEE? IT HAD HIS MUSTACHE COMPLETELY!... HE'S THE GRIM READER ALL RIGHT!



A SILENT GLANCE PASSES BETWEEN ALFRED AND BATMAN... A GLANCE THAT TELLS ALFRED A LOT!



HE KNOWS I'M INNOCENT...

SOMEHOW, HE'LL FIND A WAY TO PROVE IT!

IF I'M GOING TO QUIT... IT'LL HAVE TO BE LATER... RIGHT NOW, ALFRED NEEDS ME... I'VE GOT TO FOLLOW MY HUNCH...



...AND TRACK DOWN THE JOKER!

AS BATMAN EASES INTO THE SHADOWS, A PATROLMAN PASSES ON HIS WAY INTO THE BUILDING.

THE WALK ON THAT OFFICER... WHY DOES IT SEEM SO OUT OF PLACE IN THAT UNIFORM?



OH, WELL... WHY NOT? ... HE'S PROBABLY A ROOKIE...



...MUST GET PARANOID... GOT WORK TO DO!

MEANWHILE, INSIDE POLICE HEADQUARTERS THE RADIO SAYS THEY HAVE HIM HERE...



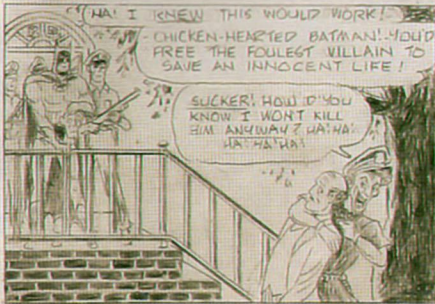
THIS IS MY GREATEST TRIUMPH! I MUST SEE IT FOR MYSELF!

THAT'S HIM... BEING FINGER-PRINTED! I DID IT! BATMAN'S REALLY GOING TO JAIL!



...WHY? THOSE AREN'T REAL STRIPES ON THAT OFFICER... THE CHIEF'LL HAVE MY STRIPES IF I LET THAT GO...





"NA! I KNEW THIS WOULD WORK!  
-CHICKEN-HEARTED BATMAN! YOU'D  
FREE THE FOULEST VILLAIN TO  
SAVE AN INNOCENT LIFE!

SUCKER! HOW DO YOU  
KNOW I WON'T KILL  
HIM ANYWAY? HA-HA!  
HA-HA-HA!



OW! MY  
ANKLE!

WHO KICKED  
ME?!



NOT ME... BUT IT  
WAS A GREAT IDEA!

ZOK



GOOD OLD ALFRED...  
-THAT WAS A SLY  
KICK-- I DIDN'T  
EVEN SEE HIM DO IT!



MINUTES LATER...

YOU WON  
THIS ROUND  
BATMAN, BUT  
YOU KNOW  
A JAIL WON'T  
HOLD ME!  
-WE'LL MEET  
AGAIN SOON!  
DEPEND  
ON IT!!

FINE!  
-IF I CAN'T  
MAKE IT...  
-I'LL SEND  
ROBIN!



MUCH LATER-- THAT KICK YOU GAVE  
THE JOKER SIR--HOW DID YOU  
MANAGE IT FROM WHERE YOU  
WERE?

ME? YOU MEAN IT  
WASN'T YOU??

OH, NO, SIR



JA! MARVELOUS MIRANDA!  
SHE'S REAL!

WHO, SIR?

SOME DAY I'LL  
FIND OUT  
WHO AND WHAT  
SHE IS...

-BUT RIGHT  
NOW THE  
IMPORTANT  
THING IS...



...THERE'S  
NOTHING WRONG  
WITH ME!

No  
Eats





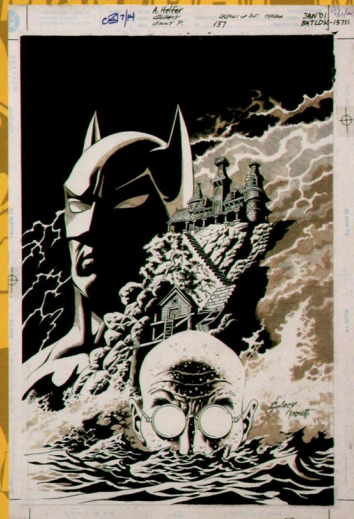
ABOVE: These two personal holiday cards were sent to friends and family of Bob and Elizabeth Kane in 1995 and 1996.

Burton had reduced his role to merely that of a producer; the film's visual palette and stylistic choices reflected the decisions of director Joel Schumacher. While fans were somewhat troubled by the emphasis on neon colors and tongue-in-cheek dialogue, they still turned out in droves to watch Val Kilmer try on the rubber tights as Batman, alongside Chris O'Donnell, who introduced Robin to a new generation of theatergoers. Two-Face was played by Tommy Lee Jones, whom fans criticized for doing little more than a Jack Nicholson-as-Joker impression. Jim Carrey lent his unique comic abilities to the role of the Riddler, who, along with Bruce Wayne, shared an infatuation with leading lady Dr. Chase Meridian, played by Nicole Kidman.

However, comic book audiences were growing tired of the constant crossovers and multipart tales. They wanted a refreshing break from the so-called "event" storylines and craved more character-driven tales. With "Knightfall" cover artist Kelley Jones now doing interior work, *Batman* returned to smaller-scale stories for a time, before lagging sales and a need to shock a fickle reading audience forced O'Neil to return to the proven formula of the mega-crossover. Soon "Contagion" spread an Ebola-like virus called the Clench through the streets of Gotham City; "Legacy" placed the blame for the illness in the already blood-soaked hands of villain Ra's al Ghul, "Cataclysm" saw an 8.6-level earthquake hit an unsuspecting Gotham, and "Aftershock" dealt with the ramification of the destroyed metropolis as it descended into chaos.

Back in Hollywood, the *Batman* movie franchise hit a roadblock with the release of *Batman & Robin*. Schumacher's second *Batman* film and the fourth in the series, the film had debuted on June 20, 1997, and audiences and critics everywhere found it lacking in just about every respect.

But even Joel Schumacher couldn't keep the *Batman* juggernaut down. *Batman's* role in the DC Universe once again continued to expand, despite his plight in Hollywood. Writer Grant Morrison and artist Howard Porter had *Batman* join forces with the rest of DC's big



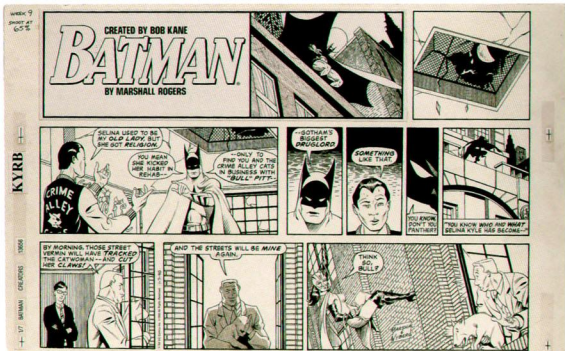
ABOVE: Paul Gulacy and Jimmy Palmiotti drew this preliminary cover (left) which differs significantly from their final cover art (right) for *Legends of the Dark Knight* #137 (January 2001).

seven—Superman, Green Lantern, the Flash, the Martian Manhunter, Aquaman, and Wonder Woman—in the pages of *JLA*, reuniting Batman with the team he'd abandoned over five years earlier. Not to be outdone, Robin formed his own team of heroes called Young Justice, and after Nightwing moved to a new city up the river called Blüdhaven and into his own ongoing series courtesy of Chuck Dixon and artist Scott McDaniel, he, too, felt the need for camaraderie and teamed up with the adult version of his childhood teammates in the new series *Titans*. It would also seem that Batman's villains had a similar idea as popular

scribe and screenwriter Jeph Loeb and his talented partner, artist Tim Sale, began *Batman: The Long Halloween*, a maxiseries firmly planted in the "Year One" world of Batman's career. The series gave the duo, best known for their previous three Halloween-themed Batman specials, a chance to play with Batman's full Rogues Gallery all in the context of an exciting thirteen-part murder mystery.

Still entrenched in myriad crossovers, the Batman offices proper were about to deliver their grand payoff, a culmination of all the crossovers before it, a mega-event called "No Man's Land." The idea was that Gotham City had undergone such tragedies and massive, irreparable damage to its landscape as well as its people that the city was declared a disaster area, its citizens told to evacuate, and its bridges destroyed. The decision had been made. Gotham City was no longer to be a part of the United States of America.

In an effort to usher in new writing and artistic talent, "No Man's Land" was spun into all four of the major Batman books: *Batman*, *Detective Comics*, *Batman: Shadow of the*



ABOVE: A Sunday newspaper strip by Marshall Rogers and John Hyberg (January 1990). OPPOSITE PAGE: Two pages of rough thumbnails by Bruce Timm for an issue of the *Batman: Harley and Ivy* miniseries. The blue pencil does not reproduce, so it allows the artist a chance to define the shapes and page composition before inking and coloring. Script by Paul Dini.

*Bat*, and *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*. Executed by new rotating creative teams, this collection of multipart stories would cross through each title and deal with the ramifications of a city that was now an island unto itself. An interesting tale of isolation and survival, this series spawned not only a mysterious new Batgirl named Cassandra Cain in the pages of *Batman* #567 (July 1999), but also succeeded in discovering then-novelist Greg Rucka, who would go on after the event to be the sole writer for *Detective Comics*.

## BRINGING IN THE BIG GUNS

The slate was wiped clean. As Warner Bros. introduced television audiences to a future take on Batman's world in acclaimed animation producer Bruce Timm's latest venture, *Batman Beyond*, which lasted fifty-two episodes, the comics were busy redesigning Batman's world as well. Though it took the combined funds of Bruce Wayne with, surprisingly, a large contribution from Superman foe Lex Luthor, Gotham was saved, and the city was once again reunited with America. Gotham was granted a new look with

a streamlined landscape for Batman to play in, and Batman once again bore the oval-less black bat symbol on his chest. New and distinct logos from critically acclaimed designer Chip Kidd decorated the Batman titles, and *Batman: Shadow of the Bat* was canceled in favor of a new ongoing series, *Batman: Gotham Knights*. Even Joker's girlfriend, Harley Quinn, and the new enigmatic Batgirl both received their own monthly titles. As writers Greg Rucka, Larry Hama, Ed Brubaker, and Devin Grayson set out crafting a new era in Batman's life, ushering Batman in to the 600th issue of his namesake title, Denny O'Neil stepped down to let other editors pave the road of Batman's new direction.

While new formulas were explored in the comics, tried and true ideas were being implemented in the cartoons. On November 17, 2001, producer Bruce Timm expanded on Batman's universe by creating *Justice League*, a Cartoon Network half-hour show that consisted mostly of two-part adventures. The series quickly found its foothold and evolved into a second, more interlocking incarnation called *Justice League Unlimited*. Overall, the series produced an impressive ninety-one episodes, which nicely linked all of Timm's previous DC animation work together into one cohesive whole.

Back in New York, after playing around with character-driven story arcs, new *Batman* editor Bob Schreck soon decided it was time to reintroduce the concept of the crossover to his stable of books. The first of these, called "Bruce Wayne, Murderer," saw



Batman accused of killing a minor love interest from his past named Vesper Fairchild. It was followed by the subsequent "Bruce Wayne, Fugitive," which had Batman escape prison in order to prove his innocence. These events garnered a lukewarm response; it seemed that their core audience might not have been ready to invest in such large-scale stories quite so soon.

Schreck devised a new battle plan: he would reinvigorate things by using Batman as a star vehicle. And as every Batman fan knew, the brightest star in the Batman's sky was iconic writer/artist Frank Miller.

Schreck reunited Miller and colorist Lynn Varley on *Batman: The Dark Knight Strikes Again*, a three-issue sequel set in the brave new world of *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*. Though the sales figures were astronomical, the book was given mixed reviews, some finding the material almost a parody of Miller's older work. If nothing else, the series proved that big names sold comic books, and Schreck was more than happy to try his luck a second time.

He did just that in *Batman* #608 (December 2002), the first issue in a year-long "Hush" saga. Fan-favorite writer Jeph Loeb, along with superstar penciller Jim Lee, unfolded a mystery involving nearly every one of Batman's villains, as well as revealing a few untold tales about Bruce Wayne's childhood. The series also saw Batman and Catwoman's relationship heat up, with Batman revealing his secret identity to her at one dramatic point. "Hush" was a smash success, and likewise, other big-name creators, including Brian Azzarello, Eduardo Risso, David Lapham, and Matt Wagner, would lend their talents to the bar-books in the coming months. Jeph Loeb was also able to parlay his "Hush" success into his new ongoing title for DC, the revitalization of the *World's Finest* concept, *Superman/Batman*.

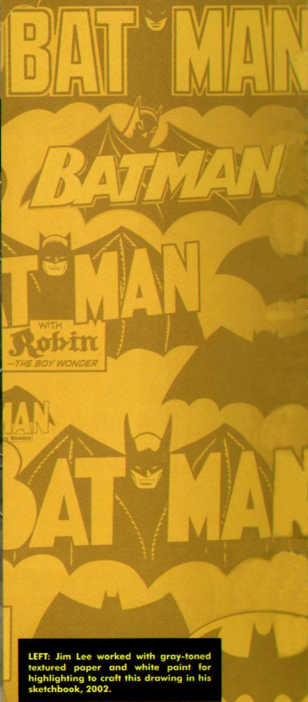
Of course, there were still some rocky roads ahead for Batman fans. In a surprisingly disjointed fashion, Cluemaster's daughter, the vigilante known as the Spoiler, went from being a supporting player in Robin's comic to becoming the fourth Robin herself when Tim Drake and Bruce Wayne found themselves at odds. With practically the shortest Robin tenure in the history of the character, Stephanie Brown's career only lasted from *Robin* issues #126 to #128, before she was fired by Batman and then supposedly killed off by the villain Black Mask in the unpopular crossover entitled "War Games."



ABOVE: These models for never-produced mannequins for the Warner Bros. Studio Store were sculpted by Karen Palinko, circa 2000.



Jim Lee and Scott Williams' original cover art for *Batman* #605, the first issue of the year-long "Hush" saga.



LEFT: Jim Lee worked with gray-toned textured paper and white paint for highlighting to craft this drawing in his sketchbook, 2002.

Not that resurrection wouldn't be an option in the Batman universe, however. In what would be later explained as a ramification of the companywide crossover *Infinite Crisis*, Jason Todd rose from the dead and took up the mantle of the Red Hood, the same identity the Joker used before a chemical dive transformed him into the Clown Prince of Crime we know today. The resurrected Jason proved to be a bit unstable and has flip-flopped between hero and villain ever since.

Meanwhile, Batman's other sidekicks also seemingly stared death in the face. Involved in a crossover miniseries entitled *Titans/Young Justice: Graduation Day*, both young super-teams did just that in the wake of a brutal tragedy that cost them the life of a few of their teammates. Nightwing and the remnants of his



ABOVE and ABOVE RIGHT: Alex Ross pencilled these turnarounds for a never-produced Justice League video game in 1999.



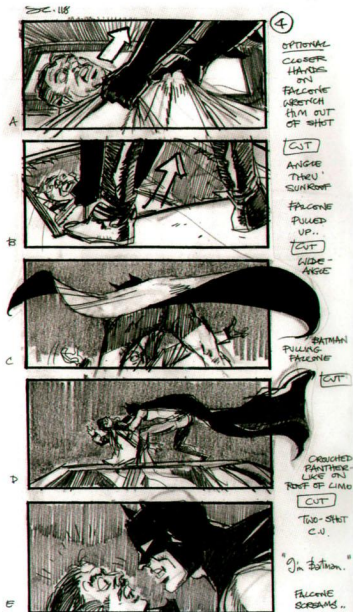
team formed the Batman-inspired Outsiders, while Robin and his friends became the next generation of Teen Titans.

Back in the world of animation, an emphasis was placed on the youth as well. On July 19, 2003, Robin headlined his own cartoon, *Teen Titans*, along with fellow members Starfire, Raven, Cyborg, and Beast Boy. Influenced heavily by Japanese animation, and with a trademark lighthearted style, the show was a huge fan-favorite and lasted sixty-five episodes. September 11, 2004, saw the premier of *The Batman*, a new take on the animated adventures of a younger Bruce Wayne, in which Batman used new Batwave technology to battle villains such as the Joker (who now sported long green dreadlocks), and the Penguin (who had become a master of martial arts). Both cartoons spawned countless toys and related merchandise and drew in a new generation of readers with their tie-in comic books. However, any revenue made by these two new media franchises would pale in comparison to what Warner Bros. had lurking up its sleeve.

## BATMAN BEGINS ANEW

After the 1997 film *Batman & Robin*, Warner Bros. spent the next eight years trying to find a new approach to Batman and his world. Although the film had been a financial success, the studio wanted an entirely new vision. When they turned the franchise over to Christopher Nolan, he received unfettered freedom with his big-budget hit *Batman Begins*, released on June 15, 2005. Nolan was free to make the kind of movie he wanted to, one that didn't even have Batman in costume for the first half. With a screenplay by Nolan and David S. Goyer that drew heavily on source material such as "Year One" and the works of Denny O'Neil before that, *Batman Begins* was deemed a favorite of both comic book enthusiasts as well as the casual moviegoer. The film starred Christian Bale as a young and unfocused Batman and featured a stellar supporting cast including Morgan Freeman, Gary Oldman, Michael Caine, Cillian Murphy, and Liam Neeson, the latter as the film's antagonist, Ra's al Ghul. Fortunately, like the *Batman* film of 1989, *Batman Begins* also succeeded in drawing many new sets of eyes toward the comic book rack.

DC Comics was more than happy to welcome all newcomers. Due to the increasing demand for trade paperback collected editions of new material, the focus of comics shifted mostly to six-part story arcs rather than an ongoing melodrama or self-contained single issues. With this new mindset, creative teams began to come and go at a quicker pace, moving on from one title to the next without lengthy runs. DC found much success in companywide event crossovers



LEFT: In this *Batman Begins* concept art by Simon McGuire, the body of crime boss Carmine Falcone is splayed across a spotlight, creating an impromptu Bat-Signal. ABOVE: Martin Asbury and James Cornish drew these pencil-and-ink storyboard panels for *Batman Begins*.



ABOVE: For his first sample submission to DC Comics, Drew R. Moore provided new colors for this image that appeared in a 1990 portfolio of George Pérez's artwork. The art was adapted from Pérez's cover for *Batman: A Lonely Place of Dying*.

such as *Identity Crisis* and *Infinite Crisis*, and soon launched a concept that would rapidly streamline the once again convoluted Batman continuity called "One Year Later."

An idea that was exactly what it sounded like, "One Year Later" saw all of DC's mainstream monthly titles suddenly skip one year into the future. Simultaneously, DC produced a weekly limited series entitled *52*. Lasting the same number of issues as its title, *52* would bridge the gap between the present and the previous year, filling in the audience on what they had missed. A gamble that paid off for DC in both financial and critical arenas, *52* also reset Batman's status quo, allowing the new creative teams to work in a more closely knit universe.

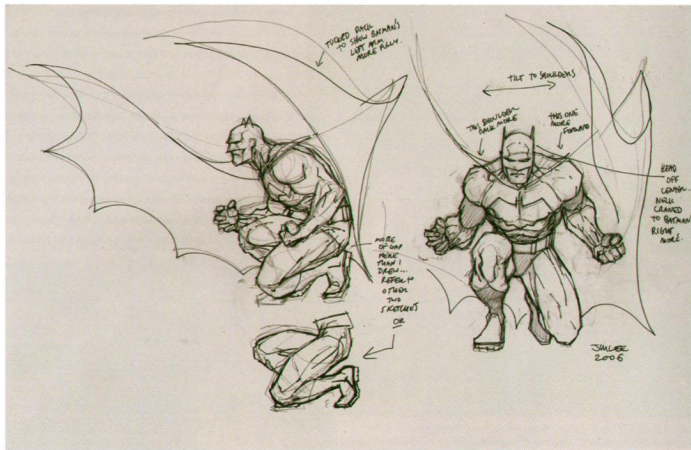
After an original arc by writer James Robinson, Grant Morrison took over as regular writer on *Batman*, alongside the art of Marvel superstar Andy Kubert, and then later Tony Daniel, while *Batman: The Animated Series*'s Paul Dini began to scribe *Detective Comics*. Under new editor Mike Marts, the Batman books began to garner the highest sales figures since the "Hush" storyline. The inclusion of crossover formats for "The Resurrection of Ra's al Ghul" and "Batman: R.I.P." attracted reader interest, as the high-quality storytelling remained paramount regardless of whatever event *Batman* was participating in. In fact, the multipart events increased *Batman*'s readership, as the audience felt for the first time in years that the stories had real and lasting implications for the character and his supporting cast.

And why wouldn't they? In just a few short storylines, Morrison reintroduced Batman and his readers to Damian (the son of Batman and Talia Head), who was momentarily glimpsed in the pages of a 1987 one-shot special entitled *Batman: Son of the Demon*, by writer Mike W. Barr and artist Jerry Bingham. Damian became a major player in Batman's world as he strived for his father's approval—which he did in the sick and twisted manner of which only a boy reared by Ra's al Ghul's League of Assassins was capable. Morrison paid tribute to some of the odd Jack Schiff stories of the 1950s by

introducing the concept of the black casebook, a collection of files Batman kept full of the weird and unexplained. Also of note, Morrison and company placed Batman's original Bob Kane costume firmly in continuity, as he retold the death of killer Joe Chill.

In the other corners of the DCU, Batman had once again helped to reform the Justice League, this time in novelist Brad Meltzer's new series that brought the team back under their original title *Justice League of America*. Always a control freak, Batman meanwhile regained command of the Outsiders from Nightwing, which jump-started a new book, *Batman and the Outsiders*, and sent

Dick off once more to start yet another incarnation of the *Titans*. Batman also teamed up with Superman and Wonder Woman for a new weekly year-long saga called *Trinity*, by writer Kurt Busick and big-name Spider-Man artist Mark Bagley. But perhaps the most surprising of the new titles that Batman would headline was 2005's *All Star Batman and Robin the Boy Wonder*. Pencilled by Jim Lee and written by none other than Frank Miller himself, this odd mix of brutal action and over-the-top dialog had fans scratching their heads but unable to put the book down. Whether viewed as a straight action tale, a parody, or a commentary on comic fandom itself, *All Star Batman and Robin the Boy Wonder*





managed to outsell nearly every DC title of its day, despite the storyline being set outside of the regular Batman continuity.

As the Batman books began to lean toward quality over quantity, director Christopher Nolan was working on his sequel blockbuster hit, *The Dark Knight*. Bearing a title reminiscent of Batman's heyday in mature storytelling, *The Dark Knight* did not disappoint. With his brother Jonathan, Nolan co-wrote the complex screenplay, which was based on a story by *Batman Begins* craftsman David Goyer. The film was released on July 18, 2008, after a massive viral marketing campaign that included scavenger hunts and fake district attorney campaign drives in major cities such as Chicago and New York. Christian Bale once again reprised the title role, and the star-studded cast included Aaron Eckhart as the conflicted Two-Face, along with Heath Ledger in his *tour de force* portrayal of the Joker, his final role due to an accidental drug overdose just a few short months before the film's premiere. In the end, *The Dark Knight* became the second-highest-grossing feature film at the box office to date, only surpassed by James Cameron's epic *Titanic*.

By the beginning of 2009, it seemed audiences had not yet had their fill of Batman in the least. Warner Bros. was actively planning a third film in this new

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Jim Lee's sketched designs for a Batman statue that was produced by DC Direct in 2006. **ABOVE:** Batman approaches the unfinished Prewitt Building in this concept drawing for *The Dark Knight* (2008).

franchise and had already completed the first season of the Caped Crusader's newest foray into animation, the Cartoon Network team-up adventure show, *Batman: The Brave and the Bold*. Back in the spotlight of the public eye, Batman once again became the focus of many an action figure and video game.

From a simple scribble in young Bob Kane's sketchbook to a worldwide phenomenon, from a two-dimensional caricature to a multilayered fascination, this character that started as an imitation of a popular trend wound up inspiring an entire medium. Batman has matured over the years, evolving both as the brooding avenger of the night and the mysterious man who lurks behind his fabled cape and cowl, but as hundreds of new creators line up to deliver their own spin on the Caped Crusader, one thing is certain: The legend of the Batman has become an indelible and beloved American institution.



...I have seen it  
before... somewhere...

...it frightened me...  
as a boy...



...frightened me...

...yes,  
Father.

I shall become  
a bat.

RELINQUISHING THEIR POSITION AS GOTHAM'S FIRST FAMILY WHEN THEY WERE GUNNED DOWN BEFORE THE IMPRESSIONABLE EYES OF THEIR SON, THE WAYNES WOULD NEVER KNOW OF THE SACRED VOW THEIR BOY MADE THAT NIGHT.

# BRUCE WAYNE & HIS FAMILY:

## *THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK*



THEY CALLED THE STREET PARK ROW. It was a wealthy area of town not unlike New York's fabled Fifth Avenue or the similarly named Park Avenue. Heirs to a vast real estate fortune, Thomas and Martha Wayne were out for a summer evening stroll with their young son, Bruce. The Waynes had just left from a late movie, *The Mark of Zorro*, at the nearby Monarch Theater, and Bruce's excitement was palpable as he ran a few feet in front of his parents, playacting like the hero of the old silent film. Suddenly, a stranger stepped out of the shadows. His name was Joe Chill, just a common and ordinary street thug. But he was a common and ordinary street thug with a gun, and that made all the difference in the world. As Chill reached forward to claim Martha's pearls for his own, Thomas instinctively stepped in front of him. A shot rang out, followed by another as Martha screamed in terror, only to be abruptly silenced. As the limp bodies of Thomas and Martha Wayne fell to the ground, Bruce collapsed to his knees next to them in utter shock and sorrow. It was 10:47 p.m., and from that moment on, the street would be known as Crime Alley. It was the night that the Batman was born.

OPPOSITE PAGE: This detail from David Mazzucchelli's *Batman: Year One* shows the pivotal moment of inspiration for Bruce Wayne as a bat enters Wayne Manor. LEFT: A detail from Brian Bolland's cover to *Batman: Gotham Knights* #32 (October 2007).



ABOVE: Batman's origin story first appeared in *Detective Comics* #33 (November 1939). Six months later, the first page of that story was slightly revised for *Batman* #1 (Spring 1940). Very few production materials from that era have survived; pictured here is an incredibly rare printer negative of that page from *Batman* #1.

Originally only glossed over in the quick two-page recap from *Detective Comics* #33 (November 1939), Batman's origin story was retold dozens of times through the years, with each interpretation adding its own unique details and flair. In the first story, the murderer was simply a nameless thief, but in 1948's *Batman* #47 he was given the name Joe Chill and developed a personality. In 1956's *Detective Comics* #235, it was revealed that Chill was hired by corrupt rival businessman Lew Moxon.

This fleshed-out version of the origin held firmly through 1980, when DC published the miniseries, *The Untold Legend of the Batman*, a three-issue exploration of Batman's past. Lew Moxon managed to survive until the modern era, but his ties to the Wayne murders did not. He was simply relegated to being the corrupt friend of Thomas Wayne, and Joe Chill's status was renewed as a lone gunman committing a random act of violence.

## THOMAS AND MARTHA WAYNE

They were the first family of Gotham, but every royal reign must come to an end sometime. When readers first met Bruce's father, Thomas Wayne, he was no more than a simple plot device. However, like all the major players in Batman's epic drama, his part would be given more lines and a broader scope as the play continued. It was in *Detective Comics* #235 that readers first learned that Thomas Wayne was a doctor, and in one scene, he wore a hat-like costume to a party, an event that obviously influenced the young Bruce. In later stories, Thomas was often depicted as a fountain of wisdom, dispatching memorable advice that would serve the adult Bruce well in his time as the Batman. Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale portrayed Thomas as a millionaire with a strong moral code in the *Batman: The Long Halloween* limited series of 1997. This was made evident when Dr. Wayne was awakened in the middle of the night by a known mobster and asked to operate on the man's son. As soon as Thomas saw the limp body, he went to work, not caring who the young man was, just knowing in his heart that all human life was sacred. This was a lesson the young Bruce never forgot, one which perhaps influenced his decision to never take a human life as the Batman.

Martha Wayne, on the other hand, was never given a strong personality. Portrayed often as a loving mother who dotes on her only son's every accomplishment, Martha is best known for the set of pearls she wore the night of her murder. A visual element in many versions of the story, the image of the shattered, blood-soaked necklace is one to which Bruce constantly flashes back. In later tales, such as *Batman: The Long Halloween* maxiseries, we find out that Bruce had actually requested that his mother wear the infamous pearls the night



CARD 2



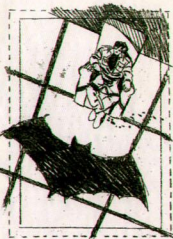
CARD 3



CARD 4



CARD 6



CARD 7



CARD 9

ABOVE: Batman's origin story is retold in these pencil sketch concepts drawn by Rick Burchett for a *Batman: Saga of the Dark Knight* trading card set released by SkyBox in 1994.

Sc 6 F



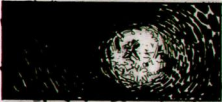
10  
CLOSE  
ON  
BRUCE  
LEFTS  
THE HEAD...  
...  
GROANING.

CUT



11  
ANGLE  
M.C.U.  
RACHEL  
REACTION  
TO "

CUT



12  
HERE F.V.  
BRUCE  
FACE BELOW

CUT



13  
C.U.  
RACHEL  
SHE  
TWISTS  
OUT OF  
SHOT.

CUT

Sc 7 P



14  
CAM. PANE WITH HER  
AS SHE  
RUNS  
OUT OF  
SHEDEN...  
SHOT  
CONTINUES

PREVIOUS SHOT CONTINUES DRAWING AS SHE REIGNS UP HOUSE STAIRS (11)



15  
M.C.U.  
RACHEL REID

Sc 7

Sc 8



16  
TOP SHOT  
OF BRUCE  
AT BOTTOM  
OF WELL...  
HE'S SHAKING -  
HE'S GOING  
CUT



17  
M.C.U.  
HE LEASE  
OFF -  
PROCEED



18  
CUT  
F.V.  
OUT OF  
THROW  
BAMS  
EXPLODE  
FROM THE  
DARKNESS



19  
CUT  
CLOSER  
OR THE  
SAME.

ABOVE: Young Bruce Wayne falls down a well outside Wayne Manor in the most recent cinematic retelling of Batman's origin story. These storyboard pages for *Batman Begins* were drawn by Martin Asbury and James Cornish.

of her death. Seeing that her son wanted to make an ordinary night at the movies a special event, Martha sweetly complied; it was those selfsame pearls that Joe Chill reached for that night, ultimately leading to the Waynes' death and propelling Bruce into a lifelong struggle with his own personal guilt.

But perhaps a bit of corruption lay behind Bruce's fond memories of his saintly parents. In the often forgotten *World's Finest* #223 from 1974, Bob Harney revealed that Bruce had an older brother, Thomas Wayne, Jr. Portrayed as mentally ill, Thomas, Jr., was locked away from society by his parents, who presumably considered the youth a blight on the family bloodline. However, this story has been mostly ignored in terms of Batman's continuity, and these days, Bruce is once again depicted as an only child. Adding even further intrigue to the Waynes' mysterious past, writer Grant Morrison's 2008 "Batman: R.I.P." storyline showed Commissioner Gordon unearthing an old photograph of Batman's parents. In it, there is evidence that Martha was actually a drug addict with various ties to the underworld, and although the photo seemed to be a machination of the mysterious Black Glove, and was subsequently proven to be a false image, Bruce nevertheless found himself doubting his cherished upbringing.

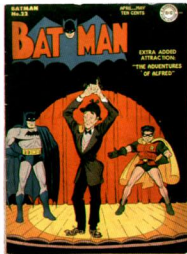
## BRUCE'S CARETAKERS

There would prove to be no consoling the serious young man Bruce had become, even though his various caretakers would attempt to do just that. In most versions of the story, Alfred Pennyworth, the loyal family butler, stays on to raise the young heir to the Wayne fortune. Denny O'Neil introduced readers to Dr. Leslie Thompkins in *Detective Comics* #457, a famous retelling of Batman's origin entitled "There is No Hope in Crime Alley." In it, Thompkins is one of the first people on the scene after the Waynes die, and in subsequent comics, she helps Alfred raise Bruce. Yet her pacifistic words of wisdom fall on deaf ears for Bruce, whose hearing is primed only to detect thoughts of his life's new dark mission. Other versions of Bruce's childhood rearing, mostly lost through the cracks of continuity, have shown Thomas Wayne's brother, Phillip, sheltering his young

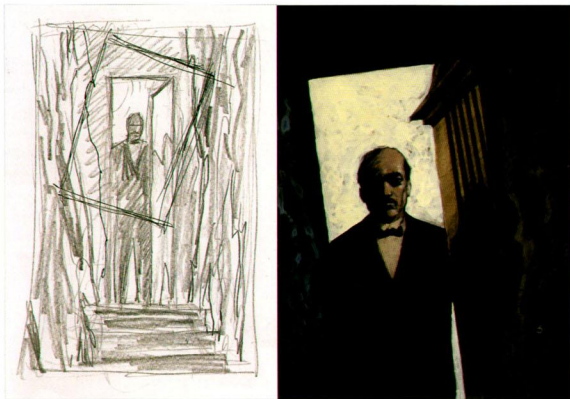
nephew for a time, and in one chilling instance, Bruce's caretaker proved to be none other than the mother of the man who killed Thomas and Martha.

There would be no overshadowing the unwavering dedication that Alfred Pennyworth devoted to Bruce throughout the young man's life. That's not to say the mysterious Mr. Pennyworth didn't have his own share of secrets. Before Alfred came to Gotham, he specialized in vocal mimicry and disguise, teaching the art of espionage to future field agents of Her Majesty's Secret Service in England. Called into duty to imitate a butler at a Polish Communist dinner party during the cold war, Alfred was exposed after saving a man's life. He was then taken hostage by a group of superpowered Communists, a fate Alfred escaped using razor wire hidden in a penny. Upon advice from his government, Alfred then fled to America, taking the name Pennyworth and hiding in plain sight in the last place anyone would look: as the butler to a rich Gotham couple, Thomas and Martha Wayne.

This version of Alfred's origin appeared in 2005's *Detective Comics* #806 and #807 by writer Scott Beatty and artist Jeff Parker, but it was the latest in a long string of tales explaining Alfred's presence on Batman's team. In fact, Alfred first debuted all the way back in the pages of 1943's *Batman* #16, by writer Don Cameron and artist and creator, Bob Kane. A product of Kane's desire for a bit more humor in the Batman books, Alfred was a bumbling, pudgy armchair detective, who arrived fresh off the boat from England, thick accent in tow, and found his way to Wayne Manor to declare he would be taking over where his father, Jarvis, had left off. Jarvis had been a butler for the Waynes when Bruce was a boy, and on his deathbed, Jarvis made Alfred



ABOVE: Alfred, the loyal Wayne butler, earned a short-lived solo feature that in humorous four-page installments saw the manservant by his hand at crime. Cover to 1944's *Batman* #22 (April–May 1944) by Dick Sprang.



**ABOVE:** In this early concept sketch (left) and finished close-up painting (right) of a 1996 *Batman Masterpieces* trading card, artist Scott Hampton shows Alfred opening the trick grandfather clock that leads to the Batcave below Wayne Manor.

promise to indenture himself once more to the Wayne household, an oath Alfred was determined to keep whether Bruce Wayne wanted him there or not. In that very issue, Alfred accidentally learned of Bruce's other life as the Batman, a secret he quickly embraced as he began to serve Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson in both of their dual identities.

When the Batman movie serials hit theaters later that year, Alfred began to take on the physical characteristics of the actor who portrayed him, William Austin. Gone were his portbely and thick accent. Alfred now was a svelte gentleman's gentleman, boasting a proper mustache, but keeping his jovial mannerisms. This new look stuck, and Alfred remained a faithful background piece in Bruce Wayne's life up until the

1960s, even starring in his own backup mystery story every now and again.

In *Detective Comics* #96 (February 1945), Alfred's last name, Beagle, was revealed when he placed an ad in a newspaper advertising his amateur detective skills. This name was later dropped in *Batman* #216 (November 1969) in favor of the last name Pennyworth, and the Beagle name was then attributed to an Alfred of another dimension, the popular destination in the DC Universe for contradictory facts, Earth-2.

As Julius Schwartz came into power as Batman editor, he decided to end the unease some readers had with the idea of three

men—Alfred, Batman, and Robin—living together under the same roof. Therefore, in 1964's *Detective Comics* #328, Schwartz had Alfred killed off and his position in the house filled in that same issue by Dick Grayson's aunt Harriet Cooper. In memoriam, the Alfred Foundation, a charitable organization founded in the former butler's name by Bruce Wayne, would later become a permanent part of the Batman's history as the famous Wayne Foundation.

When ABC's live-action *Batman* show of 1966 started production, they informed DC Comics that they would like to use Alfred, and just like that, pop culture once again shaped the direction of the mild-mannered butler's life. He returned to the comics in mutated form as the villain the Outsider before reverting back to his normal self. The ABC show also incorporated Aunt Harriet into its mythos, but as her character was no longer needed in the comics, she

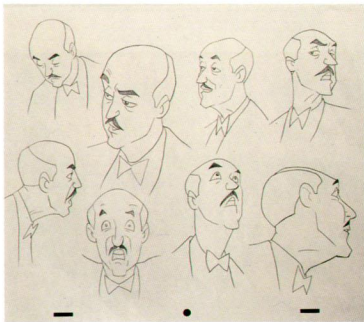


didn't fare as luckily as her male counterpart and slowly faded into obscurity after falling ill.

Alfred's legacy, however, was just beginning. Under writers such as Denny O'Neil and Frank Robbins, Alfred's past was expanded, reaffirming his background as a stage actor. Later, his espionage roots were explored, and it was revealed that Alfred had entertained a romance with famed French war hero Mlle. Marie; their union resulted in a daughter, Julia Pennyworth, also known as Julia Remarque. Despite Julia having a brief romantic affair with Bruce Wayne under writers Doug



TOP: Alfred sacrifices his life to save Batman and Robin in this sequence from 1964's *Detective Comics* #328, written by Bill Finger with art by Sheldon Moldoff and Joe Giella. ABOVE: When ABC wanted Alfred on their television version of *Batman*, editor Julius Schwartz found a way to resurrect him in *Detective Comics* #356 with writer Gardner Fox and artists Sheldon Moldoff and Joe Giella. ABOVE RIGHT: An Alfred character sheet from *Batman: The Animated Series*.



Moench and Gerry Conway in the 1980s, she was later removed from continuity in an attempt to streamline Batman's supporting cast.

Although Batman's reboot forced Alfred to lose his family, with the help of Frank Miller's influential 1986 miniseries *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, Alfred gained something even better: a personality. Miller imbued the aged Mr. Pennyworth with a trademark sense of wit and sarcasm, a trait other writers have applied to the character ever since, making him infinitely more interesting to writers and readers alike.

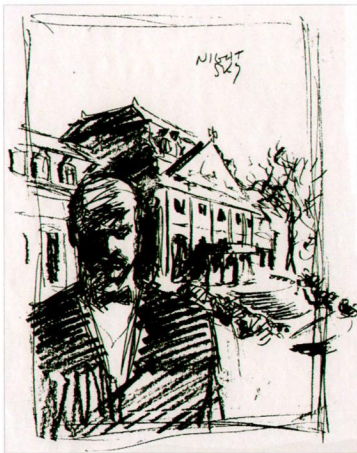
With a clean slate, Alfred's origins were examined again in the pages of 1989's *Batman Annual* #13, which meshed bits and pieces of all the stories before it. In this popular tale by writer Kevin Dooley, Alfred pursued a career as an actor before taking up his place as the Waynes' servant. After Bruce Wayne's parents died, Alfred was forced to raise Bruce and then take care of Wayne Manor when Bruce left to study abroad. Upon Bruce's return home, Alfred was prepared to quit his services to return to his dream of the stage, but instead found himself needed in Batman's world, making good use of his army medical training to help mend his young charge.



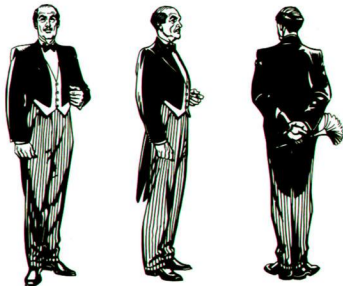
**ABOVE:** In 1995, novelist Andrew Vachas wrote *Batman: the Ultimate Evil* as both a novel and a two-part comic book story. The comic was illustrated by Denys Cowan and Prentiss Rollins. On the left are rough pencils by Cowan, indicating positioning, word balloons, and where the dark areas go. Rollins' finished art for another page shows the texture and detail he added with inking.

In this annual, Alfred raised Bruce with the help of Dr. Leslie Thompkins. Their shared responsibility soon led to a romance between the two, which was depicted in *Gotham Knights* #7 (September 2000). In addition, Alfred's personal life was explored in his only special to date, 1995's *Nightwing: Alfred's Return*, which saw him visiting an old flame in England.

In film and television, comic books and cartoons, Alfred has become a staple in Batman's life. A constant source of humor and realism in an otherwise gritty and



ABOVE: A brooding Alfred stands outside Wayne Manor in this 1996 *Batman Masterpieces* trading card sketch by Scott Hampton. ABOVE RIGHT: Artist José Luis García-López drew this Alfred turnaround in 2000 for a Batman-themed Clue board game that was never produced.



harsh existence, Alfred also serves as a role model for Bruce, a constant reminder that there is a life outside of the Batcave. And while Alfred has left Batman's side time and time again, he has always returned, unable to shake his weighty responsibilities.

## BECOMING BATMAN

Soon after swearing to avenge his parents' death by waging an unrelenting war on crime, Bruce Wayne began to travel the world to learn the skills he would need to accomplish that very goal. In the stories of the 1950s, the young Bruce Wayne studied with detective Harvey Harris, an idea revisited in current continuity with a slightly more realistic take. Much of Bruce's remaining training was chronicled in the 1980s and early 1990s, as sophisticated audiences became curious about the character's origins after Frank Miller and David Mazzucchelli's hyperrealistic portrait of Bruce's younger years in "Year One." Told in various flashback tales, Bruce was shown training everywhere from Japan to Alaska, picking up the keen martial art, detection, and scientific skills he would need for his personal mission.



"Year One," from 1987, chronicled the tale of Bruce Wayne's return to Gotham for the first time after his parents' death. There, Bruce set out for his first night of fighting crime, wearing a simple stocking cap and a fake scar on his cheek as a quick disguise. After running afoul of the woman who would one day become Catwoman and nearly bleeding to death as a result, Bruce decided he needed a symbol to hide behind and strike fear into the cowardly and superstitious minds of the criminal element. When a bat flew through his window, just as it had in the opening to *Detective Comics* #33 all those years earlier, his moniker was forever set in stone.

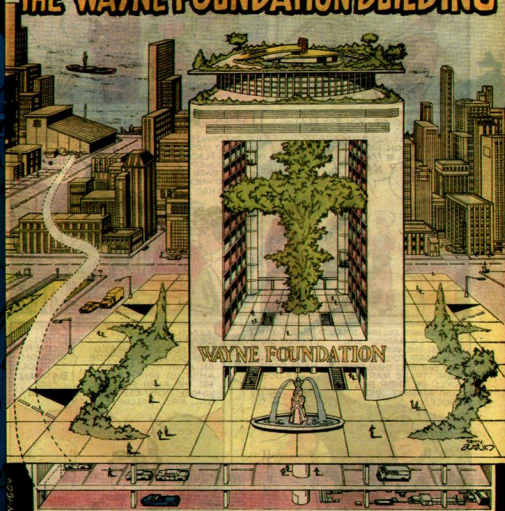
These days, Bruce Wayne spends his daylight hours wandering in and out of his company, Wayne Enterprises, his brilliant intellect hidden behind a social butterfly mask. By day, Bruce portrays himself as an airhead heir with little or no interest in an honest day's work, but when night falls, this façade is quickly discarded and his true face emerges, a face cloaked in shadows and wearing a dark mask.



ABOVE LEFT: Bruce Wayne and Linda Page in a panel from *Batman* #5 (Spring 1941). She was a short-lived girlfriend who gave up her place in Gotham's rich society to become a nurse. ABOVE: David Mazzucchelli's pencils for the last page of *Batman* #404 (February 1987), which was part of the "Year One" series.

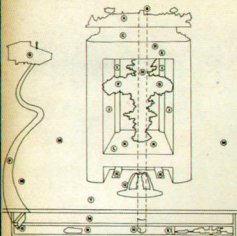
# BATMAN'S NEW HOME

## THE WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING



FOR THE KEY TO THESE PAGES, SEE THE INSIDE BACK COVER.

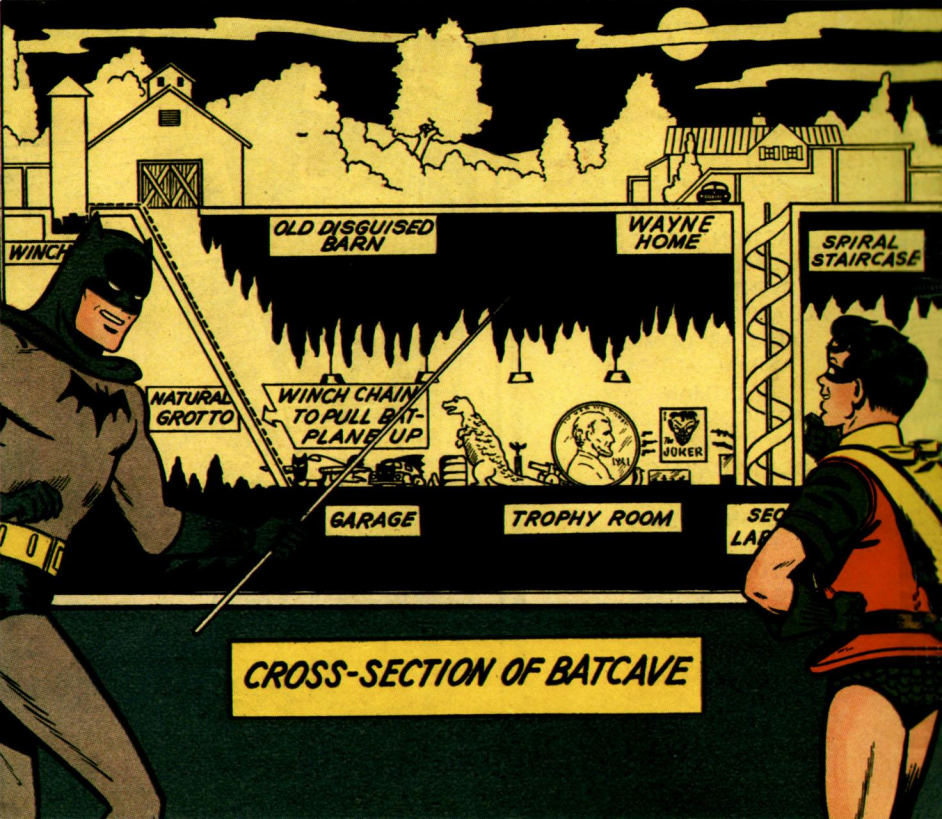
N-1505



### KEY TO DIAGRAM OF WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING

- A. Bruce Wayne's penthouse.
- B. Fake chimney conceals upper part of secret elevator shaft.
- C. Carousel Restaurant revolves around center pole which conceals secret elevator.
- D. Gymnasium.
- E. Executive offices.
- F. Communications center and maintenance for mechanism which makes restaurant rotate.
- G. Secret communications center for The Batman. Secret elevator opens on this side only.
- H. Decorative foliage conceals secret elevator shaft.
- I. Public elevators.
- J. General offices.
- K. Escalators.
- L. Mall surrounded on three sides by shops; fourth side is enclosed by special shatter-proof glass.
- M. Underground parking for public, with ramps to street.
- N. Lower end of secret elevator shaft.
- O. Secret exit for Batmobile in hidden sub-basement.
- P. Secret tunnel under streets leads to . . .
- Q. . . sealed, "unused" warehouse owned by Bruce Wayne, where Batmobile can exit on little-used side-street.
- R. Secret garage for Batmobile.
- S. The Batman's secret lab.
- T. Wayne Plaza.
- U. Thomas Wayne Memorial Fountain.

ABOVE: A diagram of Bruce Wayne's 1970s home, a penthouse atop the Wayne Foundation building. Illustrated by Terry Austin, it first appeared in a 1974 *Batman* tabloid-sized reprint collection. Note the sub-basement that served as an urban Batcave.

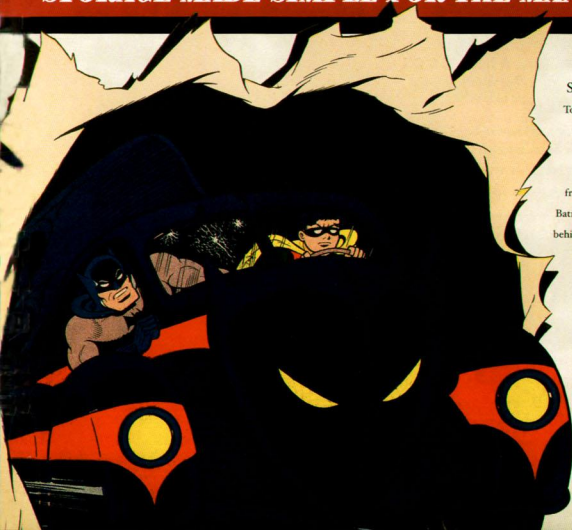


**CROSS-SECTION OF BATCAVE**

BURIED UNDER THE HISTORIC WALLS OF WAYNE MANOR ON THE FAR OUTSKIRTS OF GOTHAM CITY HIDES THE OMINOUS LAIR OF THE CAPED CRUSADER, A COMPLEX LABYRINTH HOUSING THE TOOLS OF THE CRIME-FIGHTING TRADE.

# THE BATCAVE & GEAR:

*STORAGE MADE SIMPLE FOR THE MAN WHO HAS EVERYTHING*



SITTING TWELVE MILES outside of Gotham City in Bristol Township rests stately Wayne Manor, a home that has gone through nearly as many visual incarnations as Batman himself. Rarely looking the same in any two artist's interpretations, Wayne Manor is normally depicted on a large property complete with a Gothic iron front gate and a wooded area behind the home. In some older tales, Batman's parents' graves were actually shown to be located on the grounds behind the mansion itself, but this idea has been scrapped in recent years for a more conventional burial location.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Detail from the cover of *Batman* #48 (August–September 1948) by artist Win Mortimer, showing a schematic of the Batcave. **LEFT:** Batman finally earned a worthy mode of transport with the arrival of this Batmobile, seen in a detail from the cover of *Batman* #20 (December 1943–January 1944), drawn by Dick Sprang. The vehicle's red striping lasted a short while before being dropped in favor of pure black and blue.





BATMAN

With ROBIN THE BOY WONDER

PAPER BATPLANE (1943)

Although there was no *Batplane* (and barely a *Batmobile*) in the low-budget *Batman* movie serial, this promotional paper *Batplane* was created so kids could build their own.

WITH  
ROBIN  
THE BOY WONDER

BATMAN  
THE BOY WONDER

WITH  
ROBIN

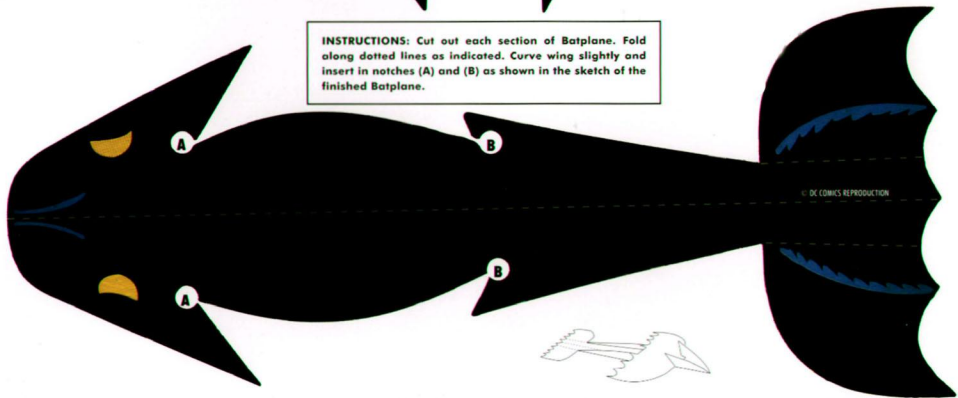
BATMAN



# BATPLANE

used by "THE BATMAN"

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Cut out each section of Batplane. Fold along dotted lines as indicated. Curve wing slightly and insert in notches (A) and (B) as shown in the sketch of the finished Batplane.

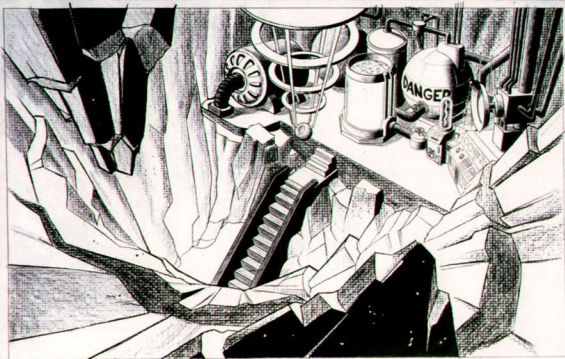




**ABOVE:** In this production drawing from *Batman Forever* (1994), the Batcave is brighter and filled with more equipment than it was in the Tim Burton-directed films. **RIGHT:** In this still from the *Batman* television series, a disguised Penguin (Burgess Meredith) thinks he has successfully infiltrated the Batcave.

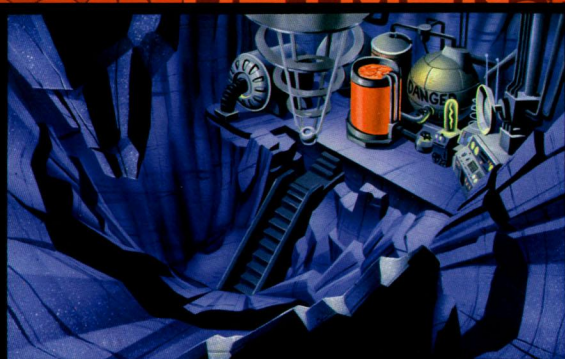
In the 1966 live-action television series, Batman and Robin pressed a button hidden inside a bust of Shakespeare when they wanted access to the cave. A wall panel would then slide open, revealing the clearly labeled Bat-poles for the two heroes to slide down, an act that mysteriously clothed the two in their costumes in the process. In 1992's *Batman Returns*, Michael Keaton pushed a button hidden inside a fish tank in his home to trigger his admittance into his lair, and in *Batman Forever*, Val Kilmer could access the cave from his desk at Wayne Enterprises through an underground tube of sorts. This quick work commute was perhaps inspired by the idea of the second Batcave that Batman had constructed beneath Wayne Enterprises in 1970s comics, wherein Bruce himself took a twelve-year sabbatical from living in Wayne





STOK

BATMAN #496-SW  
20.23



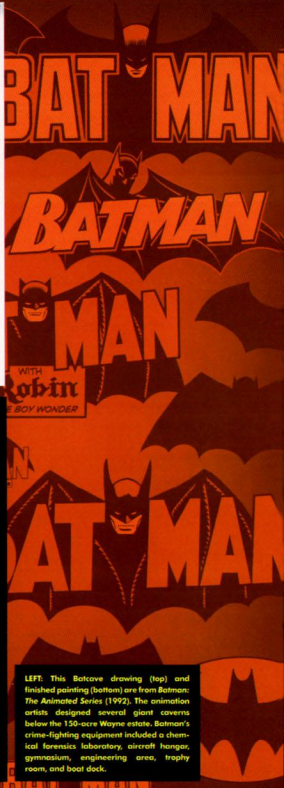
INT BATCAVE DOWNING

INT BATCAVE DOWNING

STOCK

BATMAN

BATMAN



WITH  
ROBIN  
AND  
BOY WONDER

LEFT: This Batcave drawing (top) and finished painting (bottom) are from *Batman: The Animated Series* (1992). The animation artists designed several giant covers below the 150-acre Wayne estate. Batman's crime-fighting equipment included a chemical forensics laboratory, aircraft hanger, gymnasium, engineering area, trophy room, and boat dock.

Manor and moved into the penthouse atop his company's skyscraper in the heart of Gotham City proper.

However he got there, once in the cave, Batman always managed to keep his home away from home as up-to-date as possible. Originally organizing all his criminal files on index cards, Batman soon switched to microfilm, which later gave way to a Cray computer system, with a screen large enough to facilitate any number of killer Super Bowl parties. Batman utilized his own satellite technologies to monitor the goings-on in his universe, and even employed a teleportation tube that could instantly transport him to the Justice League's hideout in space or its main Hall of Justice in Washington, D.C.

Perhaps the trademark visual element of the Batcave, and certainly the most fun for artists to draw, is Batman's trophy room. Equipped with the hallmark giant penny, robot dinosaur, and giant Joker card, the trophy room's appearance varies from artist to artist. Seemingly an idea of Batman's young sidekick, Dick Grayson, the chamber's halls are chock-full of mementos from earlier cases, at times displaying a glass case of Penguin's umbrellas, Mr. Freeze's cryonic gun, and the Red Hood's helmet. Also often pictured is Jason Todd's Robin uniform, frozen in a glass case and serving as a solemn monument to the boy's tragic fate and Batman's biggest failure.

Despite all the upgrades, the Batcave still serves its original function as a place to store and maintain Batman's equipment and vehicles. For a man like Batman who always needs to keep himself on the cutting edge of technology, storage might soon become an issue.

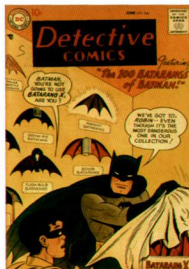
## TOOLS FOR THE CRIME-FIGHTING TRADE

"Where does he get those wonderful toys?"

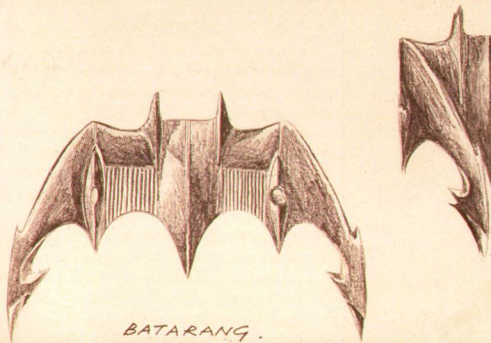
Jack Nicholson's Joker voiced the words that every Batman fan has wondered at one point or another. The fact of the matter is that, just like every other facet of his life as a crime fighter, Batman's technology is constantly in flux, a method of trial and error, more a process than a standard, as the Caped Crusader continues to adapt to the changing times.

The first device the Dark Knight Detective employed was a simple rope, later dubbed his Batline or Batrope. In fact, on that very first cover of *Detective Comics* #27, Batman can be seen swinging from it, a criminal firmly hanging in a headlock from his free arm. As early as his second appearance, Batman was seen taking this line out from his Utility Belt and using it as a lasso in order to swing to a neighboring building. In later comics, a bat-shaped boomerang, or Batarang, was

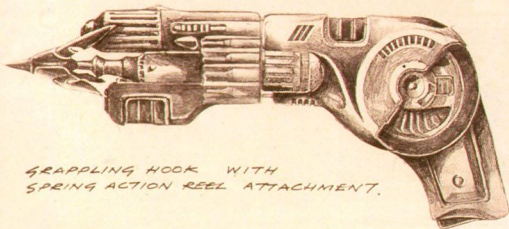
attached to the end of the line in order to snag ledges and criminals alike. Or, if the artist wasn't feeling particularly creative that day, Batman also employed a simple grappling hook for the same goals. In the Tim Burton film of 1989, Batman utilized a grapnel gun (which was later streamlined into a canister shape in *Batman: The Animated Series*)—a device that would fire his grappling hook up to the ledges for him, then automatically raise him into the night air, thereby conserving precious energy for the hero.



TOP: Sheldon Moldoff's cover for *Detective Comics* #244 (June 1957) displayed an array of Batarangs. ABOVE: Some of the more specialized styles of Batarangs that Batman utilized to light crime.



*BATARANG.*



*GRAPPLING HOOK WITH  
SPRING ACTION REEL ATTACHMENT.*

BAT MAN

BATMAN

BAT MAN

WITH  
Robin  
THE BOY WONDER

MAN

BAT MAN

LEFT: Production art for the Batarang and grappling hook gun that Batman used in the 1989 Batman film.

ROBIN  
THE BOY WONDER

BAT MAN



## THE BATMOBILES

"It's the car. Chicks dig the car."

Among all the wonders in Batman's Utility Belt, probably the most coveted items were the keys to the Batmobile. A subject of fascination for comic book fans and car enthusiasts alike, Batman's sleek hot rod traces its roots back to the same comic that birthed him, *Detective Comics* #27. Appearing as merely a red sedan, apparently the exact same car in which Bruce Wayne rode with Commissioner Gordon just a few scenes earlier, the Batmobile began to shift to a blue color as early as *Detective Comics* #35, and then became a topless model in issue #37. Although an efficient machine, the car was hardly intimidating, until *Batman* #5 (Spring 1941), when it gained a gigantic bat-head as a hood ornament along with an imposing tail fin.

A fluid design that changed with the times more than any other tool in Batman's arsenal, the car was constantly being altered to reflect the latest in automotive trends. When the 1966 ABC series began, the more streamlined hot rod in the comics morphed to mirror the boat-like two-seater approach of the show. George Barris, who customized the Lincoln Futura model for the live-action *Batman* series, actually bought the design of the concept car from Ford in the mid-1960s for a mere dollar. A brilliant purchase, his Batmobile design has graced dozens of toys, with Hot Wheels even producing small-scale replicas as recently as 2008. With its rocket-powered turbines, clearly labeled gadgets, and red hotline phone, Barris's design captured the imaginations of fans everywhere, who would act out the opening start-up dialogue from the camp craze TV show:



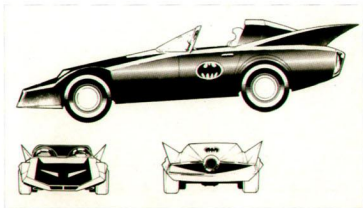
**BELOW LEFT:** George Barris designed the classic television Batmobile shown in this promotional photo. **ABOVE:** Batman and Robin appear in their roadster Batmobile in art by Carmine Infantino and Joe Giella on an ad slick that Gillette sent to its retailers. They left the bottom line adjustable for individual stores' use.

"Atomic batteries to power."

"Turbines to speed."

"Roger. Ready to move out."

When the 1970s rolled around, Batman's car in the comics began to look more like a Corvette, a laid-back expression of "cool" at the time but yet still complete with a giant bat-head painted on the hood. The Batmobile's look continually shifted depending on the artist, and in the 1990s, Batman employed a subway rocket version of the car that shot him across the tracks of Gotham.



The vehicle was even able to switch off the tracks for a time in the case of an oncoming train.

Batman grew to have so many versions of his famous automobile that in *Batman* #615 (July 2003), artist Jim Lee drew a Batcave complete with dozens of Batmobiles from the many different eras of Batman's career, all on a rotating rig to emphasize the fact that the Caped Crusader has about as many transportation choices as talk-show host Jay Leno.

Always a draw in other media, Batman's rides rarely disappointed mass audiences. From the automatic shield protection of the Batmobile in the 1989 *Batman* film, to the sleek deco navy cruiser of the animated series of the 1990s, to the tank-like Tumbler shown in *Batman Begins*, fans constantly found themselves blown away by the mix of practicality and fantasy that the cars always displayed. The realistic *Batman Begins* vehicle proved such a favorite, it was brought back in the sequel *The Dark Knight*, and given a quick escape function called the Bat-Pod, a rocket-fast motorcycle-like device that Batman employed after the Joker wrecked his prized auto in a high-speed freeway chase scene.

By that point, audiences had grown accustomed to seeing Batman navigate everything from motorcycles to speedboats. Batman tried out his first helicopter way back in 1939 in *Detective Comics* #31, a sleek aircraft he dubbed the Batgyro. The vehicle would eventually lose its propeller and morph into the Batplane a few issues later. Batplanes came and went, as did Batcopters, until Tim Burton's 1989



**ABOVE LEFT:** This 1978 style-guide drawing of the Batmobile became the basis for the version in Kenner's *Super Powers* toy line. **TOP:** The 1966 *Batman* feature film had an expanded budget, which allowed the producers to add a Batcopter, although the bat-wings slowed its flight and caused it to burn excess fuel. **ABOVE:** Nathan Crowley assembled this early model of the Batmobile, also known as the Tumbler, for *Batman Begins* (2005).

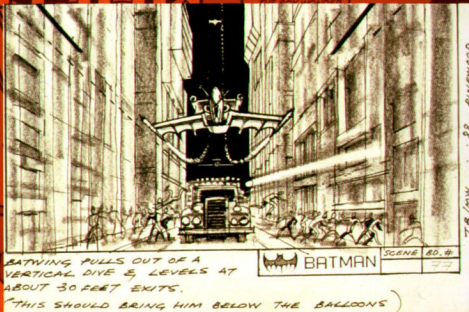
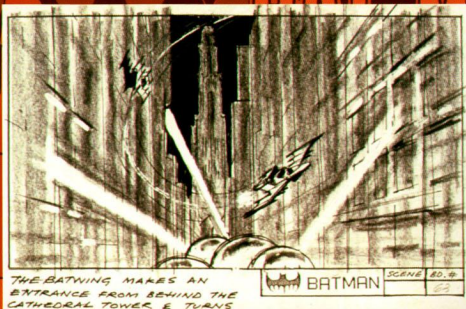


# BATMAN

With **ROBIN THE BOY WONDER**

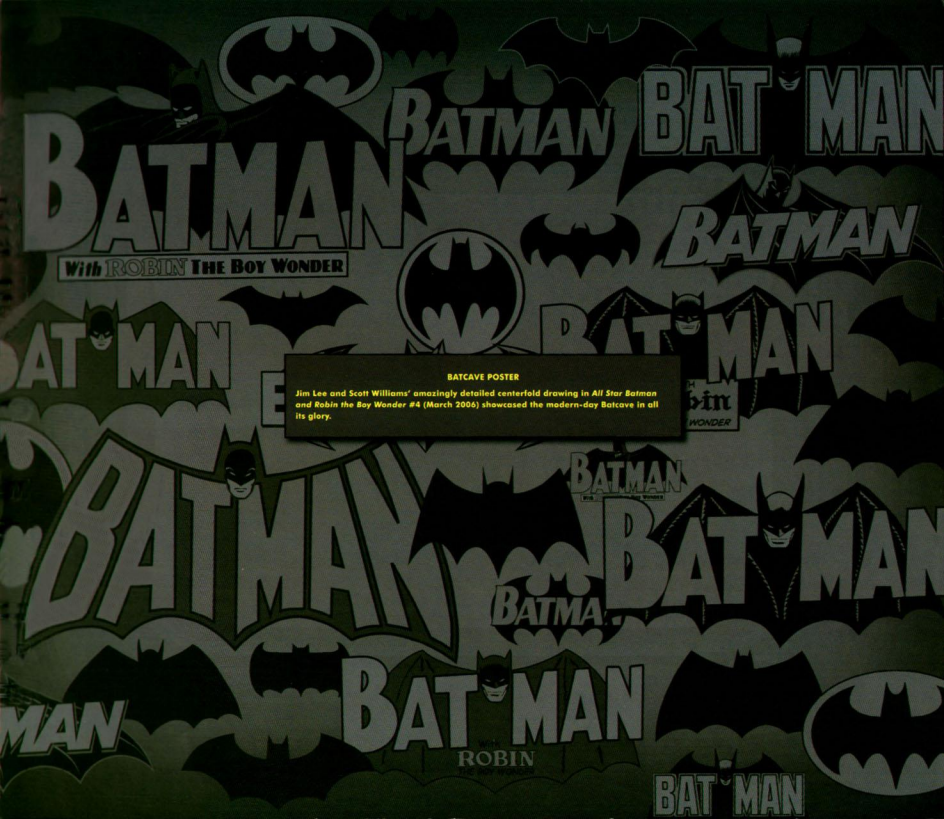


ABOVE and RIGHT: These storyboard panels from the 1989 *Batman* film depict an action sequence in which the Batwing zooms through Gotham City in search of the Joker.



With  
**ROBIN**  
THE BOY WONDER

# BATMAN



**BATMAN**

With **ROBIN THE BOY WONDER**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**MAN**

**BAT MAN**

**ROBIN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATCAVE POSTER**

Jim Lee and Scott Williams' amazingly detailed centerfold drawing in *All Star Batman and Robin the Boy Wonder* #4 (March 2006) showcased the modern-day Batcave in all its glory.

**Robin**  
**WONDER**



BLOOMINGTON  
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*Batman* film. The stylish form of Burton's Batwing, a plane completely in the shape of Batman's chest logo, impressed audiences with its creative design, the look cemented into the public's consciousness when Batman silhouetted the plane against Gotham's ominous moon in one of the film's climatic scenes. To this day, most comic, film, and cartoon incarnations of the Batplane still bear a strong resemblance to this imaginative craft.

For his more aquatic adventures, Batman utilized a Batboat, and an early 1950s design for the Batcave revealed a secret underwater grotto that allowed Batman to take to the sea at a moment's notice.

Batman could also be found on his trusty Batcycle. A different version of this famous bike—with a sidecar for Robin—was invented for the 1966 TV series but never found its way into print. That same television show also proudly showed off Batgirl's own cycle, complete with hanging fringe and a purple paint job. Batgirl rode a similar hog in the comics, yet with the frilly details dropped in favor of a large, ominous bat-windshield.

Robin made use of his own motorcycle as well, a bright red model with his signature "R" symbol clearly painted on the side. It often got him around town during his solo adventures, especially during his time at Hudson University. When the third Robin, Tim Drake, took over the sidekick role, Batman graduated him to his own hot rod, a sleek red sports car that could transform its outer appearance to an even sleeker red sports car called the Redbird. Not too shabby for a kid with an learner's permit.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Tim Burton's Batwing design was carried over to television in *Batman: The Animated Series* and subsequent shows. **RIGHT:** Although the Batboat often appeared on the series, the animated version of that vehicle was never made into a large-scale toy, unlike the Batplane, Batcycle, and Batmobile. Both vehicles pictured here were designed by Bruce Timm and Shayne Polindexter and painted by Russell Chong.





ABOVE: The Batmobile from the 1989 *Batman* film. RIGHT: A Batmobile production drawing created for the 1997 *Batman & Robin* film.



THE BOY WONDER

ROBIN  
THE BOY WONDER

BAT MAN



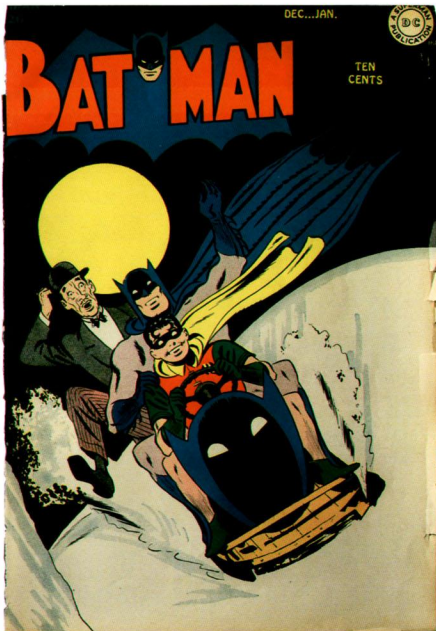
**TOP:** The Batmobile from *Batman: The Animated Series* owed something to Tim Burton's designs, but its elongated hood harkened back to earlier comic book versions. This Batmobile was designed by Shayne Paindexter and painted by Russell Chang. **ABOVE:** Even the Batmobile sometimes has a rough day, as shown in this production painting by animator Charles Pickens.

WITH  
**ROBIN**  
THE BOY WONDER

**BATMAN**

It wasn't long before the villains started to get into the act. By the 1950s, the Joker had bought into the custom car craze and began escaping from his latest crime sprees in the gaudy Jokermobile, and then later in his modified whirllybird dubbed the Jokopter. Other villains followed suit, assumedly making for some interesting Gotham City police auctions after Batman thwarted whatever crime spree each villain had up his or her individual sleeve. In the movies, the Joker led Batman on a merry chase through the streets of Gotham in a crudely painted purple-and-green procession of cars in 1989's *Batman*. In its sequel, *Batman Returns*, the Penguin cruised through the sewers of Gotham on a giant metal version of a yellow rubber ducky.

The toys were indeed wonderful, and chicks did indeed dig the car, but Batman's technological arsenal served as only a minor part in his elaborate crusade against crime. Perhaps his most effective weapons in his ongoing war were flesh and blood: the many soldiers who helped him wage it.



ABOVE: The Jokopter was featured on the cover of *Batman* #26 (December 1944–January 1945) in art by Jerry Robinson.



SWINGING ACROSS THE SKYLINE WITH A LAUGH AND A SMILE, THE BOY WONDER IS A BRIGHT STREAK OF YELLOW, A SYMBOL OF INSPIRATION AND HOPE TO ALL WHO TRUDGE THROUGH GOTHAM'S MIRE.

# ROBIN:

## *THE BIRTH OF THE SIDEKICK*



AS DC COMICS FOUND ITS FOOTING and realized its key demographic was children, Bob Kane set out to create a character that would appeal to the sensibilities of their primary market. With a love for bright colors and humor—a passion obvious in his cartooning endeavors prior to the Dark Knight—Kane worked with his artist Jerry Robinson to develop Robin, the Boy Wonder, in the pages of *Detective Comics* #38 (April 1940). A youth wearing short shorts, pixie boots, and a smile, Robin instantly brightened Batman's world, becoming a permanent fixture in the character's mythology.

Spawning dozens of imitators, such as Captain America's young partner, Bucky, and the Flash's buddy, Kid Flash, Robin has stood the test of time as many of these other young heroes have been killed off or forgotten. Somehow, the crazy notion of Batman enlisting the aid of a boy (who was not yet old enough to drive!) is a concept that the jaded audiences of today still can believe, provided enough backstory, of course. Even though Robin's mask has been worn by several different young heroes throughout the years, Robin, like his mentor, is recognized the world over, has been the subject of many a toy and action figure, and along with Batman, Superman, and Wonder Woman, can perhaps be considered one of the four most groundbreaking characters in the history of the entire comics medium.

OPPOSITE PAGE: A detail from Brian Bolland's cover for *Robin* #3 (March 1991), the Boy Wonder's first miniseries. LEFT: A classic pose: Dick Grayson taking off his mask in a 1966 premium poster.





As it turns out, Mr. Haly refused to give in to the protection racket of local thug Boss Zucco, and as a result, Zucco's men made sure that evening's performance by the Flying Graysons would be their last. As a young Dick Grayson watched in horror as his parents fell to their death from the sabotaged trapeze, a glimpse of recognition flashed through Bruce Wayne's mind. The scene was all too familiar, and Bruce knew what he had to do. The boy would soon join his life, and his crusade, and just as Dick Grayson became the ward of sympathetic millionaire Bruce Wayne, so too did Robin become the sidekick of the mysterious figure of the night, the Batman.

Retold nearly as many times and in as many different fashions as the tale of the Dark Knight's genesis, Robin's origin aged and matured, just as the boy in the yellow cape slowly became a man. In its original telling, Boss Zucco got nabbed by the pair of heroes and was sentenced to what seemed to be a lengthy stay in jail. In *Batman* #438 (September 1989), part of writer Marv Wolfman's "Year Three" epic, Tony Zucco was finally paroled, but was gunned down instantly upon his release from prison, the gruesome event witnessed in

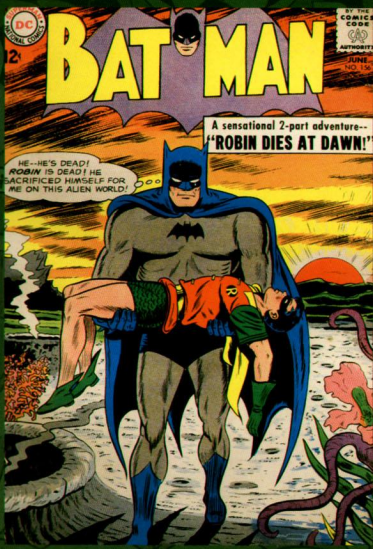
its entirety by a then-adult Dick Grayson. Denny O'Neil's *Legends of the Dark Knight* #100 (November 1997) painted quite a different scenario, as Zucco actually died from a heart attack on the very same night Robin caught up with him for the first time. The heart attack idea stuck in later tellings, including Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale's sequel miniseries to their hit *Batman: The Long Halloween*, entitled *Batman: Dark Victory*.

After Batman swore in his new partner by candlelight in *Detective Comics* #38, Robin quickly developed a lighthearted attitude as he began to serve as a foil to Batman's grim and gritty personality. Batman even found himself smiling on occasion, as any man new to fatherhood is inclined to do. Unlike Bruce though, Dick had more than one father figure in his life to help him into adulthood. As revealed in Loeb and Sale's *Dark Victory* series, Alfred assumed fatherly responsibilities with Robin as well, correcting the mistakes he made with a young Bruce, instead of letting Dick sulk by himself. Alfred quickly let Dick know that he is not alone in this world, that he had a family, and that he will



ABOVE LEFT: This sequence from *Batman* #72 (Summer 1946) by Bill Finger, Bob Kane, and Jerry Robinson shows how well Dick Grayson was trained for his role as Robin. Here he knows exactly how to treat a wounded Caped Crusader. ABOVE: A lobby card from 1949's *Batman and Robin* serial, featuring Johnny Duncan as an almost-adult Boy Wonder. In contrast to his comic book uniform, in the serial he sported less piziz-like boots, wore modified colors, and employed more pugilistic crime-fighting skills.





ABOVE LEFT: The cover of *Batman* #156 (June 1963), by Sheldon Moldoff and Charles Paris, perhaps contains the most celebrated story from the era. The "Robin Dies at Dawn" tale, penned by Bill Finger, sees Batman endure a sensory deprivation experiment that results in a story set in an alien world. In 2009, it became one of the inspirations for writer Grant Morrison's *Batman: R.I.P.* comic book storyline.

ABOVE RIGHT: A page of original artwork from the story.



ABOVE: Burt Ward made his debut as an actor playing Dick Grayson and Robin on the acclaimed ABC television series. His acting range was limited, but his enthusiasm for the role was clear.

of a young college student. So it made sense that, in 1969, Dick declared his emancipation from his mentor and traveled to New Carthage, New York, to enroll at the fictional institution of Hudson University. With younger writers like Bob Rozakis and Mike Friedrich piloting his exploits, Robin began to tackle more topical issues and met his first serious girlfriend, Lori Elton. Of course, that never stopped the youth from flirting with the heroine Batgirl whenever he ventured back into Gotham for a team-up tale.

Previously resigned to backup stories and headlining anthology adventures, Dick stepped into the spotlight again in 1980, when *DC Comics Presents* #26 showcased a sneak peek at what would become the team sensation for the decade, *The New Teen Titans*. Spinning off into their own magazine the following month, the New Teen Titans consisted of familiar faces Robin, Wonder Girl, Kid Flash, and the animal-morphing Changeling (formerly Beast Boy of the Teen Titans' West Coast division), along with new members including the half-man, half-machine Cyborg, the mystic Raven, and the alien warrior princess Starfire. Written by Marv Wolfman, with art by George Pérez, the book quickly became a top seller for DC, rivaling in popularity Marvel's blockbuster team book, *The Uncanny X-Men*.

A natural-born leader of this fledgling team, Dick soon began a romantic relationship with Starfire, after the beautiful Tamaranean kissed him in order to psychically absorb the English language from him. With Dick's newfound fame among his fellow heroes, DC finally decided it was safe to sever his ties with his longtime partner and subsequently introduce a new Robin to the populace. In July of 1984, in *Tales of the Teen Titans* #44, Dick Grayson adopted the identity of Nightwing. A good thing, too, because five months earlier, in the pages of *Batman* #368, a young hero had debuted, his shoulders draped in a familiar yellow cape.

BATMAN

With ROBIN THE BOY WONDER

BATMAN

BAT MAN

BATMAN

BAT MAN

BAT MAN

ROBIN MOBILE (1991)

To promote Robin's first miniseries, DC's marketing department sent retailers mobiles to hang in their shops. This innovative point-of-purchase toy is noteworthy, as it was one of the first non-poster marketing items from a comic book publisher.

Robin  
WONDER

BATMAN

BATMAN  
THE BOY WONDER

BAT MAN

BATMAN

MAN

BAT MAN

With  
ROBIN  
THE BOY WONDER

BAT MAN





## JASON TODD

He was caught trying to steal the tires off the Batmobile. When Batman investigated a new school for boys located in the fabled slum of Crime Alley, he returned to his parked Batmobile only to discover his front two tires missing. As he inspected the criminal's handiwork, truly amused that someone would have the gall to pull off such a brazen theft, he ran into a young street urchin named Jason Todd, tire iron in hand and intent on finishing the job he had started. Trailing the



ABOVE: Jason Todd's origin story was retold in this painting by John Bolton for the *Batman: Sage of the Dark Knight* trading card series released in 1994. ABOVE RIGHT: A page of original art from the unpublished alternate ending to "A Death in the Family" by Jim Starlin, Jim Aparo, and Mike DeCarlo. Had readers voted to save Robin, he would have been deeply injured but survived the explosion. Here Dick Grayson arrives to check in.



youth back to his rundown apartment only to discover the child was living on his own, Batman insisted Jason enroll in the new nearby school. Since he wasn't quite bold enough to say no to the Batman, Jason Todd soon found himself inside a classroom for the first time in years. There was only one problem: the school was actually just a cover for a den of thieves led by the elderly criminal, Ma Gunn. After cluing Batman in to the situation, Jason helped the Caped Crusader shut down the criminal enterprise. As they drove away into the sunrise, Batman quietly suggested that the young boy become his new partner. Once again, Jason just couldn't say no.

Jason Todd wasn't always a criminal. In fact, before this version of his origin from *Batman* #408 and #409 by writer Max Allan Collins, Jason had a completely different backstory when he first appeared in *Batman* #357 (March 1983). In his initial appearance, Jason was a virtual clone of Dick Grayson, an orphaned son of

a family of circus performers, who found solace with the Dark Knight when his parents were murdered by ruthless gangster Killer Croc. Jason originally had red hair, but by the time he made his debut as Robin in *Batman* #368 (February 1984), his hair had been dyed to match that of the original Robin so that Jason could assume his mantle. Seeing as how Jason was only created to fill a merchandising void left by his older predecessor, his copycat origin seemed like the way to go for editor Len Wein. However, when Denny O'Neil was promoted to the Batman group editor, he decided his readers deserved a bit more originality in their heroes, and therefore hired Collins to pen this origin tale.

However, many readers detested this new Robin, along with the chip on his shoulder. Even the fair-minded Dick Grayson seemed to be annoyed by the very presence of Jason, although costume envy might have played a factor in their rocky relationship. In 1988, just over a year after being given his new personality and his new origin, Jason Todd was killed.

The new Robin was murdered as much by an angry readership as by the Joker himself. Fans were given the option by DC's editorial to call in to a 1-900 number and cast their vote for whether Jason lived or died. The nays had it, and in *Batman* #428, part of the four-issue "A Death in the Family" saga by writer Jim Starlin and artist Jim Aparo, Jason was beaten with a crowbar by the Joker to within an inch of his life, then trapped in a factory as it exploded. There was no doubt about it—Jason Todd was dead.

Or was he? Years passed, editorial positions shifted, and Jason was reduced to the occasional flashback sequence or offhand mention. But in 2003, after Bob Schreck had taken over as the head editor in the Batman offices, Jason suddenly reared his head in Jeph Loeb and Jim Lee's epic "Hush" storyline on the final page of *Batman* #617. However, things weren't quite as simple as they appeared. "Jason" was soon revealed as merely the shape-shifting villain Clayface posing as the dead sidekick, his appearance made all the more real to Batman by the fear gas of fellow accomplice Scarecrow. After that caper was resolved and as time went on, Batman's keen sense of deduction kicked in, and he realized that the facts of that night didn't make sense. Soon he discovered that Jason truly was back from the dead, the former hero now calling himself the Red Hood.

Jason's new name was a reference to the mask the Joker wore on the fateful night that he fell into a vat of chemicals, forever bleaching his face white, beginning his legacy as the Clown Prince of Crime. Jason's choice to pay homage



ABOVE: This public service ad, featuring Alfred and Robin, was published to help raise AIDS awareness. It ran throughout DC's comics in 1993.

to the man who murdered him showed that his sense of irony was as warped as his new sense of justice. Renewing his interrupted war on crime, Jason began to take a violent stance against criminals, killing them whenever he saw fit, which was most of the time. His thirst for bloody vengeance brought him into conflict with his former mentor on more than one occasion, but Jason managed to elude capture in every instance.

Back in the real world, fans were wondering just how exactly Jason did make his miraculous return, a question finally answered for them during the giant DC Universe crossover event called *Infinite Crisis*. As it turned out, four refugees from an alternate timeline grew impatient with the way the heroes of our Earth were conducting themselves. One of these refugees, a misguided version of Superboy, began pounding on the walls of his proverbial cell, sending waves throughout the universe and causing time itself to alter and jump, changing the very course of the events of history. In the pages of *Batman Annual* #25 (May 2006), writer Judd Winick explained that Jason's resurrection was the result of one of these time ripples. Jason awoke in his coffin, magically alive, and through the help of international terrorist Ra's al Ghul, managed to regain his senses and memories. Jason then trained for years before making his return to Gotham, where he united with the criminal Hush in order to test his former mentor.

And test him he did. Ever since his return, Jason has been a constant thorn in Batman's side, as well as Nightwing's. His vicious form of justice has even led him into conflict with the third teen to wear the uniform of Robin, Jason's replacement, Timothy Drake.

## TIMOTHY DRAKE

In the 1980s, Batman was becoming more violent every day. And Timothy Drake would know—he had been following him for weeks. Tim Drake caught his first glimpse of the Batman when he was six years old and visiting the Haly Brothers Circus on the fateful day when the Graysons fell to their deaths from the trapeze. Forever changed by the incident, Tim later deduced that Dick Grayson



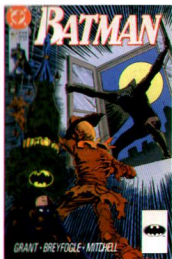
ABOVE: Phil Jimenez drew this rough concept sketch for a *Batman: Saga of the Dark Knight* trading card. In it, young Tim Drake tries to convince Nightwing that Batman needs a Robin.

was Robin, after seeing the Boy Wonder in action and recognizing the moves he'd seen a young Dick perform under the big top. Using logic to determine Bruce Wayne's dual identity, the thirteen-year-old Tim began to follow Batman, noticing how the caped hero seemed to be more careless and brutal since his second ward, Jason Todd, had been killed by the Joker. Understanding that Batman inherently needed a Robin in order to ground him and not teeter over the brink of insanity and the law, Tim petitioned Dick Grayson to take up his old cape and mask and partner with Batman once more. Content with his life with the New Titans as Nightwing, and not wanting to get sucked down into Batman's grim world again, Dick denied Tim his request and sent the boy on his way.

But Dick Grayson took an oath years ago. So when Bruce truly needed his help in a battle against Two-Face, Dick stepped in to help out his old partner. However, fate plotted against the reunited Dynamic Duo, and Two-Face managed to get the

best of Batman and Nightwing, trapping them under a pile of rubble. Only Tim Drake's timely rescue saved the day and the pair's lives, as he valiantly fought off Two-Face and freed his two heroes. And he did it all while wearing the mask and costume of Robin, the Boy Wonder.

Tim Drake first appeared in *Batman* #436 (August 1989) as part of a flashback sequence to Dick Grayson's origin in Mary Wolfman's "Year Three" arc. However, in the very next storyline, "A Lonely Place of Dying," Tim stole the spotlight as he deduced the Dark Knight's identity, and fans everywhere welcomed this brash young man, who, unlike Jason Todd, seemed to earn his place by Batman's side: Tim would go on to make history as the first Robin to really make the costume his own in 1990's *Batman* #457, when he was officially knighted as Batman's new partner. Gone were the short shorts and pixie slippers. In their place, Tim now wore full-length green tights and black ninja-inspired boots. His "R" symbol was now a sharp-edged throwing star, and his cape, while maintaining the trademark Robin yellow on the inside, had a black exterior, making it much more functional for a creature of the night. Designed by legendary Batman artist Neal Adams, Robin's new costume only added to the



ABOVE: *Batman* #457 (December 1990), with cover art by Norm Breyflogle, shows one of the earliest appearances of Tim Drake as Robin after his six months of training.

character's popularity, and the costume stood the test of time, lasting until 2006's "One Year Later" event in the pages of *Detective Comics* #817, where Robin's costume was altered to match more closely that of his counterpart on the popular 1990's cartoon *The New Batman Adventures*.

Tim Drake continued to break new ground as DC awarded the hero his own miniseries in 1991. Written by Chuck Dixon, *Robin* spawned sequel miniseries *Robin II* and *Robin III*, and then finally in 1993 an ongoing series that related to the "Knightsquest" storyline from the other Batman books at the time. As

borderline psychotic and temporary replacement Batman Jean Paul Valley explained in no uncertain terms that he had no use for a Robin, even using physical violence toward the youth to prove his point, Tim Drake set out on his own, an independence he would retain even after Bruce Wayne returned to his proper place behind the cow.

Dick Grayson, in contrast to his strained relationship with Jason Todd, instantly befriended the tenacious young Tim. As the two formed a brotherly relationship, in 1998, Tim followed in his forerunner's footsteps by teaming up with other like-minded young heroes to combat larger threats. Alongside the young Superman clone, Superboy, and a time-displaced speedster, Impulse, the trio formed *Young Justice*, an ongoing series by fan-favorite writer Peter David and expressive artist Todd Nauck. The all-boys' club slowly morphed into an equal opportunity super-team as several new female members joined the group and helped shake up the status quo. The godly powered Wonder Girl, lost spirit Secret, and archer Arrowette soon joined the team to help the series last a respectable fifty-five issues, before the members felt it time to graduate to the big leagues. With help of writer Geoff Johns and artist Mike McKone, they'd do just that in the pages of 2003's *Teen Titans* #1, a series that continues into the present day.

Unfortunately, being a trendsetter cut both ways. Tim was the first Robin to take up the mantle while still having two fully competent living parents. He was the first Robin not born into tragedy, and as such, he would be the first Robin to have tragedy strike him later in the game. Before formally beginning into his career as the Boy Wonder, Tim's mother was killed by the Caribbean criminal known as the Obeah Man, a crime Tim was powerless to stop. Years later, in the crossover event miniseries *Identity Crisis*, Tim's father was murdered by Flash villain Captain Boomerang in a heart-wrenching scene, courtesy of writer Brad Meltzer and artist Rags Morales. Around the same time, Tim's longtime girlfriend, Stephanie Brown, was supposedly murdered by Batman foe Black Mask, and shortly after, Tim's two best friends in the world, Superboy and Impulse, the latter having since graduated to the mantle of the Flash, were both killed in unrelated epic events. The tragedy of Batman's legacy had finally caught up to Tim Drake, but his pain only made him more focused than ever on his duties as Robin, a focus unfortunately not always shared by those that wear the domino mask.

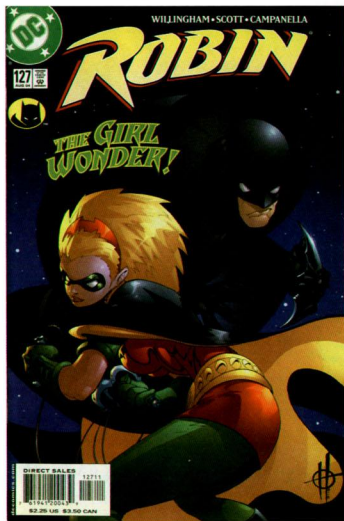
## STEPHANIE BROWN

She wanted the cape so badly. She wasn't new to the hero gig; in fact, Stephanie Brown had been fighting crime since her father, the Cluemaster, reemerged in Gotham City. The victim of a broken home due to her father's third-rate attempts at becoming a costume-clad supervillain, Stephanie decided to take her family's legacy into her own hands. Wearing a purple-hooded outfit and calling herself the Spoiler, she set out to leave clues to the crimes her father committed. Stephanie's hints pointed Batman and Robin in the right direction and helped put an end to the Cluemaster's latest illegal activities.

After her initial few adventures, beginning with her first appearance in the pages of writer Chuck Dixon's *Detective Comics* #647 in August 1992, Stephanie soon followed Robin as the boy hero began to branch out on his own. The two began a flirtation that finally gave way to a relationship. That is, until Tim Drake briefly quit being Robin, and Stephanie quickly stepped up to fill the vacant position. Using Stephanie as a tool to get back at Tim, Batman gave her the proverbial keys to the Batcave, and Steph became the first female Robin, a title she held for just a few short adventures. Convinced she couldn't obey orders, Batman stripped Stephanie of her cape and mask, telling her to not only give up her career as Robin but as Spoiler as well.

But Stephanie Brown was as stubborn as every other hero to don the mantle of Robin, and in an attempt to win Batman's favor, she activated one of his hypothetical war game scenarios (Batman's dangerous plans of attack on Gotham's organized crime scene), an act that caused a massive battle among Gotham's gangs and countless deaths. While trying to mend her mistake, Stephanie was taken captive by the psychotic criminal Black Mask, who tortured her and left her for dead.

Stephanie's was a death that Dr. Leslie Thompkins, close friend and confidant of the Batman, was more than happy to see happen, in a way. Leslie had served as a mentor to the young woman, as well as to all those enlisted in Batman's war over the years, and she hated the idea of any harm befalling the young Spoiler. In order to save Stephanie from the fate of danger and violence that her male counterparts lived, Leslie faked the young girl's death and relocated her out of the country.



ABOVE: Damian Scott's cover of *Robin* #127 (August 2004) depicts Stephanie Brown, the former Spoiler, as the fourth Teen Wonder. Her apprenticeship did not last long.

As it turned out, you could take the girl out of Gotham, but not Gotham out of the girl. When writer Chuck Dixon returned to the *Robin* title in 2008, Stephanie Brown accompanied him back into Gotham, shocking Robin in the process, the Boy Wonder unsure of how to handle his former love's resurrection.



# BATMAN

WITH  
**ROBIN**

*THE BOY WONDER*

IT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS COURT TO PROVE WHETHER OR NOT BRUCE WAYNE IS A FIT GUARDIAN FOR HIS YOUNG WARD! IF ANYONE HERE CAN SHOW GOOD CAUSE WHY BRUCE WAYNE SHOULD NOT LOSE THE CUSTODY OF DICK GRAYSON... LET HIM SPEAK NOW, FOR WE ARE NOW ABOUT TO BEGIN.

## THE TRIAL OF BRUCE WAYNE!



LEFT: Dick Sprang and Charles Paris drew this original artwork for the splash page of Batman #57 (February-March 1950).



LEFT: These costume designs were created for 1997's *Batman & Robin*. The film gave Robin an outfit much more reminiscent of Nighthawk's costume than in his previous appearance in *Batman Forever*.

Having reclaimed her title as the Spoiler, Stephanie continued to win back her place by her former boyfriend's side in the pages of the *Robin* title until the book's recent cancellation.

## AND THE REST

As long as there's a Batman, there will be a Robin. While the role that Dick Grayson pioneered has been officially adopted by only four individuals in the current DC timeline, a few others have popped up here and there in various other corners of the vast expanse of DC Comics and its related media projects.

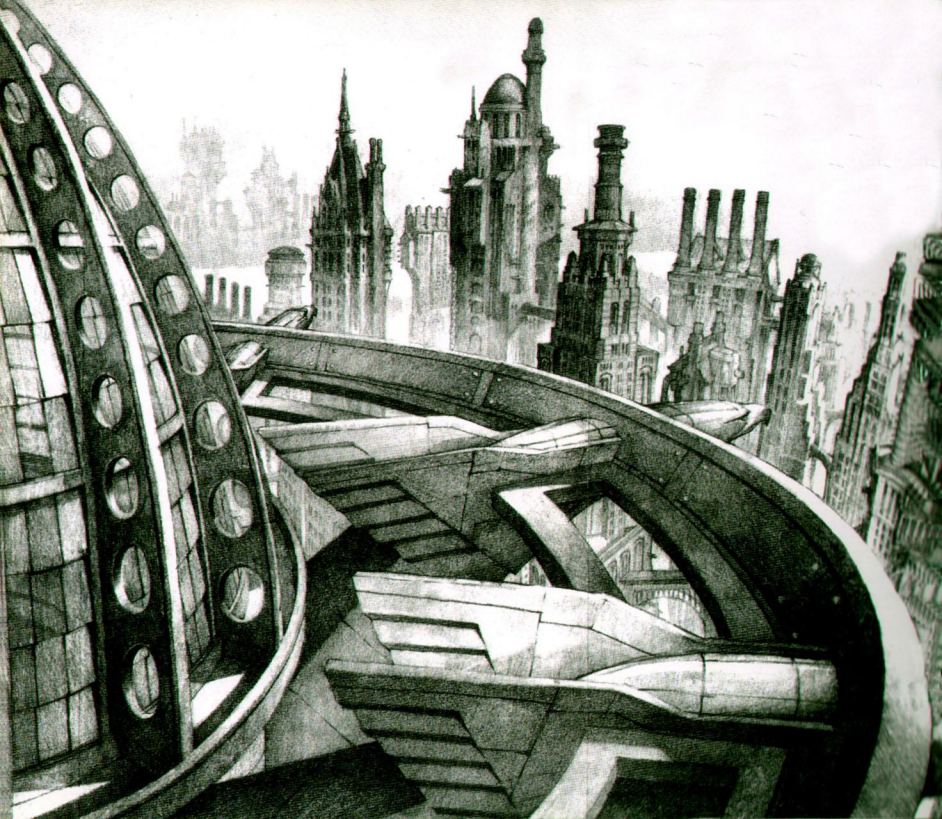
Technically, the first female Robin was actually Carrie Kelly, who debuted in Frank Miller's landmark miniseries *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, which was released in 1986, nearly twenty years before Stephanie Brown tried on the green tights for size. The catch is that Carrie made her entrance to Batman's world in

an alternate future timeline—a reality that may never come to pass. Inspired by the return of her hero, the aged folk legend Batman, Carrie spent two weeks' lunch money on a Robin suit of her very own, and set out to join him in his efforts to clean up Gotham City. A smart girl who was fast on her feet, Carrie soon earned her place beside the Dark Knight after saving his life at the hands of the villainous Mutant gang leader. Later in the sequel, *Batman: The Dark Knight Strikes Again*, Carrie switched costumed identities to the roller-skating Catgirl to aid Batman.

Another hero to sport the red and yellow was none other than Bruce Wayne himself. In a flashback story from the 1950s, Bruce donned a Robin costume in order to mask his true identity from detective Harvey Harris. Although that story has since been written mostly out of continuity, there was another, more recent occasion when Bruce Wayne wore the uniform of the Boy Wonder. In *Batboy and Robin*, a special tie-in to the *Sins of Youth* crossover event of 2000, Batman and Robin saw their ages swapped by the evil magician Klarion the Witch Boy, reducing Bruce to a teenager and Tim Drake to an adult, and the two saw what it was like to fill the other's boots, if only for a brief time. Tim Drake reverted back to his natural age at the story's end, reclaiming his sidekick identity from Batman. But unlike Tim, not all Robins found it easy to go home again, and most wouldn't have it any other way.

BELOW: A detail from Frank Miller's pencils for *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, showing Carrie Kelly as a future Robin.





CASTING OMINOUS SHADOWS ON ALL WHO PASS BELOW, THE SPIRES OF GOTHAM CITY INSTILL A BLEAK FEAR INTO THE HEARTS OF THE DENIZENS BRAVE ENOUGH TO CALL THE TOWN THEIR OWN.

# GOTHAM:

## THE CITY FROM HELL AND ITS INHABITANTS



"A CITY OF JUSTICE, A CITY OF LOVE. A city of peace, for every one of us." When pop star R. Kelly wrote the lyrics to his hit single "Gotham City" for the *Batman & Robin* movie soundtrack, he obviously had no idea what he was talking about.

A city nearly as old as the hero it birthed, Gotham City was first referred to by name in 1940's *Batman* #4 on a newspaper clearly labeled as the *Gotham City Gazette*. Before that landmark issue, Batman simply fought crime in an undisclosed metropolis similar to New York City that on at least one occasion was even referred to as Manhattan. Founded by a Norwegian mercenary in 1635, Gotham City is believed to be located somewhere between New York City and Superman's Metropolis on the East Coast of the United States. Denny O'Neil described the city in his *Batman: Knightfall* novelization as "Manhattan below Fourteenth Street at eleven minutes past midnight on the coldest night in November."

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Production designer Anton Furst created striking pencil drawings of Gotham City for the 1989 *Batman* film. He and the filmmakers chose to ignore the spooily look of the 1966 TV series. **LEFT:** Harvey Bullock was the first modern Gotham City detective to have a major recurring role in Batman's world. His personality has been modified through the years, but his tenacious pursuit of the law has remained constant. This image is a detail from the cover of *Batman: GCPD* #2 (September 1996), drawn by Jim Aparo and Bill Sienkiewicz.

Just like the real-life New York City on which it was based, Gotham comes equipped with a large seaport, a midtown, a financial district, and Chinatown. It has a youthful, bohemian West Village, an infamous East Side (often home to Catwoman sightings), and even a State Building over one hundred stories tall. In the city's center stands Robinson Square Park, but unlike the similarly located Central Park in Manhattan, the urban escape has fewer sprawling lawns and open areas, and more lush forests and nature preserves. This area was exploited during the "No Man's Land" crossover event of 1999 by criminal Poison Ivy, who claimed the serene setting as her own territory and punished trespassers harshly.

No matter how bad crime is in the real world, New York City's crime rates pale in comparison to those of its fictional doppelganger. Gotham had been a safer burg when patrolled years ago by Green Lantern, the Golden-Age hero, but the city deteriorated over time, and a layer of corruption built up over its once glossy exterior. After



the Green Lantern retired, Gotham saw the debut of the Reaper, a murderous vigilante who took a stance of corporal punishment against his town's criminals, shooting or cutting them down without a second thought. By the time the Batman burst on to the scene, the absence of such vigilantes had taken its toll on the city, and illegal activities had even partially rotted the police force, home to the city's supposed protectors.

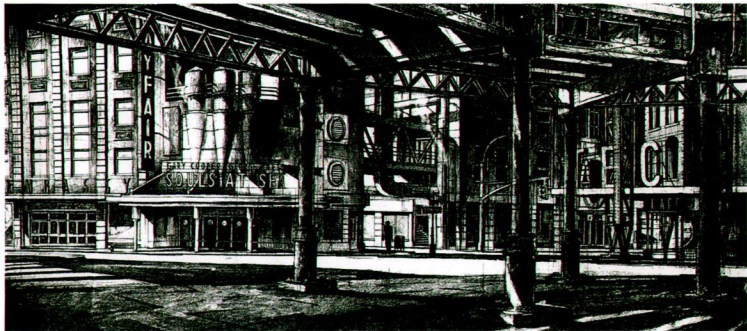
Many view the night of the brutal murder of millionaire socialites Thomas and Martha Wayne as the city's ultimate undoing, and Gotham's formerly glamorous Park Row fell on hard times directly after the Waynes' cold-blooded murder by the common street thug Joe Chill. Park Row has since become one of Gotham's most notorious downtrodden slums. Locals



ABOVE LEFT: Batman drives the streets of a rather nondescript Gotham City from an early comic. ABOVE: Gotham in the year 3051, as envisioned by artist Dick Sprang.



Gotham City's subways look ominous in this 1994 production drawing from *Batman Forever*.



have dubbed the street Crime Alley, announced by the graffiti adorning several of the neighborhood's street signs and dilapidated buildings. Unlike the moral center of its denizens, Gotham's organized crime seems never to weaken, despite the constant war waged against it by Gotham's police force, the G.C.P.D., headed by the still incorruptible Commissioner James Gordon. Instead, like the Hydra of myth, the city's mafia seemingly regenerates a new head, continually being ruled by a wide variety of criminals, from traditional gangsters like Carmine "The Roman" Falcone and Rupert Thorne, to arms dealers like the notorious Penguin, to crazed lunatics like Black Mask.

On top of that, Gotham is virtually an insanity magnet, as it is home to Arkham Asylum for the Criminally Insane, an institution whose revolving doors are constantly welcoming perhaps the largest and most colorful array of dangerous psychotics in any city in the world. Arkham (which takes its name from the fiction of H. P. Lovecraft) is located on the far edge of town, still too close for comfort to Gotham City's eight million citizens—an understandable

**ABOVE:** A gloomy Gotham City elevated track dominates this drawing that Anton Furst created for the 1989 *Batman* movie.

trepidation, since the asylum has been rebuilt a number of times due to the occasional mass breakout.

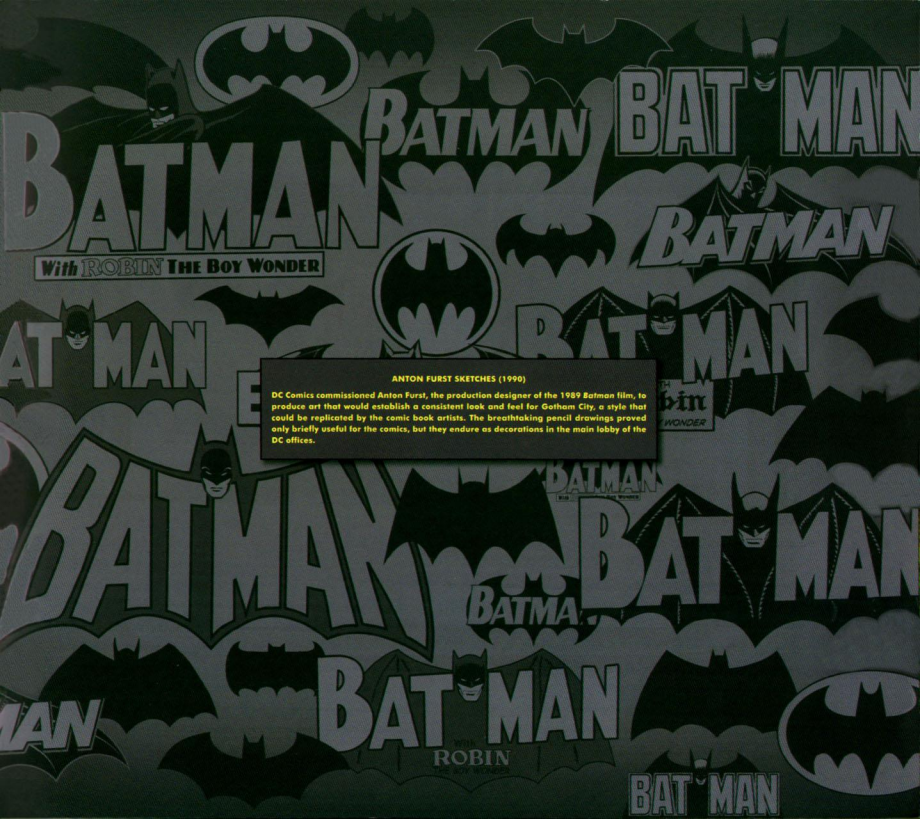
Besides its most famous denizen, Batman, Gotham has played host to dozens of other heroes over the years. From the violent no-holds-barred attitude of the Huntress to the secret operative Orpheus, Gotham has taken its dark cost on a variety of crime fighters, even costing Orpheus his very life at the hands of Black Mask. The rumored occult history of the city has also attracted a few mystical heroes to the historic town. Etrigan the Demon once made his home among Gotham's twenty-five square miles, as did the tattered soul-catcher Ragman, and the monstrosity called Simon Dark.

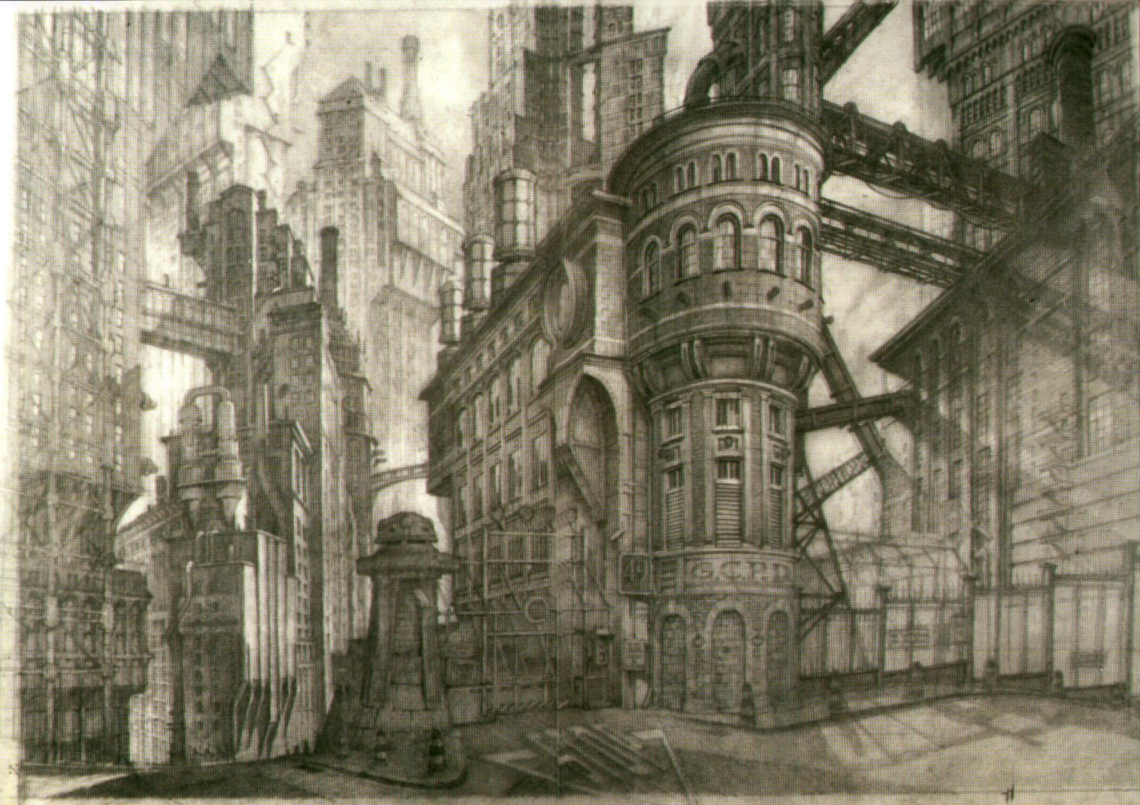
Perhaps what best defines Gotham is its overall appearance. The architecture of the skyline is a mixture of streamlined 1930s Art Deco influences and the historic steeples and sharp arches from the classic Gothic period. Anton Furst, production

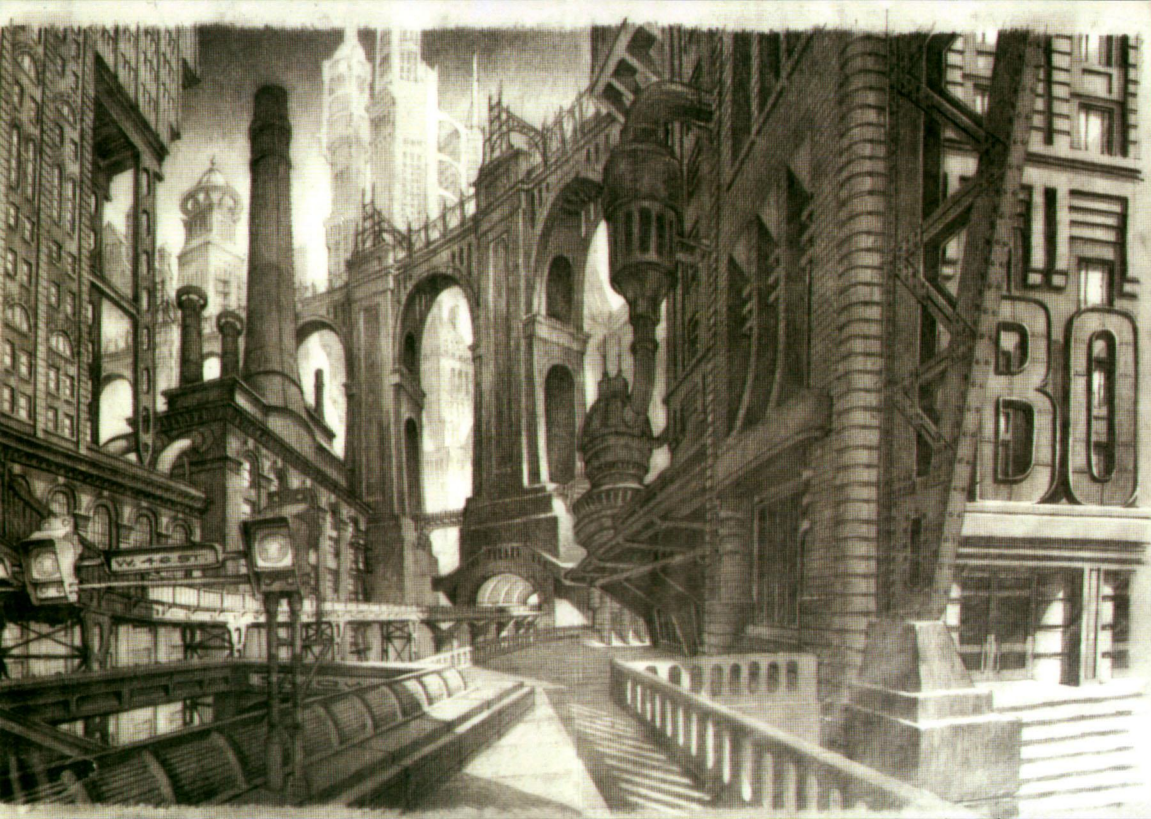
**BATMAN**  
With **ROBIN THE BOY WONDER**

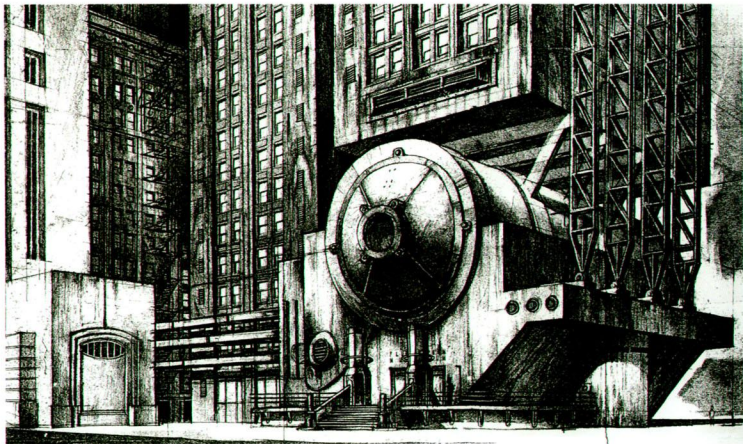
**ANTON FURST SKETCHES (1990)**

DC Comics commissioned Anton Furst, the production designer of the 1989 *Batman* film, to produce art that would establish a consistent look and feel for Gotham City, a style that could be replicated by the comic book artists. The breathtaking pencil drawings proved only briefly useful for the comics, but they endure as decorations in the main lobby of the DC offices.







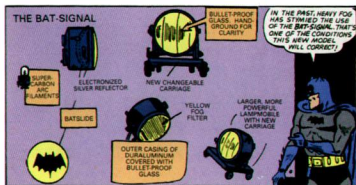


**ABOVE:** One of Anton Furst's favorite designs for the 1989 *Batman* film, the Flagehalm Museum was inspired heavily by locomotives and came equipped with a skylight that Batman utilized to save the life of Vicki Vale.

designer of the 1989 *Batman* film, envisioned Gotham as an industrial creature, where no structures are ever torn down, but are merely added on to. Furst's vision of the city has been highly influential on future comic artists, and his original drawings have even found a home on the comic covers themselves, including the three-part 1992 "Destroyer" arc that served as the first crossover between *Batman, Detective Comics*, and *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*.

Against a twisted skyline of maze-like water towers, steam pipes, and gargoyles, Gotham's purple skies seem perpetually privy to a full moon, a tradition started by

artist Jerry Robinson as he worked on the *Batman* books in the 1940s. The most famous sight over the city's skyline is the legendary Bat-Signal. First debuting in February 1942's *Detective Comics* #60, the Bat-Signal is a high-powered spotlight overlaid with a black cutout bat, projecting an eerie summons onto the night sky. Erected by James Gordon after *Batman's* first clash with the Joker, the Bat-Signal not only lets the G.C.P.D. contact *Batman* for help, it also doubles as a warning signal about what lies ahead for any criminals out to cause trouble. For the innocent, the act of looking up to the sky and catching a glimpse of *Batman's* symbol reflected off their city's smoggy clouds fills them with a brief glimmer of hope. And in a city as corrupt as Gotham, its citizens can use all the hope they can get.



ABOVE: Batman shows readers how the famed Bat-Signal works in a panel from *Batman* #155 (May 1963). RIGHT: Silent film star Neil Hamilton gained his greatest national attention as Commissioner Gordon on the Batman television series.

While men dressed up like giant bats and women armed with whips and razor-sharp claws are not out of place among the winding spires and sharp edges of Gotham's unusual nightlife, they're certainly not the norm. Eight million people call Gotham home, ranging from your average working Joe to the aloof social elite to the forgotten faces filling the homeless shelters and dirty street corners. These men and women are content merely to live their lives without superpowers, uncontrolled manias, or access to amazing advanced technology. But despite the best intentions of these everyday citizens of Gotham City, many have found their paths intertwined with the fantastic world of the Batman.

## COMMISSIONER JAMES GORDON

His trip to Gotham was a large-scale walk of shame. A disgraced honest cop, caught up in a scandal of murder and politics in Chicago, Lieutenant Jim Gordon uprooted his pregnant wife, Barbara, and headed to Gotham City in order to avoid any further blemishes on his police record. Once situated in his new home, Gordon found opposition at every turn, facing a police force more corrupt than any he'd ever known. Managing to keep his nose clean and his hands out of the filth, Gordon made a friend in crusading district attorney Harvey Dent, as well as

in the mysterious vigilante of the night, the Batman, after the Dark Knight saved his new child from a fall off a bridge. Finding favor with the public, even if he wasn't as successful with his bosses within the system, hero cop Gordon was soon promoted to captain and years later to commissioner. Since then, he has continued to clean up the streets of his adopted city, constantly relying on his secret weapon against crime, the Dark Knight himself.

Officially, Jim Gordon is as old as the Batman. He first appeared as a close friend of Bruce Wayne's in *Detective Comics* #27 (May 1939), and he grew into a faithful supporting role, though his personality was as two-dimensional as most lawmen in super hero books of the period. Gordon's character was there to deliver exposition; if he wasn't doing that, he simply ceased to be, as the writers of the 1940s and 1950s didn't care to delve too much into the law enforcer's personal life.

After Gordon showed up in the 1949 serial *Batman and Robin*, later media exposure led to the first real development in his life: the birth of his daughter. When the live-action *Batman* show entered its third and last season in 1968, the producers decided to expand the Batman mythos by adding a female face to the cast. Editor Julius Schwartz had introduced Batgirl in *Detective Comics* #359 (January 1967), and the show's producers eagerly adopted her. The new Batgirl had the distinct honor of being Barbara Gordon, the police commissioner's daughter, and the character was an instant hit. Suddenly, Jim Gordon found himself a family man.

However, it wasn't until the 1970s and 1980s that Gordon really found his individual voice in the pages of the comics. When writer Denny O'Neil, Frank Robbins, and company darkened the feel of Gotham City and the Batman,



Gordon developed a relationship with the Caped Crusader not explored in the earlier stories. Gordon often summoned Batman to police headquarters with the Bat-Signal, filled Batman in on the specifics of a crime, and usually attempted some small talk with the Dark Knight Detective, only realizing midsentence that Batman had disappeared into the night. Batman's abrupt departure from their conversations became a running gag, and variations of it still take place in the comics of the present day.



**ABOVE:** This pencil sketch by Scott Hampton from the 1996 *Batman Masterpieces* trading card series depicts the torture of Commissioner Gordon by the Clown Prince of Crime. **ABOVE RIGHT:** After Gordon suffered a heart attack in the comics, DC worked with the American Heart Association to produce this public service ad about the dangers of cigarette smoking.

**BATMAN'S BEST FRIEND ISN'T ON THE STREETS TONIGHT**

People said that Commissioner Gordon had heart. He was a tough cop, and proud of it. Eating right, exercise, vacations—those things were for guys not so tough.

Tobacco was part of it. A smoke would jump-start the day, help him get through a long night, mellow out the bad hours.

Then one day all the pain in the world collected in his chest and squeezed.

Jim Gordon's heart wasn't working right anymore. That made it hard to be tough. And even harder to be proud.

For information about helping your heart to work right, call or write your nearest American Heart Association.

American Heart Association

As more and more writers decided to explore the relationship between Batman and Gordon, a genuine friendship based on mutual respect began to evolve. The Caped Crusader and Gordon would even meet once a year on Christmas to exchange gifts at a small local diner, Batman usually giving Gordon some type of exotic tobacco for his pipe. This lifelong habit would come back



**THIS PAGE:** A maquette (above left) and turnaround drawings (left) of Commissioner Gordon were created for a never-produced Batman Clio board game. José Luis García-López pencilled and inked the Gordon drawings. (Above right) A model sheet of Gordon attitudes for Batman: The Animated Series.



ABOVE LEFT: Scott Hampton drew this sketch of Commissioner James Gordon on the roof of Police Headquarters, standing next to the Bat-Signal. ABOVE RIGHT: Hampton's finished painting was used on a *Batman Masterpieces* trading card in 1996.

THE  
ROBIN

BAT-MAN

to haunt Gordon in 1991, when he suffered a heart attack in the comics, then appeared in an awareness campaign in ads throughout DC Comics' line, warning readers of the dangers inherent to smoking.

Gordon's biggest supporter, and the man responsible for giving the character a defined backstory and personality, was none other than writer/artist Frank Miller. In both of his groundbreaking four-issue series of the late 1980s, *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* and "Year One," Gordon was given a larger role than usual. In fact, in "Year One," he nearly hogged as much page time as the Dark Knight himself. In this story, Gordon's past was examined, detailing the period where his wife, Barbara Sr., became pregnant, soon giving birth to his son, James, Jr. Not afraid to portray his characters as real and flawed men and women, Miller also gave Gordon a lover. Sarah Essen was a female cop who had an illicit affair with Gordon in "Year One," an affair that James finally called off, forcing Sarah to leave the city. Miller also promised her return; in the future reality of *The Dark Knight Returns*, Sarah was once again back in Gordon's life, the two married now that James's first wife, Barbara, was out of the picture for unknown reasons. Despite his first marriage, Sarah was Gordon's true love, and as promised, the writers and artists of the 1990s finally brought her back, the two dating and eventually marrying in the pages of *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight Annual #2*.

Just as Barbara Gordon, Sr., and James, Jr., disappeared from Gotham City soon after the flashback events of "Year One," writers of the time found the need to explain the younger Barbara Gordon, also known as Batgirl, to an audience curious about her exclusion from that same definitive origin story. Barbara's past was rewritten to make it seem as though she were Jim's niece, the daughter of his alcoholic brother, Roger. The story held that she was sent to live with Jim in Gotham in order to give her the opportunity for a better home environment.

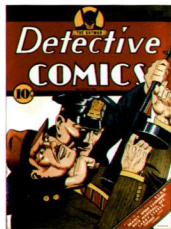
Like most Gotham citizens, Jim Gordon's life has not been an easy one. Gordon has been kidnapped numerous times, most notably by the Joker, who crippled his daughter, Barbara, and tortured him in a funhouse of horrors in the pages of Alan Moore and Brian Bolland's *Batman: The Killing Joke*. Gordon's later relationship

with Sarah grew strained, and was only made worse with her temporary promotion over him as commissioner of police. And finally, just when Jim thought his world stood a chance of getting back on track, the Joker shot and killed Sarah during the epic "No Man's Land" crossover. Throughout it all, Gordon has remained determined not to repeat the mistakes of his Chicago past and fail in the eyes of the people he serves. Today, Jim Gordon remains the firm foundation upon which the handful of honest Gotham City cops have built their lives.

## THE GOTHAM CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Gotham City Police Department (G.C.P.D.), the city's first line of defense against the endeavors of common crooks as well as the threats posed by the interesting things that go bump in the night, first began as a faceless supplier of personality-devoid men in blue, who were there to get in Batman's way or clean up after him when the heavy lifting was finished. Despite their commissioner, James Gordon, being an important player in the Batman mythos from the beginning, the G.C.P.D. served more as window dressing: background figures doing their best to mind their own business and then disappear into obscurity by the next panel.

Over the years, there have been a few exceptions, the first of which was a comedic, bumbling oaf who went by the name of McGonigle. Debuting in the fall of 1940 with not even a first name to call his own, Detective McGonigle was determined to bring the vigilante Batman to justice, something he failed to do time and time again. McGonigle finally saw the error of his ways after witnessing the Dark Knight in action, and soon



ABOVE: The cover to *Detective Comics #32*, illustrated by Fred Guerdine, depicts a generic police officer doing his duty. Batman's success soon made him the permanent cover feature.



ABOVE: Artist Kelley Jones created these Harvey Bullock character designs. RIGHT: This blocky version of Bullock was created for the *Lego Batman* video game in 2008.

became a staunch Batman supporter, quickly ending his campaign to land the Caped Crusader behind bars.

The next minor player to garner a quick moment in the spotlight was Harvey Hanier, a veteran Gotham officer who debuted in *Batman* #85 in 1954 and was cursed with the affliction of worsening eyesight. Rather than taking him off the force due to this handicap, Commissioner Gordon took pity on the old cop and gave him the duty of manning the Bat-Signal whenever the city needed to contact Batman and Robin, a position he proudly held for years.

During the *Batman* television series, Commissioner Gordon, portrayed by Neil Hamilton, was given a sidekick in the way of Chief O'Hara, stereotypically brought to life by actor Stafford Repp. Adding a bit of over-the-top flair to the

normally exposition-heavy scenes in police headquarters, Chief O'Hara only made a few appearances in the comics until 1999, when he had merely a bit part in Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale's maxiseries *Batman: Dark Victory*. In this cameo, he was quickly hanged by the story's serial murderer, the enigmatic and appropriately dubbed Hangman Killer.

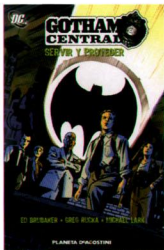
In 1974's *Detective Comics* #441, the Gotham P.D. was granted yet another major player, Detective Harvey Bullock. Originally introduced as a corrupt cop intent on ruining Gordon's career, Bullock's clumsy charade was put to rest when he realized the error of his ways after inadvertently causing Gordon to suffer a heart attack. Becoming a steadfast Gordon loyalist, Harvey went on to join the secret spy organization known as Checkmate for a brief period.

In current continuity, Bullock has been reestablished as a brute with controversial methods, but one who never wavers in his support of Gordon and his crusade against crime. When Gordon was nearly killed in the crossover "Officer Down" storyline in 2001, Bullock decided to cross a moral line in a quest for vengeance.

Bullock then parted ways with the G.C.P.D. when new Commissioner Michael Akins replaced his mentor at the force's helm, only to come back a few years later when Gordon returned to active duty. Today, Bullock continues to work in the Major Crimes Unit, taking time out to relax with an old movie, a good cigar, or a box of his favorite glazed donuts.

During his long tenure with the force, Harvey Bullock's most famous partner was Renee Montoya, a character that first came into popularity in *Batman: The Animated Series*. Actually created for the





cartoon, Montoya made her first print appearance in *Batman* #475 in March 1992, appearing on the page before being seen on the screen. Originally working as Commissioner Gordon's assistant, Montoya managed to collar the escaped serial killer Mt. Zsasz, establishing her as a force to be reckoned with inside the department. Quitting the G.C.P.D. after the death of her second partner, Detective Crispus Allen, Montoya descended into alcoholism, an affliction that ruined her relationship

with her girlfriend. However, at the depths of her despair, Montoya soon discovered a chance at redemption when the role of the enigmatic hero the Question



**TOP:** Cover to a Spanish edition of *Gotham Central* drawn by Michael Lark. The series won awards for its depictions of Gotham's finest in a city filled with costumed crazies. **ABOVE:** Character designs of Renee Montoya for *Batman: The Animated Series* by Lynne Maylas. **ABOVE RIGHT:** "Officer Down" was a five-issue event in which an assassin shot Commissioner Gordon at his retirement party.



was passed on to her. Montoya utilizes the Question identity to this day, often teaming up with her on-again/off-again lover, Kate Kane, the vigilante known as Batwoman.

Montoya wasn't the only character to make the jump from Gotham City cop to super hero. When Detective Crispus Allen was gunned down by corrupt crime-scene investigator Jim Corrigan, the honest cop and family man was reduced to a ghost,

forming a bond with the mystical avenger the Spectre, eventually merging with him and serving as the spirit of God's wrath toward those that would walk the path of the criminal.

Other notable members of the G.C.P.D. include the somewhat psychic Josephine "Josie Mac" MacDonald, her partner Detective Marcus Driver, Chief of Police and avid reader Mackenzie "Hardback" Bock, and a recent implant from Metropolis, Captain Maggie Sawyer. In 1996, the team's efforts and popularity were rewarded by DC when the force was given its own four-issue miniseries entitled *Batman: GCPD*. A critically acclaimed ongoing title, *Gotham Central*, written by fan favorites Ed Brubaker and Greg Rucka, was launched in 2003. The series chronicled the G.C.P.D.'s ongoing struggle against the forces of supervillains, interior corruption, and the legal problems of accepting help from a man dressed as a bat.

## LUCIUS FOX

He's the CEO of Wayne Enterprises with the so-called "Midas touch." And he may just be one of the biggest contributing allies to the Dark Knight's war on crime, whether Fox is aware of it or not.

Lucius Fox first debuted in the pages of January 1979's *Batman* #307 as Bruce Wayne's indispensable right-hand man. The manager of Wayne's giant company's complex financial standings, Fox has often been offered other jobs at other companies. Nonetheless, he has remained loyal to Bruce and been rewarded with a substantial amount of freedom to pursue his own agenda with the company's holdings.

As established in the third *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight* Halloween special by Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale, Fox and Wayne first met when a then-young Bruce Wayne saved Fox's life from a mugger while the two were both vacationing in Paris. Wayne originally turned down Fox's offer to manage Bruce's money, but later decided to promote Fox to just such a position as head of the Wayne Foundation. With the success of the blockbuster film *Batman Begins*, in which Lucius, played by Morgan Freeman (later reprising his role in the 2008 sequel, *The Dark Knight*), was depicted as a technological whiz, the comics began to incorporate this side of his character



as well, as seen in the pages of the 2007 flashback series, *Batman Confidential*, which established Fox as working for Wayne Enterprises' aerospace division.

From his beginnings with Wayne Enterprises until the present day, what Fox is apparently unaware of is that many of the purchases and technological advances his company makes are put to practical use in the Batcave under Wayne Manor. Bruce constantly uses these developments to his advantage, updating his personal arsenal of weapons and vehicles in order to gain the upper hand on his war on crime as the Batman.

**LEFT:** Morgan Freeman portrayed Wayne Enterprises CEO Lucius Fox in *Batman Begins*. This digital character sketch was created by Simon McGuire. **ABOVE:** Fox also made an appearance on this Upper Deck V.I. trading card, drawn by Sean Phillips.

## DR. LESLIE THOMPkins

A mother with no children of her own; a doctor with no practice to speak of; a human being with no thought toward her own personal needs—Dr. Leslie Thompkins is many things, but her pacifist nature and constant selfless sacrifices prevent her from fully experiencing life as others do.

Leslie Thompkins was a social worker, later recast as a doctor, a career that she left behind in order to form a free clinic for Gotham's impoverished. First appearing in writer Denny O'Neil's landmark *Detective Comics* #457 (March 1976), Leslie was one of the first people on the scene at Bruce's parents' murder, and the tragedy deeply affected her, causing her to reevaluate her own life. Becoming a fixture in Bruce Wayne's world, Leslie continued to help raise the boy, her

constant presence in Wayne Manor ultimately sparking an affair with the Wayne family butler, Alfred Pennyworth. After discovering Bruce's dual identity as the costumed hero Batman, she would continually serve as emergency medic for the hero, as well as meeting with him annually on the anniversary of his parents' death. While Leslie disapproves of Bruce's violent methods, she has occasionally recognized his cause to be just, as well as his presence to be a necessary evil of Gotham City.

During the raging gang violence of the large-scale "War Games" crossover of 2004, Leslie faked the death of the hero known as the Spoiler, in order to flee the country with the girl, saving her from a dangerous life like the one that Batman leads. Leslie has since returned to Gotham, once again renewing her low profile and putting the good of others before her own needs. With rare noble intentions in an unforgiving city like Gotham, Leslie Thompkins remains one of its strongest citizens.



ABOVE: Dr. Leslie Thompkins and Batman's relationship was loving but tense, given her aversion to violence and his occasional dalliance with it. Arthur Suydam created this painting for an Upper Deck *Vs.* trading card.

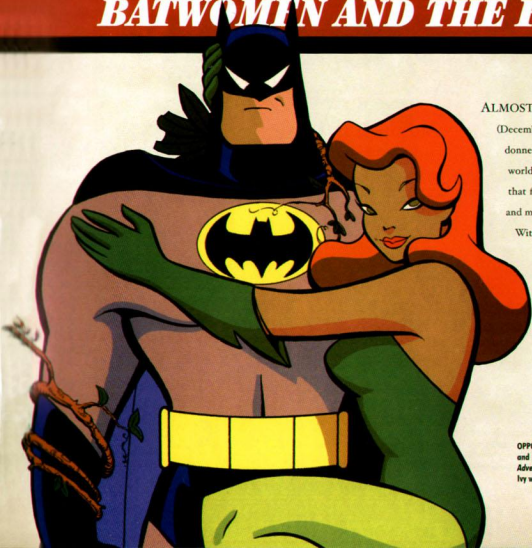
YOU'LL TAKE  
BATMAN TO YOUR  
CATACOMBS OVER  
MY DEAD BODY,  
CATWOMAN!



WHETHER SLINKING OVER THE ROOFTOPS OR SASHAYING OVER BALLROOM FLOORS, THE MANY BEAUTIFUL WOMEN IN THE BATMAN'S LIFE PROVE TO BE A THREAT NOT ONLY TO HIS HEART, BUT ALSO TO HIS LIFE.

# WOMEN OF THE KNIGHT:

## BATWOMEN AND THE FEMMES FATALES



ALMOST FITTINGLY, AN AMAZON paved the way. In *All Star Comics* #8 (December 1941-January 1942), Princess Diana of the mythical island Themyscira donned a patriotic uniform and matching tiara and made her journey to "man's world" as Wonder Woman, coining the term super heroine in the process. Since that fateful day in 1941, women in comics graduated from being mere girlfriends and minor supporting characters and began to develop stories of their own.

With Batman being such a major force at DC Comics, it was only a matter of time before he would be given a run for his money as chief crime fighter in Gotham City. As it turned out, the Caped Crusader would develop more than his fair share of imitators of the gentler sex.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Batgirl and Catwoman square off over the Caped Crusader on this detail from Carmine Infantino and Mick Espinosa's cover of *Batman* #197 (December 1967). LEFT: A detail from the cover of *The Batman Adventures* #23 (August 1994), drawn by Mike Parobeck and Rick Burchett, shows an animated version of Poison Ivy wrapping herself around Batman, much like a vine.

## BATWOMAN

In Batman's world, Kathy Kane was the first. A circus stunt-cyclist and trapeze artist who received a sizable inheritance, Kathy was inspired by the Batman and donned a Batwoman costume, for some reason constructed of the brightest material she could come across. Fully accessorized with a purse and small mask that let her hair flow in the breeze, Kathy started joining the original Caped



ABOVE: This pin-up of the Batman Family drawn by Sheldon Moldoff, appeared in the 1961 *Batman Annual* #2. Participants are, from left to right, Batman, Bat-Mite, Robin, Alfred, Bat-Girl, Commissioner Gordon, Batwoman, and Ace the Bat-Hound at their feet. RIGHT: Capitalizing on the American Batman television series, Mexico released *La Mujer Murcielago* in 1968, featuring actress Mauro Monti as Batwoman in this unlicensed knockoff.

Crusader on missions. But the Batman wasn't always too keen for her company. Convinced that fighting crime was no place for women, Batman often tried to talk Kathy out of her new career path, but his pleas usually fell on deaf ears.

Swinging on to the scene in *Detective Comics* #233 in 1956, Batwoman fought by Batman's side for the better part of a decade, causing Alfred to suspect a romantic relationship forming between the two vigilantes. The two creatures of the night dated on several occasions in their civilian identities. Also, a rare event for the era, a continued subplot saw Batwoman begin to fall for the criminal and near-doppelganger of the Dark Knight, Catman.



As Julius Schwartz took over the Batman books in the 1960s, Batwoman abruptly disappeared from Batman's world in an effort to streamline the crowded Gotham City rooftops. Her character would only be seen in the occasional reprint or *Batman Family* issue, wherein it was revealed that she had retired from the nightlife to purchase her own circus. In *Detective Comics* #485 (August–September 1979), she was killed by members of the League of Assassins while Batman was in battle with the brainwashed hero Bronze Tiger. The story, written by Denny O'Neil, was perhaps a preventative measure to ensure that the garishly dressed Batman impersonator never staged a comeback.

## BAT-GIRL

Niece of Kathy Kane and tennis pro, Mary Elizabeth "Betty" Kane began to fight crime by her aunt's side in 1961's *Batman* #139. Quickly forming a crush on Robin that would border on obsession in later years, Betty also fell victim to Julius Schwartz's cleaning house and disappeared for a time alongside her mentor.



However, fate, and the miseries known as *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, would be much kinder to the youth than they were to her aunt. In the revised continuity contained in that tumultuous event of the mid-1980s, it was established that Mary Elizabeth Kane had never been Bat-Girl in the first place. Instead, her new origin and new post-*Crisis* nickname, "Bette," chronicled in the pages of *Secret Origins Annual* #3, saw her take up

the guise of Flamebird to help found the West Coast branch of the Teen Titans, in an effort to impress her crush, Dick Grayson. Taking a nod from the historic pairing of Nightwing and Flamebird from the classic *Superman* #158, Bette's new retroactive identity made perfect sense now that Grayson was calling himself Nightwing. Not quite having what it takes to be a full-time super hero, Flamebird can still be seen here and there in the corners of the DC Universe or in the occasional group shot, as Bette always tries to edge her way closer to wherever Nightwing is standing.

## BATGIRL I & ORACLE

Barbara Gordon was getting ready for a costume party. She had spent all her free time when not at work at the public library sewing her disguise, an homage to her hero, Batman. She wanted to prove to her father, Commissioner James Gordon, that she wasn't just a shy bookworm. When she came into conflict with



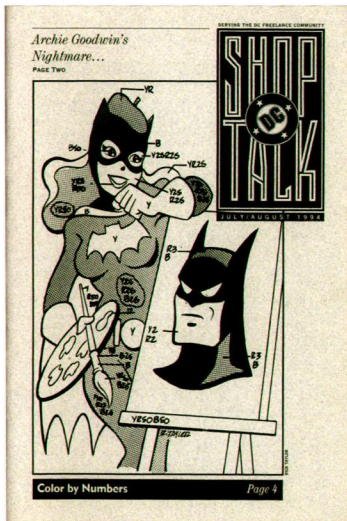
LEFT: It's Batgirl to the rescue on this Sheldon Moldoff-illustrated cover to *Batman* #141 (August 1961). ABOVE: In 1996, *Batman: The Animated Series* became *The New Batman/Superman Adventures*, and Batgirl joined the team. Pictured here is an early concept drawing by Glen Murcinka.

the villainous Killer Moth on her way to the ball, Barbara acted quickly and defeated the foe, relying heavily on her lifelong study of gymnastics and the self-defense techniques her father had taught her. Having enjoyed herself too much

to reveal her true identity, Barbara instead embarked on a new career as Gotham's newest heroine, Batgirl.

Debuting in *Detective Comics* #359 (January 1967) after the live-action show announced they wanted to use a Batgirl in their third season, this new Batgirl was the creation of writer Gardner Fox and artist Carmine Infantino. Batgirl hit the newsstands in November 1966 and was warmly welcomed by her readership, something that wasn't quite as true for her two predecessors. She became a staple in the Batman's universe and was given a backup feature in the pages of *Detective Comics* (largely written by Frank Robbins and illustrated by Don Heck). Batgirl went on to develop her own supporting cast, including on-again/off-again boyfriend Jason Bard, and she even moved to Washington, D.C., when elected congresswoman.

As the Batman comics began to mature, Batgirl slowly faded from popularity, managing one last gasp in 1988 to headline her own special. Shortly thereafter, she would go on to play a major role in Alan Moore and Brian Bolland's opus *Batman: The Killing Joke*, in which the Joker burst into her home, then shot and paralyzed her. The maniacal killer then stripped her naked, took photographs of her, and later attempted to use the disturbing imagery to drive her father insane. Defeated and emotionally scarred, Barbara's nature would not let her give up on the world, and soon Oracle was born.



ABOVE: Shop Talk was an internal newsletter from DC's editorial department to its freelance talent. Production manager Rick Taylor provided this cover illustration to explain the coloring process; each letter and number indicates a specific color value. RIGHT: Barbara Gordon was the star of this 2004 American Library Association poster to promote literacy.



An enigmatic information guru whose career began on the cusp of the Internet craze, Barbara transformed herself into the computer hacker to beat all computer hackers. She first decided upon this new role in the pages of *Suicide Squad* #23 (January 1989), as a source for that clandestine government-sponsored team. Oracle soon branched out and began to aid Batman and his various agents, offering them information from inside a secret clock tower she had purchased with various funds siphoned from criminal accounts and a little help from Bruce Wayne. She soon began to take in field agents, and in 1996, the Birds of Prey were formed in a one-shot special by writer Chuck Dixon and artist Gary Frank.

*Birds of Prey* paired Oracle and former Justice League mainstay Black Canary; the combo intrigued audiences, and several sequel specials and miniseries were created to fill the demand for the characters' adventures. Oracle soon joined the Justice League herself, and in 1999, the *Birds of Prey* were finally given their own ongoing series. While Oracle's professional life got more and more hectic, so did her personal life. Continuing her lifelong flirtation with Dick Grayson, Oracle had encounters with ex-boyfriend Jason Bard and the wisecracking technical genius super hero Blue Beetle before finally agreeing to marry Nightwing, a union that unfortunately was never to be.

As *Birds of Prey* grew into the second-longest-lasting title featuring a female lead in DC Comics' history, The WB television network decided to produce a live-action series in 2002 loosely based on the comic. The show was not a success, and *Birds of Prey* ended after one season.

However, with highly skilled craftsmen at the helm, the comic continued going strong. And when Black Canary once again got more involved with the Justice League, Oracle began to team with other notable heroines, including the time-displaced pilot Lady Blackhawk, as well as the Huntress, a woman Oracle used to find herself at constant odds with due to their vastly different methods of fighting crime.



ABOVE: Dinah Meyer appeared as Barbara Gordon in the *Birds of Prey* television show. The WB network series only lasted one season.

## THE HUNTRESS

Her father was the Batman, her mother, Catwoman. It seemed Helena Wayne really didn't have much in the way of career choices. Not that she didn't give fate a run for its money. Despite being trained as an athlete since birth by both of her parents, Helena decided to focus on the law, joining up with the firm of Cranston and Grayson. When her mother died while being blackmailed into resuming her old identity as Catwoman, Helena decided to join the true family business and began her life as the avenging vigilante known as the Huntress.



ABOVE: Joe Orlando's rough cover composition for DC Super-Stars #17 (December 1977), the comic in which the Huntress' origin was first revealed. RIGHT: Jim Lee's sketch shows her newly designed costume.



An unusual occurrence, the Huntress's first and second appearances debuted in the same month in 1977, with *All Star Comics* #69 showcasing the start of her first adventure in costume, and *DC Super-Stars* #17 recounting her origin story. Both tales were executed by her creators, writer Paul Levitz and artist Joe Staton, and both were met with much excitement from the readership. With the Huntress's adventures taking place in the alternate reality of Earth-2, a world where Batman and Catwoman were a married couple instead of constant sparring partners, Helena soon took her place by the other heroes of that world known as the Justice Society of America, including an adult version of Robin.

As the subject of her own solo adventures in the backup stories of the pages of *Wonder Woman*, the Huntress grew to be a favorite with readers. However, no amount of favoritism could explain away her confusing backstory when all the various realities of all the various Earths were merged in the epic maxiseries of the mid-1980s, *Crisis on Infinite Earths*. There, Huntress perished alongside the Robin of Earth-2, shocking her devoted fans.

But Huntress was, if nothing else, a fighter. In 1989, in the pages of the new ongoing series *The Huntress*, a familiar heroine wearing a purple cape and mask emerged in Gotham City. Renamed Helena Bertinelli, and given a new origin that included her family's dramatic deaths at the hands of a rival Mafia family, the Huntress was back in full form, if only for a short while. Without the added intrigue of being the daughter of two of America's favorite comic creations, *The Huntress* was canceled after nineteen issues, the character then making a few appearances in *Justice League*. Slowly, the Huntress shifted into the Batman books, becoming a supporting player in various Batman titles and spin-offs, even gaining her own miniseries in 1994, then another in 2000.

With her new role firmly established amongst Gotham's tried-and-true heroes, Helena began to enjoy much fan support in the real world, but in the comics, the one person that the Huntress could not impress was the Dark Knight himself. With her mob background, Helena was not adverse to taking extreme, and sometimes excessively violent, measures in her battles against crime. Though she was a mild-mannered teacher during the day, her nighttime activities went too close to the line for Batman's taste, and he refused to let her into his tight-

knit circle, despite allowing her to serve for a brief period in the JLA. Batman's approval meant so much to Helena that during the "No Man's Land" crossover event of 1999, she even created a makeshift Batgirl personality, masking her face and hoping that her actions would finally prove to the Batman that she belonged as a part of his team. However, Batman saw through her ruse, shunned her yet again, and, to add insult to injury, promoted a new Batgirl in her place.

Finally giving up on gaining Batman's blessing, the Huntress adopted a new costume, one designed by Jim Lee in the pages of the "Hush" storyline, and debuting in *Batman* #609. She then moved to Metropolis after joining up with her former rival Oracle, and has since seemingly found her place in the world, even learning to curb her violent tendencies and better control her inner rage.

## BATGIRL II

The second Batgirl was a natural-born killer and was trained since infancy in the ways of assassination by her father, the mercenary known as David Cain. But Cassandra Cain wasn't his first pupil. Years ago, David Cain taught Bruce Wayne the ways of his trade, only to have Bruce take what he had learned and exploit it as the masked vigilante Batman. Cain wasn't about to make that mistake again, so when it came time to teach his own daughter, he ingrained his values deep into her mind from the beginning, teaching her to communicate through action, never allowing her to speak, read, or write. She became the perfect warrior, her only language the martial arts that she spoke more fluently than practically any person alive. Cassandra grew to predict her opponent's every move, and at a very young age, Cain had her commit her first kill with her bare hands. Realizing what she did was wrong, Cassie ran away from home, living on the streets until she was discovered by Oracle. Being a bright girl, she quickly recognized the inherent nobility in Batman's cause and joined his team, permitted to wear the new Batgirl costume Batman had stripped from the Huntress when she refused to follow his orders. And just like that, daddy's little girl had grown up to achieve the opposite of her father's wishes. Cassandra Cain had become the new Batgirl.



ABOVE: Though it looks like a silent exchange between Nightwing and Batgirl, this art is a pre-press digital file of a page from the first issue of the newest *Batgirl* miniseries (September 2008), shown just before the word balloons were added. It was illustrated by penciller Jim Calafore and inked by Mark McKenna.

First appearing during the “No Man’s Land” crossover in *Batman* #567 in 1999, Batgirl quickly found herself spinning off into her own 2000 title by writers Kelly Puckett and Scott Peterson and artist Damion Scott. Determined to be a good soldier in Batman’s war, Cassie approached her role as Batgirl like the sheltered child she was, gradually learning to speak, read, and write under the tutelage of her mentor, Oracle. She continued to aid Batman without question, even joining up with a splinter faction of the Justice League that called themselves the Justice League Elite. In order to spy on the group for Batman, Batgirl disguised herself as the ninja assassin Kasumi.

However, possessing a naïve, inquisitive nature soon led Cassie down a few dark paths, bringing her into conflict with her mother, the premier martial artist of the DC Universe, Lady Shiva. In their final fight, Batgirl nearly killed her assassin mother by impaling her on a meat hook in the last issue of Batgirl’s first ongoing series.

Batgirl later resurfaced as a brainwashed drone of the classic Teen Titans enemy, Deathstroke the Terminator. In his makeshift team of lesser Rogues called Titans East, Deathstroke staged an attack on Tim Drake’s incarnation of the team. However, when the villains were bested, Robin was able to break Deathstroke’s control over Cassie by injecting her with an antiserum, bringing her back to the side of the angels. Batman then recruited Batgirl into his new incarnation of the Outsiders in 2007, putting the heroine’s stealthy skills to good use in this makeshift clandestine strike force. Early the next year, Batgirl once again was given the spotlight, this time in her own new miniseries, as she continued her struggle to understand the world she had been sheltered from for so long.

## BATWOMAN II

Her debut made headlines—a full-page article in *The New York Times*, for starters. DC’s new weekly year-long maxiseries, entitled simply *52*, showcased a full year of the DC Universe in real time, a year without Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman. In its seventh issue, audiences were introduced to wealthy socialite Katherine “Kate” Kane, and by issue #11, she was swinging from rooftops as the newest Caped Crusader, Batwoman.



Selina Kyle never had it easy. Her mother died when she was a baby, leaving her in the hands of her disheartened father, who slowly drank himself to death. Later, trading life at an orphanage for life as a cat burglar, Selina went on a crime spree aided by her years of gymnastic and martial arts training. However, one simple near-fatal mistake sent her life on a downward spiral, and Selina soon found herself hiding from the law as a different kind of lady of the night, a prostitute working Gotham's notorious East End. It was a dead-end life, and one Selina probably would have resigned herself to if not for a chance encounter with the Batman while she was rubbernecking at a nearby SWAT operation. Inspired by this mysterious man dressed up as a bat, Selina donned her own eccentric ensemble, taking inspiration from the independent animal she'd always felt connected to: the cat. As her sometime sidekick Holly Robinson looked on, Selina Kyle disappeared into a gray, tight-fitting costume, and Catwoman leapt out into the night air for the first time.

Catwoman first appeared back in 1940's *Batman* #1, calling herself the Cat and wearing nothing more elaborate than a disguise as an elderly lady. By issue #3, she had lengthened her name to Cat-Woman and had taken a more literal approach to her thefts, wearing a furry brown cat mask, a red cape, and a sensible orange dress. Catwoman soon became a popular recurring character in Batman's life, her costume changing nearly as many times as her allegiances. Walking the thin line between heroine and villain, Selina has played both roles in her



**ABOVE:** In *Batman* #3 (Fall 1940), Selina Kyle was introduced as the costumed Cat, using a full head mask (left). In *Batman* #15 (February–March 1943), she acquired a sleeker green costume (right). **ABOVE RIGHT:** An early character sketch of Catwoman for *Batman: The Animated Series*.

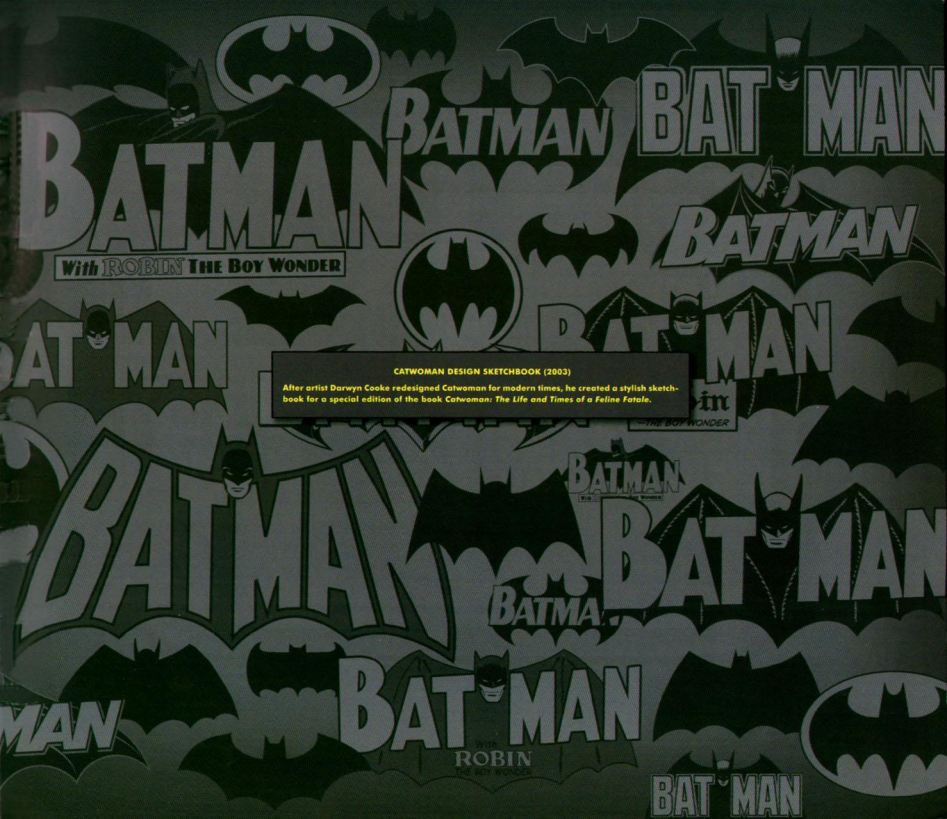


long and storied career, nearly always reverting back to her kleptomaniac tendencies as a jewel thief with a particular eye for cat-related baubles.

With fame spurred on by the performances of actresses Julie Newmar, Lee Meriwether, and Eartha Kitt in the live-action *Batman* show of the 1960s and its companion film, *Catwoman* thrived in the *Batman* books, even making an appearance or two in other publications such as *Superman's* *Girl Friend Lois Lane* and *Wonder Woman*. Catwoman became a mainstay of Batman's Rogues Gallery, and in the late 1970s and early 1980s, she

became a mainstay in his heart as well. She embarked on a long tenure as a hero in order to advance her relationship with the Dark Knight, a romance that had been previously limited to on-the-job flirtations.

Despite her many incarnations, Catwoman's past was rarely touched upon, and her origins were often subject to conflicting stories, portraying her as everything from an amnesiac flight attendant to an abused housewife. In the mid-1980s, when Frank Miller was permitted to create the definitive *Batman* origin in the pages of "Year One," Catwoman was given her current backstory, one that was only added to and expanded upon by subsequent flashback tales, such as the one found in her very first limited series, the 1989 four-issue mature-reader title simply called *Catwoman*. This series, written by Mindy Newell with art by J. J. Birch, revealed that Selina had a sister, Maggie, who had chosen to walk a very different path in life: as a nun in the Catholic Church. The miniseries also introduced the idea of



**BATMAN**

With **ROBIN THE BOY WONDER**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BAT MAN**

**CATWOMAN DESIGN SKETCHBOOK (2003)**

After artist Darwyn Cooke redesigned Catwoman for modern times, he created a stylish sketchbook for a special edition of the book *Catwoman: The Life and Times of a Feline Fatale*.

**in**  
**THE BOY WONDER**

**BATMAN**

**BATMAN**

**BAT MAN**

**BATMA**

**MAN**

**BAT MAN**

**ROBIN**

**BAT MAN**



*Darwin & Co*

CATWOMAN  
DESIGN  
SKETCHBOOK



# Catwoman



LINE NOT BARE  
WIDE SHOULDER  
IN PLACE LIKE  
A BOLT



CATWOMAN  
DESIGN  
SKETCHBOOK



SHORT "HIP  
GLIDE OUT"  
"PROM" STYLE  
"RUFFS" HAIR  
NIGHT GOWN  
TO CLING  
LIKE A...  
LIKE A CAT



# Slam Bradley

ROUGH COLOR GRADES  
MAR / 2001



PLEASE KEEP SHADING SIMPLE - PLEASE NO LINES OR TOUGH RENDERING ON CHARACTER'S FACE

Thanks, Dave



NOTE SHADE OF SELF-COLOR WHITE HAIR

NOTE: HAIR PARTS ATTEND WHITE

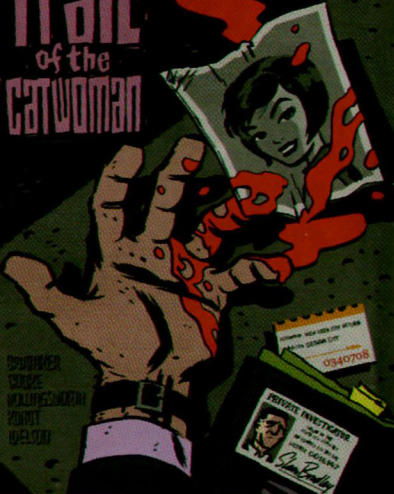
HAIR: WARTHOSE ?  
- BLUE LASH "DROOP"  
- BLUE TINT OF THE GREY HAIR  
- RED GREY HAIR  
- SHIRT - WHITE  
- TIE - BLUE  
- TIE - VERTICAL  
- HAT - TANGENT

\* HAIR - PLUME  
THICK "COMB" AND  
CHANGE AND  
SHIRT/TIE  
COLORED TO TIE  
SLAM  
HAIR - RED  
HAIR,  
OR TANGENT  
ATTEND ETC.



# Slam Bradley Trail of the Catwoman

BRADLEY  
WILSON  
WILSON  
WILSON



BRADLEY WILSON (100) 400-0000  
BRADLEY WILSON (100) 400-0000  
BRADLEY WILSON (100) 400-0000  
0340708

PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR  
BRADLEY WILSON  
100 WILSON ST  
BRADLEY WILSON  
Slam Bradley



FAR LEFT: **SLAM BRADLEY** COLOR COMP, UNPUBLISHED FRONTIS FOR "TRAIL OF THE CATWOMAN".

HEAD TURNS IN PENCIL AND INK, DETAIL FROM "SELINA'S BIG SCORE", UNPUBLISHED SKETCH.

CATWOMAN  
**DESIGN**  
SKETCHBOOK



ABOVE: UNPUBLISHED INK SKETCH.

# Selina Style



LIGHTWEIGHT  
STORMCOAT



URBAN  
WINTER  
SAMPLE  
WRAPPED COAT  
W/SCARF



WINTER  
ACTIVEWEAR  
(FOR ALPINE  
SWISS LOOK)



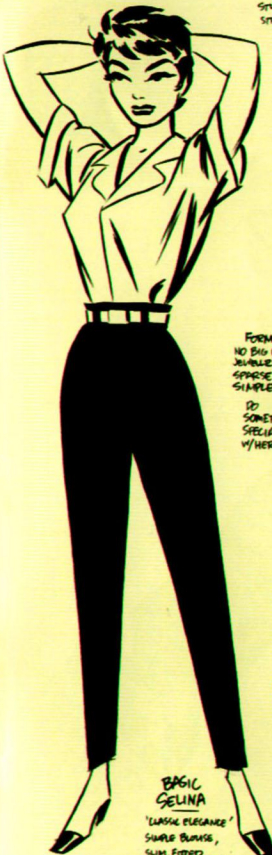
CASUAL  
MOD

SWIMWEAR  
SO: STALE  
SHIRTED  
ONE-PIECE  
NO BIKINI!

SEXY  
STYLE  
STRONG

**NOT**

GLEAMY  
FASHION  
BUTCH



FORMALS:  
NO BIG GUNNY  
JEWELRY—  
SPARKLE +  
SIMPLE

DO  
SOMETHING  
SPECIAL  
W/HER HAIR



FORMAL:  
SIMPLE, CLASSIC GOWNS  
NO BELTS, SASHES,  
RIBBONS, FLOWERS,  
GLOVES OR OTHER  
CRAP!

LOOK AT CLASSIC  
DIOR + GIVENCHY  
IN THE 50'S



NO!

BASIC  
SELINA

'CLASSIC ELEGANCE'  
SIMPLE BLAUSE,  
SLIM, FITTED  
PANTS (NOT SLEATH)  
SIMPLE SHOE  
W/LOW HEEL

VIVED

AVA GARDNER in MOGAMBO  
GRACE KELLY in REAR WINDOW  
AUDREY HEPBURN in ANYTHING

DESIGN





CATWOMAN  
DESIGN  
SKETCHBOOK

UNPUBLISHED COVER FOR

ISSUE FOUR OF "CATWOMAN".

*Damage*

Selina's training with Ted Grant (otherwise known as Wildcat from the historic super-team, the Justice Society of America).

The *Batman Returns* feature film, released in 1992, threw Catwoman into the mainstream spotlight once more with actress Michelle Pfeiffer tantalizing a whole new generation of fans. Selina Kyle finally received her own ongoing monthly title in 1993, the comic spinning directly out of events in the "Knightfall" epic Batman crossover. Secure in her life as a catburglar, Catwoman traveled all over the globe in pursuit of riches and villains who didn't quite have the same high respect for human life as Selina has. The series lasted a hearty ninety-four issues before being relaunched in 2002 by acclaimed writer Ed Brubaker and artist Darwyn Cooke. In Brubaker's highly touted thirty-seven-issue run, Selina flip-flopped back to the side of the good guys and became the guardian of her original stomping grounds of Gotham's East End. After Brubaker's departure, the book changed creative hands a few times before finally ending at issue #82.

Despite the unsuccessful 2004 *Catwoman* feature film that saw Halle Berry take up the title role and perhaps misinterpret the ambiguous supernatural element to



ABOVE: Frank Miller's 2001 sketchbook drawing of Catgirl for *The Dark Knight Strikes Again*. ABOVE RIGHT: A piece of art from the 2004 *Catwoman* movie style guide.



Catwoman's character set up in *Batman Returns*, Catwoman's second ongoing comic title continued to go strong. The series pulled no punches when it came to major events in Selina's life; it saw her strike up a relationship with aged private eye Slam Bradley, have a brief fling with Bradley's son that resulted in an unexpected pregnancy; and murder the longtime Batman enemy and Gotham gangster Black

Mask, after the villain had tortured her sister, Maggie. Catwoman even took a bit of a break from her time in the mask, passing on the mantle to Holly Robinson, as Selina began to raise her new daughter, Helena. Her past quickly caught up with her, however, and Selina was forced to reclaim her costume and put her daughter up for adoption in order to keep the defenseless child safe.

Through it all, Catwoman and Batman have remained an on-again/off-again item. After their first more serious relationship cooled in the wake of 1985's *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, flirtation and sexual tension between the two once again became par for the course. Finally, things escalated in 2003's *Batman* #615, when Batman revealed his dual life to Catwoman during the "Hush" storyline, and the two embarked on a romance that was cut drastically short after Batman realized he had been drugged by the villain Scarecrow during an earlier battle. Not being able to trust that his feelings were his own, Batman broke off his relationship with Catwoman, leaving neither of them satisfied with its conclusion. To this day, Catwoman remains a staple in Batman's life, despite her own comic's cancellation. And as always, she has more than her fair share of competition for his heart.



ABOVE LEFT: In 2004, artist Jim Lee sketched a concept for a DC Direct Catwoman statue, showing the Felina Fatale with a few of her favorite things. ABOVE RIGHT: The final statue, sculpted by Jonathan Matthews.



LEFT: A page of Jim Lee's original pencils for a six-page interstitial story during the year-long *Batman: Hush* storyline. Here, Catwoman finally learns more about the man she now loves, thanks to sage words from Alfred. ABOVE: Artist J. G. Jones pencilled and inked this original artwork for the cover of the 2004 book *Catwoman: The Visual Guide to the Feline Fatale*.

## TALIA HEAD

Talia Head has been a damsel in distress, a corporate CEO, and the heir apparent to the most dangerous group of assassins known to man. She's the daughter of international terrorist Rā's al Ghūl and the mother of Batman's son.

When readers were first introduced to Talia in the pages of 1971's *Detective Comics* #411, they were led to believe this mysterious woman was merely another face in the long line of beautiful women Batman had rescued over the years. But when she reappeared just one short month later in Denny O'Neil and Neal Adams's legendary *Batman* #232, the comic that introduced her father, the environmental extremist Rā's al Ghūl, to the DC Universe, fans realized there was much more lurking behind Talia's exotic features. If her father had his way, Batman would wed his daughter, a union that



would see the Dark Knight take over the family business and seat him at the head of Rā's al Ghūl's League of Assassins. Though conflicted at the temptation of spending the rest of his years in the company of the beautiful Talia, Batman turned down the offer time and again, even though he grew to develop genuine feelings for the villain's daughter. But in 1987's *Batman: Son of the Demon* graphic novel, Batman and Talia consummated their union, the end result of which was a child named Damian.



While keeping her child a secret from Batman, Talia remained by her father's side due to a misguided sense of loyalty. Although she had rebelled from Rā's many times in the past, blood always proved thicker than water, and Talia ultimately chose her father over her "beloved" Caped Crusader. As she and Batman grew farther apart, Talia's personality grew darker, and she began to align herself with



ABOVE LEFT: Talia plants an unexpected and affectionate kiss on Batman at the conclusion of 1971's *Batman* #232, in art by Neal Adams and Dick Giordano. LEFT: *Batman* #235 featured Talia's third appearance and deepened the relationship between her and Batman in a story from Denny O'Neil, Neal Adams, and Dick Giordano. ABOVE: Artist Dermal Power envisioned Talia and Batman as cover subjects for a gothic romance novel in his 1996 sketch for a *Batman* Masterpieces trading card.

society's worst apples. When Superman's archfoe Lex Luthor ran for president, Talia accepted his offer to run his business enterprise as CEO of LexCorp, only to purposely run his assets into the ground. She also became one of the founding members of the new Secret Society of Super-Villains, comprised of the vilest criminal threats of the DC Universe. Later, she took over her father's role as head of the League of Assassins (along with her newly discovered half-sister, Nyssa) when Rā's al Ghūl was presumed dead for a time.

Recently, Talia has once again broken off from her father after Rā's attempted to murder her son, Damian, in order to possess his body. She has become more obsessed with Batman, monitoring his every move, and has even introduced him to his own son. The union was sullied by Batman's discovery that Damian was actually a homicidal killer, trained since birth by the League of Assassins. It seems Talia has decided it is once again time to reignite the flame that she and Batman shared, only this time, the Dark Knight might not be so obtainable.

### POISON Ivy

No one ever brought Pamela Isley roses, so she decided to grow her own. Despite her beauty, Isley isolated herself in most social circles, having discovered botany as her first true love. This obsession served her well as she attended college and studied under Dr. Jason Woodrue, a renowned scientist who would go on to become the villainous plant master known as the Floronic Man. While working for Woodrue, Isley became a test subject for his various extreme plant experimentations, the results of which endowed her with enhanced control over plants, the ability to manipulate men using plant pheromones and toxins, and an immunity to all poisons. But even as she mastered her field, there was a part of her that wanted more. Or, to be more specific, a part of her that wanted the Batman.

Becoming obsessed with the Gotham Guardian, Isley adopted the name Poison Ivy and began a crime spree in order to attract his attention. But Ivy's charms held no sway over Batman as he recognized the disturbed woman for what she was and repeatedly spurned her affections. As she grew more distant from humankind itself

and became more and more enveloped into the realm of vegetation, Poison Ivy's love for the Dark Knight slowly transformed into something from the other end of the emotional spectrum. Today, she is hardly recognizable as that feisty super-villain out to make a name for herself in her first appearance in 1966's *Batman* #181. She has evolved into a twisted, heartless killer obsessed with the environment and



ABOVE: The final cover art for *Batman: The Long Halloween* #6, featuring the seductive Poison Ivy.



ABOVE: Tim Sale's finished pencils for the St. Patrick's Day-themed cover of *Batman: The Long Halloween* #6.



A production illustration of Poison Ivy's lair from Joel Schumacher's *Batman & Robin* feature film.

the natural world of plants, who resents not only the existence of Batman, but the existence of all humankind.

## THE WAYNE WOMEN

A term coined by his Gotham "peers" to label the many girls Bruce Wayne has dated throughout his infamous playboy life, only a few of these so-called Wayne Women have actually stolen Bruce's heart. Julie Madison was the first to do so. Debuting in the pages of *Detective Comics* # 31 (September 1939), Julie was revealed to be Bruce Wayne's fiancée. The relationship soon dissolved, as the character was never truly explored by the writers of the time, only in recent flashback stories has Julie begun to be fleshed out and given a distinct voice. Likewise came and went nurse Linda Page, Bruce's second love, who was first introduced in 1941 in *Batman* #5 and was a victim of an even briefer romance. In 1948's *Batman* #49, Vicki Vale first appeared and set out to stake her claim on Bruce Wayne's affections. A virtual clone of Superman's love interest, Lois Lane, Vicki was a



LEFT: Vicki Vale, in a panel from *Batman* #81 (February 1954), became the first significant addition to Batman's supporting cast since Alfred. Modeled after Lois Lane, she remained a regular part of Batman's world until 1964. ABOVE: A publicity shot of actress Irene Adams, who portrayed Vicki in the 1949 *Batman* and *Rubin* serial. Interestingly, her final role was as a guest star on a 1953 episode of the TV series *The Adventures of Superman*.

photo journalist for the picture-news weekly magazine, and unlike Bruce's first two loves, she would constantly pop back into his life, disappearing in the 1960s only to reappear in the early 1980s, prompting her inclusion in the 1989 *Batman* feature film. Vicki ultimately never saw through Bruce's playboy façade and finally left him and Gotham for good.

Silver St. Cloud proved to be a bit more of a detective. When first introduced in 1977's *Detective Comics* #470, the wealthy socialite Silver was instantly



ABOVE: Artist Kelley Jones created these Vesper Fairchild character designs in 1997.

suspicious about Bruce Wayne's disappearance at a party. As she and Bruce became romantically entangled, it wasn't long before she deduced his alter ego, a revelation she couldn't handle, as she was unable to cope with knowing her true love was putting himself at risk every night. Soon, she, too, left Gotham for a future out of the shadows.

In the early 1980s, Bruce added three more women to his romantic résumé. One was Julia Pennyworth, the daughter of Alfred Pennyworth, whose brief appearances were wiped from the face of continuity by 1985's *Crisis on Infinite*

*Earths*. Natalia Knight didn't fare much better. Natalia, also known as the albino mystery woman of the night Nocturna, and Bruce had a falling out that resulted in her adopting Bruce's then-ward Jason Todd for a time, in order to get revenge on the man who had spurned her. Rachel Caspian was Bruce's third fling from the 1980s and soon became his fiancée. Debuting in the four-issue flashback "Year Two" storyline starting in *Detective Comics* #575, Rachel soon ended her whirlwind romance with Bruce to join a convent when she discovered her father was actually the murderous vigilante called the Reaper.

Tragedy was no stranger to the Wayne Women. First appearing in 1992 in the pages of *Batman* #481, just before the epic "Knightfall" crossover, psychiatrist Shondra Kinsolving caught Bruce's eye and later healed his broken back, but the romance fell apart when Shondra was tragically reduced to a child-like state by her half brother the villain Benedict Asp. Following suit, radio talk-show host Vesper Fairchild began to date Bruce in 1997's *Batman* #540, only to be murdered by the villain Cain in an attempt to frame Wayne for the crime. In 2000, bodyguard-turned-confidant Sasha Bordeaux would be the next to win over Bruce's emotions, until the two parted ways after Sasha was forced to fake her own death to join the clandestine government agency Checkmate.

Jezebel Jet was the most recent Wayne Woman to go the way of her predecessors. Debuting in 2006's *Batman* #656, Jezebel was a wealthy foreign dignitary whose relationship with Bruce Wayne was reaching a cooling point when she discovered his dual identity. Later revealed to be a part of the nefarious Black Glove society, Jezebel tried to bring about the death of her supposed lover Batman, and instead she seemingly was killed by Talia's ninja Man-Bat servants. Despite all his failed attempts at love and his private longing for a personal connection, Batman's rational mind is always in control, and his romantic relationships have therefore suffered accordingly. In the end, Batman functions best as a lone creature of the night, despite a lifetime of secretly trying to disprove this fact.



LEFT: This page from *Batman* #676 (June 2008) shows Bruce Wayne visiting the graves of his murdered parents. He's accompanied by European beauty Jezebel Jet, who feigned a romantic interest as part of the *Batman: R.I.P.* storyline. The art was drawn by Tony Daniel and Sandu Florea.



ROCKETING TO EARTH FROM FAR-AWAY PLANETS OR RISING UP OUT OF THE HUDDLED MASSES OF GOTHAM, THE MANY FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF THE DARK KNIGHT DETECTIVE ARE EAGER TO LEND A HELPING HAND.

# THE ALLIES:

## TEACHING BATMAN TO PLAY NICE WITH OTHERS



HE HAD MADE A VOW: His parents would be avenged. No other innocent would suffer as he had suffered. He would cleanse Gotham of the criminal virus that infected it. And he would do it alone.

The Bruce Wayne who made that vow over his parents' limp bodies was just a boy. As he grew and aged, he realized the task he had charged himself with was impossible for an army, let alone a single, solitary individual. So as his war on crime matured, so did his perspective, and he began to recruit soldiers in his never-ending battle. Robins, Batgirls, and even a Nightwing partnered with the Dark Knight over the years, but they weren't alone in their pursuit. Across the DC Universe, there were hundreds of like-minded individuals with strong moral codes who had been similarly inspired to take up the good fight on their own. Inevitably, their paths would cross with that of the Batman, as Gotham was a popular hub for the criminal element and therefore attracted those who would combat it. And while Batman normally resented other heroes in "his" city, he grew to respect a good number of them, realizing that there was much more than just his personal ego at stake in his war.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** A detail from J. G. Jones' 2002 cover painting of Wonder Woman graphic novel *The Miketia*. The relationship between Batman and Wonder Woman has been a complex one over the years. **LEFT:** A detail from *Nightwing* #3 (December 1996), by Scott McDaniel and Ray McCarthy. Originally the first Robin, Nightwing grew to adulthood, took on a new persona, and declared his individuality.

## NIGHTWING

With a new Robin debuting in the pages of the Batman books, writer Marv Wolfman and artist George Pérez were free to mature Dick Grayson into the true hero he was, giving the former Teen Wonder a starring role and a new identity. In the pages of *Tales of the Teen Titans* #44, Dick became Nightwing. Dick was now his own man, leaving his creators free to engage him in more open romantic relationships without having to worry about what developments the character was undergoing in other titles by other creative teams.

Dick chose the name Nightwing from Kryptonian lore. A legendary crime fighter in Superman's world, the original Nightwing was almost an amalgam of Dick's two role models. In January 1963's *Superman* #158, both Superman and his pal Jimmy Olsen traveled to the "bottle city" of Kandor, a surviving Kryptonian metropolis reduced to the size of a bell-shaped jar. There, the two donned crime-fighting identities inspired by Batman and Robin and became a pair of vigilantes who called themselves Nightwing and Flamebird. Although this story was fully erased from DC's canon continuity, the hero named Nightwing was later designated to be an old legend from Krypton's storied history.

With a past entrenched in the legends of the DC Universe, Dick Grayson's new identity excited the fan community. As *Tales of the Teen Titans* gave way to the second series of *The New Teen Titans* (after a short-lived overlap of the two titles), Dick's popularity continued and his character matured. After his wedding to longtime girlfriend Starfire literally went up in flames and she was rushed to the hospital, Dick soon quit the Titans, and his strained relationship with Starfire slowly faded into a memory.



ABOVE: The finished cover to *Batman* #615, illustrated by Jim Lee and Scott Williams with color by Alex Sinclair. RIGHT: The original pencils, showing the detail, texture, and attention paid to the architecture of Gotham City.

No longer the star of his team book, Dick wandered slowly back to Batman's realm, becoming an important player in the aftermath of the major "Knightfall" storyline. Nightwing even took over for Bruce for a time during the "Prodigal" crossover, a role that made Dick realize that the legacy he'd always dreamed of continuing wasn't all it was cracked up to be. Later, when faithful butler Alfred Pennyworth left Batman's service, refusing to watch the Dark Knight put himself





ABOVE: Jim Lee's pencil art for two pages from *Batman* #615, the eighth chapter in the *Mush* storyline. The relationship between Batman and Nightwing was tested time and again, but when needed, Nightwing was always found at the Caped Crusader's side.



ABOVE: For a *Batman Masterpieces* trading card, Scott Hampton sketched this Batcave meeting between Nightwing and Robin, in front of a case displaying the first Robin outfit. RIGHT: Greg Land and Brian Stelfness's cover to *Birds of Prey* #8 (August 1999), the issue in which the flirtation between Dick Grayson and Barbara Gordon turned into a full-fledged romance.

into harm's way again after already suffering a debilitating back injury at the hands of archfoe Bane, Nightwing was awarded his own special wherein he traveled to England to convince his old friend to return to Gotham (1995's *Nightwing: Alfred's Return*). The special was quickly followed up by Nightwing's first four-issue miniseries, which had been promised to hungry fans for years. This series, by Denny O'Neil and artist Greg Land, saw Dick adopt yet another new costume, an even darker version of his trademark look, which would continue to this day.

In 1996, despite being reestablished as a heavy-hitter in the Batman universe, Dick moved down the river a bit from Gotham to a town called Blüdhaven, a city so corrupt on every level that it made Gotham look like the immaculate landscape of Metropolis. While protecting the people of his newly adopted home, Dick continued to serve in various incarnations of the Teen Titans. In 1999, he was reunited with his friends, now more adults than teens, and the title *Titans* was born. Later, in 2003, after serving a brief stint with the Justice League at Batman's request, Dick's life got a bit darker as he witnessed the death of longtime Titans member and former Wonder Girl, Donna Troy. In a reaction to this event, Dick enrolled in a different team, taking a page from Batman's book and calling them the Outsiders. Since the Titans had become as tight-knit as blood relatives, Dick refused to watch any more members of his proverbial family die, and with an all-business approach to his new group of Outsiders, he wouldn't have to. Nightwing would stay with the Outsiders until 2007, when he would hand them over once again to Batman, to serve as the Dark Knight's private strike force.

Meanwhile, Dick Grayson proved to be quite the ladies' man. Nightwing had a one-night stand with fellow crime fighter the Huntress, briefly dated his landlady Bridget Clancy, and was entangled in the twisted machinations of the second vigilante to take on the name the Tarantula, all the while continuing to flirt with his lifelong crush, Barbara Gordon, the former Batgirl who now called herself Oracle. Dick and Barbara's relationship began to take a turn toward the serious, and soon the two became engaged. However, like ever other romance in the young hero's life, it was not meant to be, and the two reluctantly went their separate ways—Barbara to Metropolis with her team, the Birds of Prey, and Dick to New York City, his former stomping ground during his years as a Titan.

Nightwing set up shop in the upper Manhattan museum called the Cloisters and established a job for himself there as



curator. Using the real-life historic castle as a front from which to base his operations, Dick fought foes such as Talia Head and began to employ a hang glider of sorts to get him around the vast metropolis, while frequently making trips back to Gotham for team-up adventures with his mentor.

Finally, in 2008, Dick found himself joining yet another incarnation of his familiar team in the new revamped series *Titans*, written by Judd Winick. Having no choice but to answer the call when his teammates all came under fire from the evil siblings of longtime Titan Raven, Dick reunited with the



ABOVE: Jim Lee drew these Nightwing pencil sketches—for a 2004 DC Direct action figure (above) and for the *Mush* comics (right). In both drawings, Nightwing holds martial arts escrima sticks, with which he battles foes of many forms.



group that had helped him become the well-adjusted young man he is today. He continues to fight alongside them, establishing a life for himself in New York; yet he knows there is always a place for him by Batman's side, as the Caped Crusader's first and favorite partner.

## SUPERMAN



Superman was the first true super hero, appearing in 1938's *Action Comics* #1, and was a huge success from his inception. So it only made sense, in 1940, when Batman proved to be just as popular a sensation, that the two should team up and draw all their multitudes of readers to a new title.

A year after the trial issue of the *New York World's Fair* special showcased the two heroes in the same magazine, *World's Best Comics* debuted in 1941. By the second issue, the title had changed to *World's Finest Comics*, a title that would stick throughout the book's healthy 323-issue stint. However, this popular team-up title, showcasing covers of Superman, Batman, and Robin doing everything together from shaking soldiers' hands, to skiing, to playing baseball, never originally had the trio partner up in the same adventure. Batman and Robin would fight their usual enemies, and Superman tackled his everyday fantastic challenges in his own separate feature. It wasn't until issue #71, when costs forced the comic to shorten its page count, that the Dynamic Duo and the Man of Steel partnered up in one story: The concept proved popular with the readers, if not more challenging for the writers, and the format stuck until the title's conclusion in 1986, with only one temporary interruption in the partnership.

When they did finally cross paths, Batman and Superman were portrayed as best friends, often sharing each other's company in and out of their costumed identities.



ABOVE LEFT: *World's Finest Comics* #4 (Winter 1942) with art by Fred Ray. ABOVE: This promotional page from *Moderns Retailer* trumpets Batman's journey from TV to the cash register. Note the 007 logo atop a building: DC's Licensing Corporation of America controlled Batman merchandising and the James Bond franchise.

They were both honorary members of the first DC super-team, the Justice Society of America, and constantly teamed up against cosmic threats that a mere mortal such as Batman had no business combating in the first place. They often found it necessary to cover for each other in order to protect their secret identities. But as comic books began to attract older readers, the Superman/Batman relationship became one based on mutual respect and less on friendship. Batman was portrayed as being annoyed when Superman would tread on his hallowed Gotham ground, and

Superman was often shown as being bothered by Bruce's paranoia and dark nature. But despite their varying methods of operation and ideologies, each man understood the need for the other. In fact, in 1990's *Action Comics* #654, when Superman came into possession of a kryptonite ring that could poison him and possibly kill him, he entrusted it to Batman.

After *World's Finest Comics* was canceled, Superman and Batman's partnership was reduced to the occasional miniseries or crossover event. That is, until 2003, when writer Jeph Loeb and artist Ed McGuinness created the ongoing title *Superman/Batman* that proved to DC that the old format was still viable in the modern comic book arena. The series continues as a solid seller for the company. Today, both Batman and Superman have once again reclaimed their places as cornerstones of the DC



LEFT: Dick Dillin and Joe Gielle's original artwork for an unused cover of *Justice League of America* #46. ABOVE: An image from a promotional brochure, illustrated by Dick Giordano, shows how DC's characters can help others sell their products or services.

Comics universe, and along with Wonder Woman, are held in the highest regard by their super hero peers. The three even teamed for a 2008 fifty-two-part weekly series called *Trinity* that examined just why these lauded individuals are so important to the world they inhabit.

## THE JUSTICE LEAGUE

It wasn't an original concept by any means. The idea of teaming a large number of heroes to create a shared universe was birthed in 1940 in the pages of *All Star Comics* #3, with the creation of the Justice Society of America. But in 1960, after editor Julius Schwartz helped to create revitalized versions of older characters like the Flash and



LEFT: This image of the DC heroes atop a red ribbon was featured on the DC team's T-shirts for the annual AIDS Walk New York in 1997. The artist, Sergio Aragones, added *MAD* mascot Alfred E. Neuman in the lineup and even included himself, carrying a sign, near the end of the line. ABOVE: Neal Adams and Dick Giordano teamed up to illustrate the cover to *Heroes Against Hunger*, a comic book created to raise funds for African relief.

Green Lantern, he decided to breathe new life into the team book format, and in *The Brave and the Bold* #28, with writer Gardner Fox and artist Mike Sekowsky, the Justice League was born.

Originally formed when Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Green Lantern, Aquaman, Flash, and Martian Manhunter all joined in battle to fight the villainous alien starfish Starro, the Justice League quickly gained a new member, Green Arrow, by issue #4 of *Justice League of America*. Batman and Superman were used sparingly at first so as not to overshadow the other players, but this idea was quickly nixed in order to draw in higher sales from the book's readership. As the team battled intergalactic threats such as Despero and Kanjar Ro, as well as magical beings such as Felix Faust and the Demons Three, their own ranks continued to swell, signing on characters such as the super-shrinking Atom, the birds of prey Hawkman and Hawkgirl, the female magician Zatanna, the singing siren Black Canary, and the super-stretching Elongated Man, to name a few.

As the team's comic was launched and relaunched over the years in various titles including *Justice League International*, *Justice League Europe*, *Justice League Task Force*, and *JLA*, Batman would come and go depending on the current feelings of the editorial and creative staff. Batman would switch from being a proud founding member, to an embarrassed extra, to a figure missing in action altogether. He would grow to develop lasting respect for some members, such as Martian Manhunter and Black Canary, dubious acceptance of humorous characters like Blue Beetle and futuristic failure Booster Gold, and even almost spark a few romances with characters like Wonder Woman and Zatanna. In the latest version of the title once again called *Justice League of America*, Batman, Superman, and Wonder Woman recruited their own roster in order to bring the team back to its roots. This 2006 incarnation of the comic, conceived by writer Brad Meltzer and artist Ed Benes, once again brought out DC's big guns in order to maintain the tried-and-true formula that Julius Schwartz had pioneered all those years ago.

## THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD

When the comic series *The Brave and the Bold* first began in 1955, it was an anthology title, showcasing adventure heroes such as Viking Prince, the Silent Knight, and Robin Hood. Batman was nowhere to be found, and in fact, no traditional super heroes adorned the book's pages. As the title progressed, its format switched from spotlighting swashbuckling heroes to serving as a testing grounds of sorts to help launch new concepts that DC editorial wasn't sure could support their own titles.



ABOVE: Batman and the Creeper battle the freakish half-man, half-insect Helligramite in this dynamic cover art drawn by Neil Adams for *The Brave and the Bold* #38 (November 1948). ABOVE RIGHT: Batman breaks up a fight between Wonder Woman and Batgirl, almost allowing the villain to escape, in this page from Bob Haney's story "In the Coils of Copperhead" from *The Brave and the Bold* #78 (June-July 1968). Art by Bob Brown.



Teams like the Justice League, the Suicide Squad, and the Teen Titans sprouted forth from its pages, as well as new characters like Metamorpho, the Element Man. The super hero approach proved popular, and after the 1966 television show *Batman*, it was clear which particular hero the audience wanted to see.

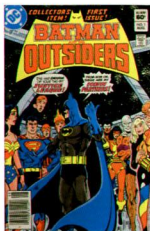
After several test pairings, Batman became a permanent fixture of *The Brave and the Bold* with issue #74 (1967). Each month, he would partner with a different hero from some corner of the DC Universe in stories that usually avoided the continuity at the time. Heroes such as Wildcat, Green Arrow, and the military hero Sgt. Rock became repeat characters as editor Murray Boltinoff and writer Bob Haney paid attention to sales to see which team-ups were the most popular with

the readers. Even Superman stopped by for the special 150th issue, to lend his hand as a surprise guest. However, just before Batman seemingly outgrew Superman in the mid-1980s over in *World's Finest Comics*, *The Brave and the Bold* format, too, seemed to have become an outdated concept. With issue #200 (1983), the title was canceled, only to return again in 2007 with a second ongoing series. In that 200th landmark issue of 1983, not only were fans treated to a pairing of the Golden Age Batman from the separate dimension of Earth-2 with his counterpart from Earth-1, but they also witnessed the debut of a fresh new super-team called the Outsiders. With the group adventures in *The Brave and the Bold* canceled, readers were extremely surprised to find at the helm of this fledgling new team none other than the Batman himself.

## THE OUTSIDERS

"Be here, it'll be good."

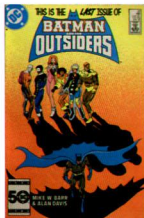
That often-used quote from writer Mike W. Barr was used to promote *Batman and the Outsiders*, an ongoing title that saw Barr once again paired with former *The Brave and the Bold* collaborator Jim Aparo. Debuting in 1983, just a few years before the darkening of Batman's character in the gritty realistic works of Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* and "Year One" stories, *Batman and the Outsiders* saw Batman quit the Justice League over political reasons to become a father figure of sorts to a group of young heroes. With only two veteran faces, Black Lightning and Metamorpho, recognizable to longtime DC fans, the Outsiders were primarily made up of newcomers like the powerhouse Geo-Force, martial artist Katana, and the naive Halo. In later issues, telepath Looker joined the fold, as well as the element-controlling Windfall and the armored throwback Atomic Knight. With these inexperienced heroes in tow, Batman quickly grew to embrace his position as team leader, and issue #3 (October 1983) saw the Outsiders set up camp in the retired second Batcave, which was located underneath the Wayne Foundation building in the heart of Gotham City. In issue #13 (August 1984), Batman even revealed his secret identity to his new allies. However, by issue #32 (April 1986),



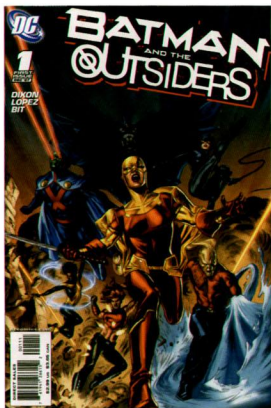
it was made apparent that Batman had never planned to be a permanent fixture of the team, as he quit their ranks, secretly satisfied that he had trained this group to utilize their full potential and work as a unit. The title became *Adventures of the Outsiders* with issue #33 (May 1986) and sprouted a second companion title called simply *The Outsiders*.

Often facing threats inspired by the real-world global arena of the time, the Outsiders fought villains such as the patriotic Force of July, the poisonous Agent Orange, the tycoon robot Duke of Oil, the artificial Nuclear Family, and the Soviet super team called the People's Heroes. But with the absence of a Batman, who perhaps no longer meshed with the team in the wake of his revamp in "Year One," the Outsiders' sales began to lag, and by issue #28 of their deluxe second title *The Outsiders*, the team disbanded. A subsequent revamp in 1993 of the team, also sans Batman, fared about the same, only managing twenty-four issues even with the inclusion of the Superman supporting character, the Eradicator. The team members seemed fated to spend the rest of their lives as obscure extras appearing in various corners of other DC Comics.

Finally, in 2003, writer Judd Winick relaunched *Outsiders* as more of a mixture of the now adult Teen Titans team and the classic Outsiders roster. With Nightwing leading the group of familiar faces including Metamorpho, former Green Arrow sidekick



ABOVE LEFT: Batman quits the JLA in order to train a new generation of heroes in *Batman and the Outsiders*, which launched in 1983. Cover art by Jim Aparo. ABOVE: All good things come to an end as the Outsiders declare their independence and Batman departs the team, as seen in this cover by Alan Davis.



Arsenal, and Thunder, the daughter of Black Lightning, along with many newcomers, the book showed renewed popularity. In 2007, the title was restarted with a new first issue and a new title, once again *Batman and the Outsiders*, as Batman took back his team from his former ward and changed the roster as he saw fit. With characters such as Katana, Geo-Force, the new Batgirl, and Green Arrow signing up for membership, the team became more of a first-response strike force, going places where the Batman dared not send his teammates from the Justice League.

In his long career, Batman has gone from lone creature of the night to grand architect of the super hero landscape. His influence has guided nearly every vigilante in one form or another, butting heads with more than a few personalities that have proved just as stubborn as his own. Only a few of these men and women have earned

the Batman's trust, but he is always content to use the others as controlled weapons in his now-global mission. While he spends more than his fair share of time saving the world from galactic threats with his various teammates, Batman is still most at home waging his private war in Gotham—a fact that's more than a little disturbing when one considers just which twisted individuals also choose to call that particular city home.



ABOVE LEFT: The Outsiders reformed as a strike force under Nightwing and his pal, Arsenal, but when things grew too emotional, Batman inherited the team in 2007. He mixed and matched personnel based on each mission's needs to keep the lineup fluid. Cover by Doug Braithwaite. ABOVE: Artist Joe Kubert assembled an impressive gathering of DC's biggest heroes for this cover for the hardcover book *The Greatest 1950s Stories Ever Told*.



LEAVING MANIACAL LAUGHTER OR TAUNTING PUZZLES IN THEIR WAKES, THE GHOULS AND FENDS WHO STALK THE CITY STREETS WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO SEE THE END OF GOTHAM'S ONE TRUE GUARDIAN.

# THE VILLAINS:

*A HANDY LIST OF PEOPLE TO AVOID IN A DARK ALLEY*



THERE'S A BUILDING ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF GOTHAM proper that nobody talks about. On its shadowy, isolated hill, supposedly secure behind its dark iron fence, Arkham Asylum sits waiting, ominously silhouetted against Gotham's purple skies. It's a place of nightmares, home to the natural offspring of a city as cruel as Gotham: disturbed men and women who see life as a twisted game, with their only opponent being a man dressed up as a bat. If a few innocent bystanders fall as casualties of that game, then maybe they shouldn't have been in the way in the first place. As Grant Morrison wrote in his landmark *Batman: Arkham Asylum* graphic novel of 1989, Arkham is indeed a serious house on serious earth, even if its residents don't quite see it that way.

OPPOSITE PAGE: This stunning production painting of Arkham Asylum was created for the *Batman & Robin* film in 1997. LEFT: Actor Heath Ledger posed for a series of photos that appeared in *The Dark Knight* style guide.

## THE JOKER

It could be just another one of his lies. He's told his origin more times than most can remember, each version a bit more bizarre than the last. But there's been one that's stuck, a tale that rings a bit truer than the others.

He was a comedian with a pregnant wife, but he wasn't very funny. With no money to support his growing family, he took a job with some men he shouldn't have. He dressed up in a red helmet and cape. Alongside the men who brought him into this new life of crime, he helped rob the Ace Chemical Processing Plant. When Batman showed up, the man in the red cape was startled by the giant bat creature and leapt into a vat of toxic chemicals. He emerged with bleached white skin, green hair, and a smile on his face.

When he first appeared in *Batman* #1 in 1940, the Joker was merely a clown-faced murderer and not quite so complex a character as he would grow to be. Artists Bob Kane and Jerry Robinson and writer Bill Finger had been influenced by the 1928 film *The Man Who Laughs*. A dark killer from the start, in his first appearance, the Joker announced his targets in advance, daring the police, and Batman, to stop him. And Batman did that very thing, but not until the Joker had actually gotten away with a few of his chilling crimes. At the issue's end, the Clown Prince of Crime was intended to perish for his dastardly deeds, but was saved by then-editor Whitney Ellsworth, who found the character too intriguing to not bring back to plague the

Batman. Instead, Ellsworth had the story altered so that the Joker somehow managed to escape an otherwise fatal dagger to the chest.

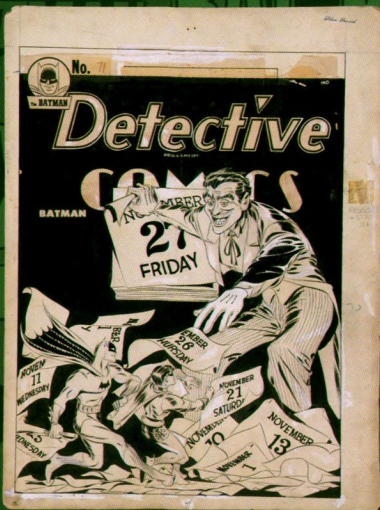
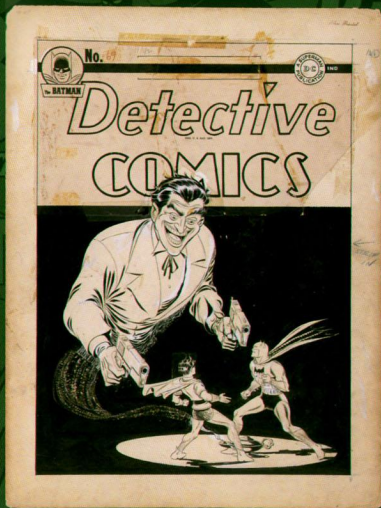
As editorial mandates began to lighten the Batman's character in the '50s, his new archfoe began to brighten with him. Joker's murderous rampages became elaborate, only slightly dangerous pranks, his clown persona taking on a more traditional role. Readers were finally treated to an origin story in *Detective Comics* #168 (February 1951) entitled "The Man Behind the Red Hood." It was from this story that Alan Moore drew heavily to create his 1988 masterpiece *Batman: The Killing Joke* that solidified Joker's modern origin in the eyes of most fans and creators.

Despite the Comics Code taking the edge off his brutal crimes, the Joker's popularity never waned, and he became a frequent guest on the ABC *Batman* show of the 1960s. His character was brilliantly portrayed by the legendary Cesar Romero, even though Romero refused to shave his trademark mustache for the part, and instead simply covered it with white greasepaint. Finally established as Batman's archfoe, the Joker went on to make frequent appearances on Batman's animated cartoons and surfaced on many a comic cover and piece of Batman-related merchandise during the 1960s.

Leave it to writer Denny O'Neil to return the character to his roots. In 1973, O'Neil, alongside frequent collaborator Neal Adams, forged the landmark "The

**BELOW:** Original art from a 1944 "Batman and Robin" daily newspaper strip, showing the Joker preparing to escape prison... yet again. Script by Bill Finger and art by Bob Kane and Charles Paris.





ABOVE: The original cover artwork for Detective Comics #69 (November 1942) and Detective Comics #72 (January 1943), both by Jerry Robinson, clearly show the impact the Clown Prince of Crime had on the lives of the Dynamic Duo.



ABOVE: In celebration of *Detective Comics* #600 (May 1989), Golden Age Batman artist Dick Sprang contributed this two-page pin-up, which included memorable story moments in addition to classic poses and gruesome foes.



Joker's Five-Way Revenge" in *Batman* #251, in which the Clown Prince of Crime returned to his murderous ways, killing his victims with his trademark Joker venom and taking much delight from their sufferings. And with an audience happily devouring every darker and more serious issue of *Batman* to be found, in 1975, the Joker even earned his first and only ongoing comic series. Despite lasting just nine issues due to complications with the strict Comics Code, the series featured guest appearances by Two-Face, Catwoman, Lex Luthor, Green Arrow, and even Sherlock Holmes himself.

In the years that followed, the Joker was once again reduced to making frequent appearances in Batman's various titles. In *Detective Comics* #475 (February 1978), writer Steve Englehart and artist Marshall Rogers granted Joker the highly lauded "Laughing Fish" story. In this fondly remembered tale that was later adapted into an episode of the 1990s cartoon *Batman: The Animated Series*, the Joker poisoned the harbors of Gotham so that the fish would all bear his signature grin, a look the Joker then tried to trademark in order to collect royalties from the county.

Once again a ruthless killer, a theatrical antagonist, and a criminal more insane than any of his peers, the Joker seemed tailor-made for the mature storytelling that would be birthed in the 1980s. He quickly became a target of fascination in important works such as Alan Moore's *Batman: The Killing Joke*, Grant Morrison's *Batman: Arkham Asylum*, and Jim Starlin's "A Death in the Family." In these titles, the Joker proved exactly why he was Batman's archfoe, as he paralyzed former Batgirl Barbara Gordon, overthrew Arkham Asylum and claimed it as his own, and brutally beat and murdered the second Robin, Jason Todd. The Joker had become a serious contender, a criminal the criminals feared, and

LEFT: A giant Joker dominates this page from "The Cross Country Crimes" in *Batman* #8 (January 1942), written by Bill Finger and illustrated by Bob Kane and Jerry Robinson. In the story, the Joker faces the wrath of a nation when he attempts to assassinate the head of the FBI, G. Henry Mover.

SCENE A-24 (CONT.) B.G.



ACTION: LOOKS UP AT OS. BATMAN, FORLORN ("UH-OH")

SCENE A-25 B.G.



ACTION: ON JOKER, TENSED-UP FOR IMPACT...

SCENE A-26 (CONT.) B.G.



ACTION: ...BATMAN SLAMS JOKER AGAIN ... SPINNING HIM AROUND; OUTLINES FACE IN MOCK 'AGONY'...



ACTION: ...SNAPS HEAD FORWARD ACTION: ASRUDDY... REGRASSING BOUND WHITE "EYEBALL" (BATMAN INSTINCTIVELY FOLLOWS MOVEMENT)

SC A-25 B.G.



HOLD A LONG BEAT ON PISSED-LOOKING BATMAN ... (JOKER'S P.O.V.)

SC LOAN B.G.



WHAM! BATMAN PISTES JOKER WITH A FAST RIGHT CROSS!

SC CONT. B.G.



DEARS BACK WILDLY ...

SC. CONT. B.G.



... HE GRIMACES, ANTICS BACK WITH FIST ...

SC A-27 B.G.



CONTINUOUS ACTION (FOLLOW-THRU) ...

SC CONT. B.G.



DEARS BACK WILDLY ...



PAN W/MARBLE AS IT BOUNCES PAST BATMAN'S FEET...

...ROLLS TO A STOP...

LEFT: Writer Paul Dini adapted the classic 1952 comic book story "The Joker's Millions" for an episode of The New Batman Adventures animated series in 1998. These storyboards were drawn by Bruce Timm.



ABOVE: The Joker and Batman meet for the climactic battle in this page from *Batman: The Killing Joke* (1988). Script by Alan Moore and art by Brian Bolland.

so it made sense when Jack Nicholson stole the show as the archfiend in 1989's blockbuster film *Batman*.

As the Joker continued his crime sprees in both the comics and in various appearances in the 1990s cartoon *Batman: The Animated Series*, voiced by *Star Wars*' own Mark Hamill, his solitary mission against the sanity of Gotham would soon earn a plus-one, in the form of the twisted sidekick Harley Quinn. The Arkham Asylum psychiatrist

Dr. Harleen Quinzel turned into a loyal follower of the Joker after falling desperately in love with him. She dressed up in a jester costume to embark on what she considered a loving relationship with her "Mr. J." In reality, Harley was the victim of an abusive romance, one explored by her creators in the pages of the award-winning comic from 1994, *The Batman Adventures: Mad Love*.

Created for *Batman: The Animated Series* by writer Paul Dini and artist Bruce Timm, Harley became a cult sensation, finally emerging in the Batman comic book universe proper in the pages of 1999's *Batman: Harley Quinn* special. Since that time, Harley has made frequent appearances beside her Clown Prince charming, as well as with her fellow gal pal and Arkham regular, Poison Ivy. In 2000, she was even granted her own monthly ongoing series that lasted thirty-eight issues.

With or without Harley, the Joker continued to be a significant player throughout the DC Universe. He proved once again to be a disturbing presence in Commissioner Jim Gordon's life when he shot and killed Gordon's wife, Sarah, at the conclusion of the "No Man's Land" crossover of 2000 in *Detective Comics* #741. In 2001, the Joker even usurped magical fifth-dimension powers from Superman menace Mr. Mxyzptlk, and became Emperor Joker, ruler of his own reality and the subject of a major Superman storyline. When the Joker released his patented Joker gas on heroes and villains alike, he was granted his own companywide crossover, grounded by a miniseries entitled *Joker: Last Laugh*.

In 2008, the Joker would once again blow the roof off his house of cards. Just as Nicholson created quite a stir with his performance in the 1989 *Batman* film, actor Heath Ledger unveiled what would perhaps be his most memorable character in Christopher Nolan's 2008 film *The Dark Knight*. Ledger's last performance before his untimely death prior to the premiere. Ledger astounded audiences with his twisted rendition of the familiar sociopath, and the actor once again put the Joker in the public eye, creating a version of the character that was marketed in everything from toys to Halloween costumes.

A constant thorn in Batman's side to this day, a twisted soul like the Joker would be enough to fill any crime fighter's plate. Arkham Asylum is anything but a lonely place, however, and the Clown Prince of Crime has more than a few competitors in the race for the Batman's throat.

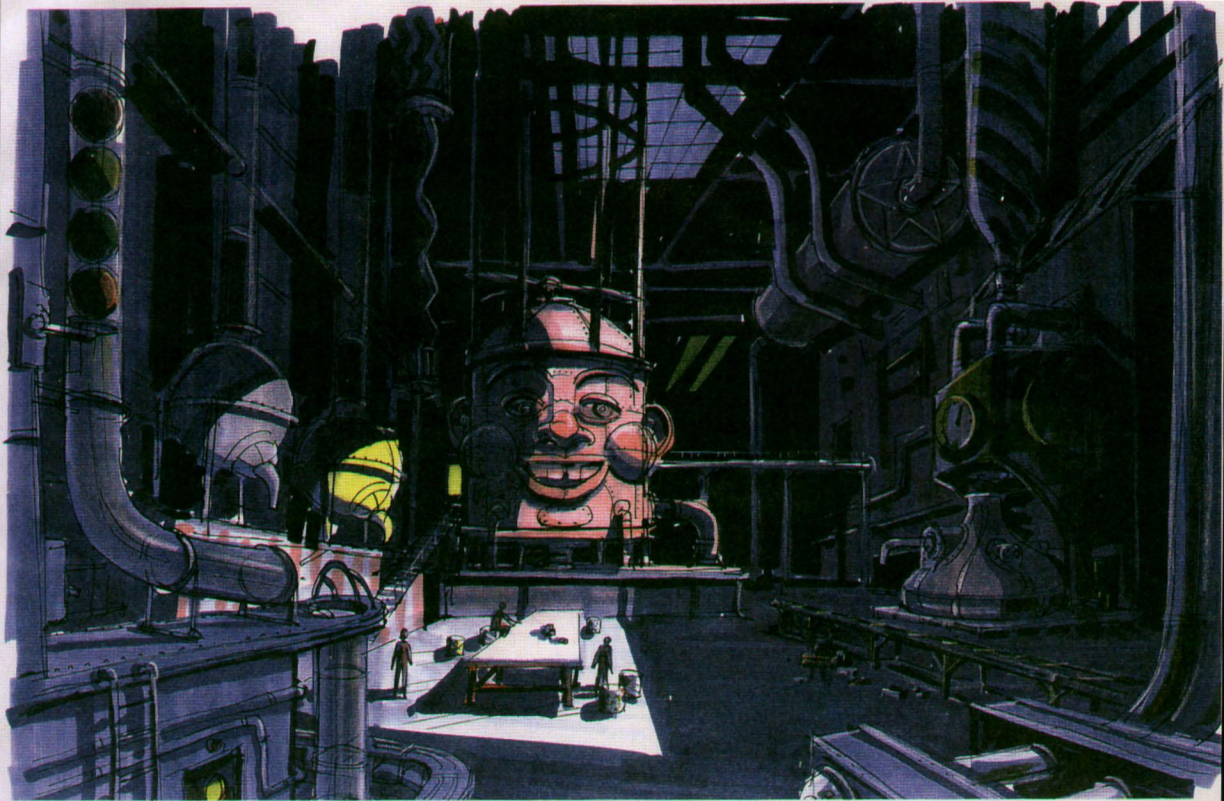


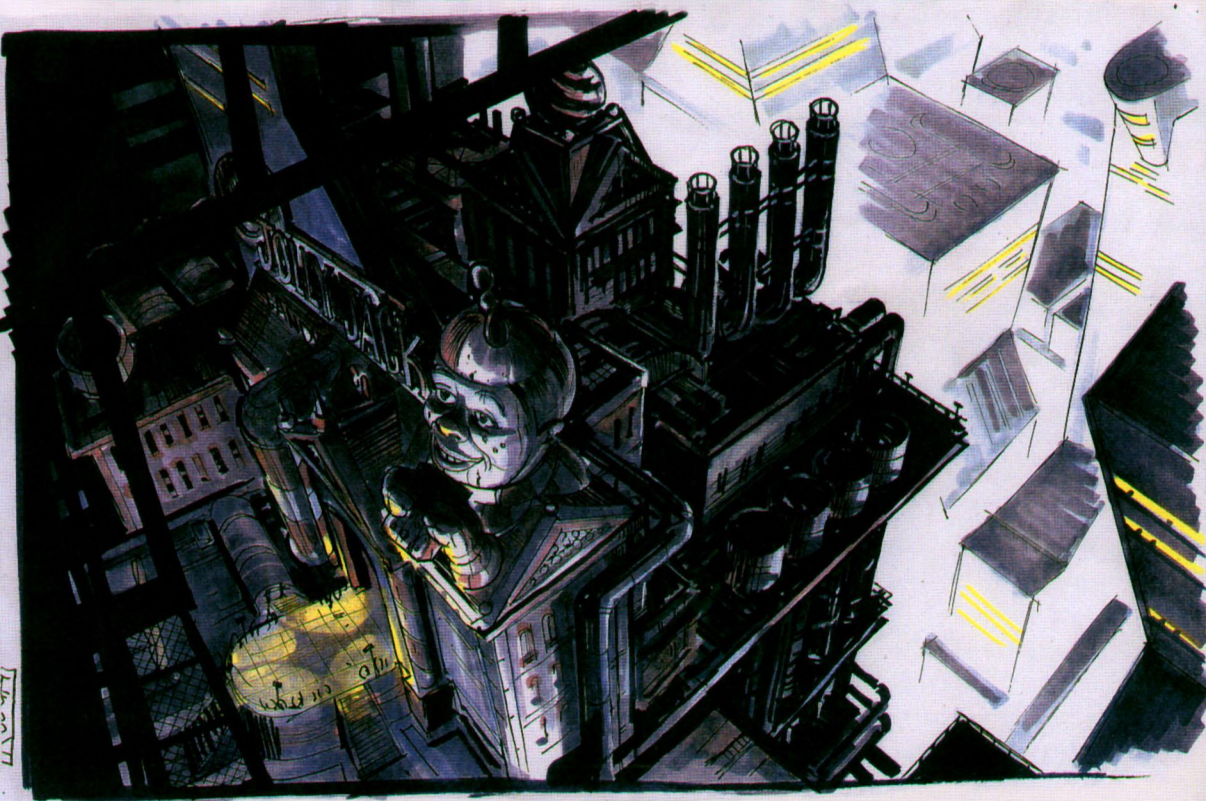
LEFT: George Pérez created this terrific Batman pinup for a 1990 collection of pasters. It was colored by Drew R. Moore for his own portfolio of sample work. ABOVE: Frank Miller's 2001 sketchbook drawing of the Joker for *The Dark Knight Strikes Again*.

**BATMAN**  
With **ROBIN THE BOY WONDER**

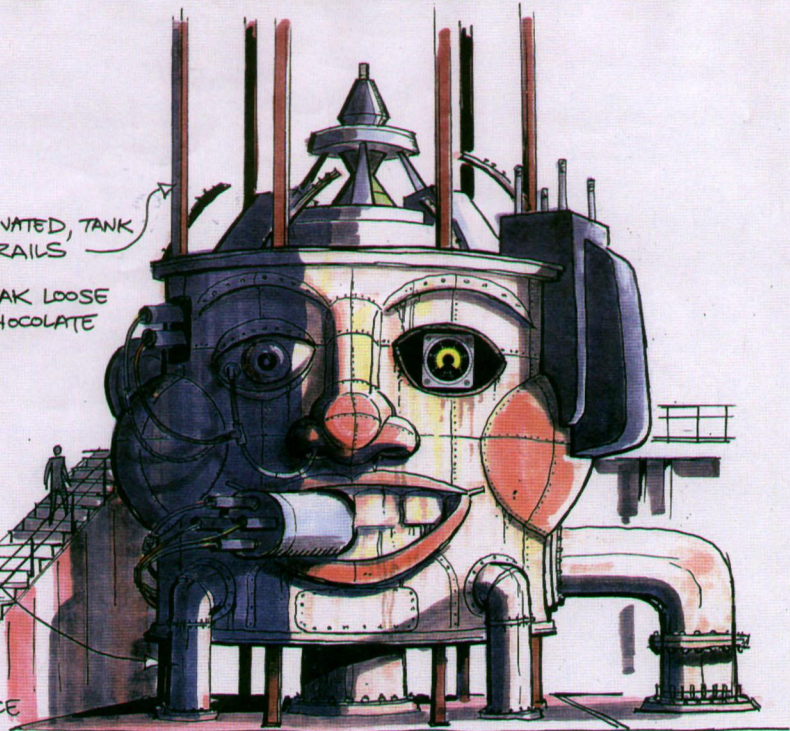
**BATMAN BEYOND: RETURN OF THE JOKER CONCEPT SKETCHES (2000)**

*Batman Beyond: Return of the Joker* was a direct-to-video animated film written by Paul Dini, based on an original story by Dini, Bruce Timm, and Glen Murakami. Among the stylish settings and vehicles devised for the film were the Jolly Jack Candy Company, a Joker tank, and a Jokermobile. Enclosed are production drawings of each (with two views of the Joker tank).



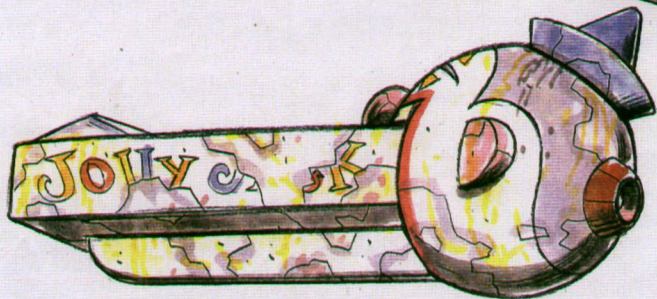
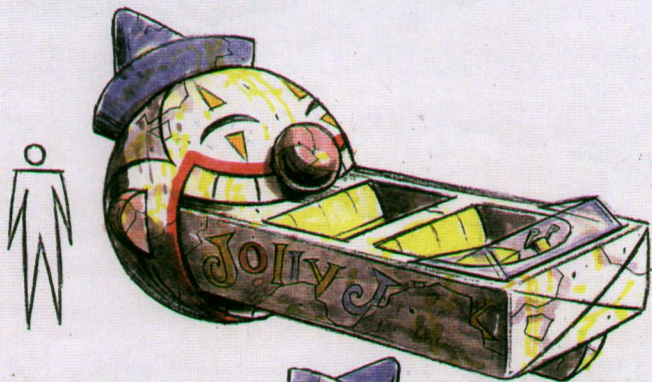


- WHEN ACTIVATED, TANK RISES ON RAILS
- PIPES BREAK LOOSE SPILLING CHOCOLATE



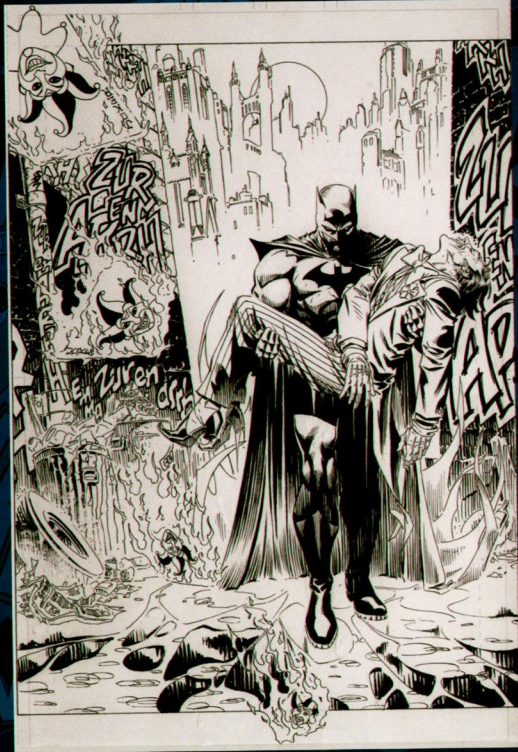
SATELLITE JAMMING DEVICE  
INSTALLED IN CHOCOLATE  
TANK

- HOME VIDEO



"JOKER MOBILE"  
HOME VIDEO

- SHOULD BE WEATHERED  
AND BEAT UP LOOKING



LEFT: This is a page of original art by Andy Kubert from *Batman* #655 (September 2006). As often as Batman and the Joker fought, one could never bring himself to actually kill the other. The Joker has admitted on more than one occasion his world is not complete without Batman to torment.



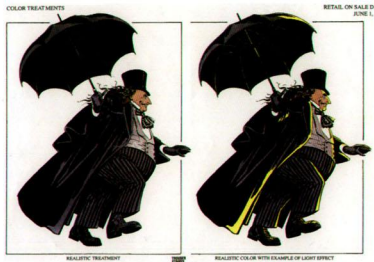
## THE PENGUIN

At first glance he's comical, at second he's off-putting. But in order to see the complete picture when it comes to Oswald Chesterfield Cobblepot, the diminutive foe known in criminal circles as the Penguin, one must linger long enough to witness his actions. Underneath that pudgy exterior lurks the brain of a criminal genius, a survivor capable of adapting with the times, and a crass yet shrewd businessman who always somehow manages to stay one step ahead of the game.

The Penguin first donned his top hat, monocle, and umbrella in *Detective Comics* #58, back in 1941. A creation more true to artist Bob Kane's comical roots, the Penguin was in fact first mocked by Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson when they crossed his path at an art gallery. However, the Dynamic Duo soon learned to take the cartoonish rogue seriously as he quickly established himself as a master criminal and thief.



ABOVE: In 1978, DC and IBM created *Super AA*, an educational magazine series designed to promote literacy. Here, the Penguin uses a "snow turkey" to mock the Dynamic Duo, Queen Rita, the twelve-year-old monarch of Sawk, and her mother. ABOVE RIGHT: Style guide artwork of the Penguin, used for *Batman Returns*. The two pieces of art demonstrate different lighting effects.



Having grown up with an overbearing mother who lost her husband to pneumonia at an early age, Oswald Cobblepot was forced to bring an umbrella everywhere on the off chance that he might be caught in the rain. With this accessory added to his frumpish appearance, Cobblepot became the target of much ridicule all through his young life, his only solace the birds at his mother's pet store. Wishing to live a life of refined culture but not wanting to work for it, Cobblepot reclaimed his schoolyard nickname of Penguin and embarked on a series of elaborate robberies, quickly becoming a regular pest in Batman's life. With his popularity renewed by the performances of Burgess Meredith in the 1966 *Batman* show, and later Danny DeVito in 1992's *Batman Returns*, the Penguin continued to thrive as one of Batman's main enemies.

For the last decade, instead of spending his life as a costumed career criminal who was no physical match for the Dark Knight, Cobblepot has transformed himself into a trader in illegal goods, operating out of his popular nightclub the Iceberg Lounge. Though often forced by the Batman to inform on his criminal peers, the Penguin maintains a strong foothold in Gotham's underworld, his brilliant mind always looking for the next big scheme.



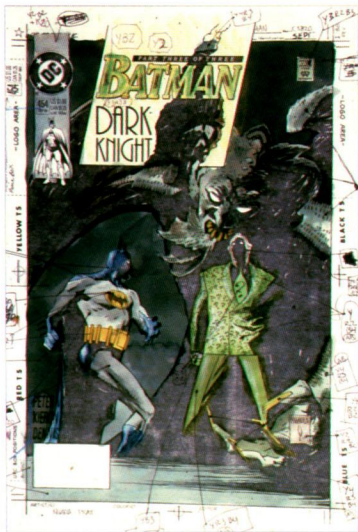
LEFT: Production artwork from *Batman Returns* (1992) establishes two different Penguin locales, including the lair where victims were caged and a motorized duck granted mobility to the villain (top).

## THE RIDDLER

Edward Nigma always was a cheater. Even his name, E. Nigma, didn't come to him naturally, according to *The Question* #26 (March 1989). He had to change it from Nashton in order to fit his villainous motif as the master of puzzles, the Riddler. Constantly trying to garner praise from his alcoholic father, young Eddie cheated during a class puzzle competition, and from that day forth, his life's mission was set into motion. He became the Riddler, a costumed criminal compelled to leave clues before committing his crimes, his egotistical mind needing to feel superior to the local law enforcement. With his henchwomen Query and Echo sometimes in tow, Riddler has plagued the Dark Knight time and time again, even unearthing the Batman's secret identity in the "Hush" storyline of 2002, though he has apparently since lost that information.



Riddler wasn't quite the sensation that his contemporaries were when he first debuted in the pages of *Detective Comics* #140 in 1948. Although he made several repeat appearances, the Riddler didn't become the well-known rogue that he is today until Frank Gorshin wonderfully portrayed him in the 1966 *Batman* show, which, combined with the live-action companion film, cemented him alongside the Joker, Penguin, and Catwoman as one of the greatest Batman foes of all time. The Riddler has since gone on to star in numerous comic books and animated appearances, and even was brought back to the silver screen by actor Jim Carrey for 1995's *Batman Forever*. Despite the character's prominence, he hasn't yet



ABOVE LEFT: Animator John Calmette created this painting of the Riddler for *Batman: The Animated Series*.  
 ABOVE: The color guide for Mike Mignola's cover of *Batman* #454 (September 1990).

secured his own comic book title. Today, the Riddler has reformed and opened up his own private detective agency, earning much fame from Gotham's media. It remains to be seen if he has truly changed, or if he's just biding his time, waiting for another chance to bend the rules.



## TWO-FACE

Like many politicians, Gotham district attorney Harvey Dent had a skeleton in his closet. Suffering physical abuse at the hands of his father all through his childhood, Harvey suppressed a dark side of his personality containing all his hate and rage. He hid this side from the public as he became Gotham's golden boy and was nicknamed Apollo by an admiring public. Discovering that Dent was one of the few honest authority figures in Gotham, Batman quickly brokered an alliance with him, the two agreeing to partner with Captain James Gordon, in order to see the end of the organized crime that had such a grip on their city. However, the union was not to last, as at the trial of the criminal "Boss" Sal Maroni, the brash mobster doused Dent with acid, forever tarnishing the D.A.'s legendary good looks as half of Dent's face was disfigured into gruesome scar tissue. Upon seeing his post-attack visage for the first time, Harvey's mind snapped, and his alter ego Two-Face emerged. Ever since that fateful day, Harvey has literally been of two minds, a conflicted victim of circumstance and a criminal mastermind with a penchant toward duality.

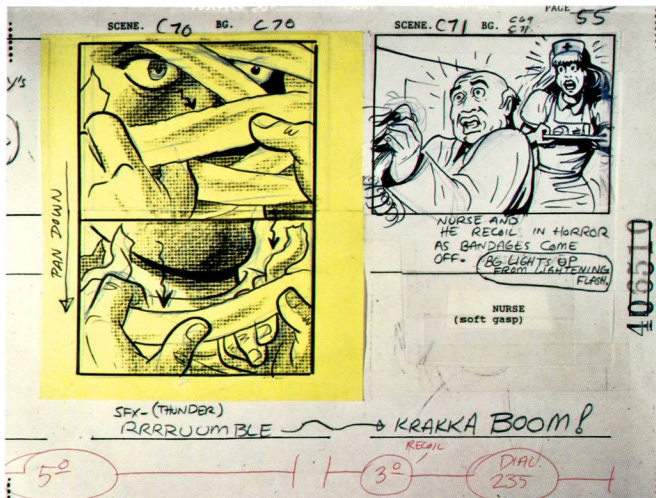
In his first appearance back in 1942's *Detective Comics* #66, Harvey was actually called Harvey Kent, his last name later altered in order to mask any confusion with the monkier of a famous Metropolis citizen. His origin was truly defined in the brilliant *Batman Annual* #14 from 1990, by writer Andrew Helfer and artist Chris Sprouse, adding a third dimension to Harvey's two halves.



**ABOVE LEFT:** Production art from *Batman Forever*, showing the oversized lab used by the Riddler to extract secrets from the minds of Gotham's citizens. **ABOVE:** Harvey Dent's tragic transformation into Two-Face left him both mentally and physically scarred, as seen in this pinup drawn by Bruce Timm. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** A storyboard, drawn by Kevin Allieri, showing the origin of Two-Face sequence from an episode of *Batman: The Animated Series*. It is clear how slowly the scene built up to revealing his ruined face.

This story was later revised a bit in Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale's *Batman: The Long Halloween* maxiseries, as Harvey's mob contacts and his marriage were further explored. Harvey's life was also examined by *Batman: The Animated Series* when he was voiced by *Night Court* alumnus Richard Moll, as well as skimmed over in 1995's *Batman Forever* in a performance by actor Tommy Lee Jones. Later, Two-Face was once again taken seriously by actor Aaron Eckhart in 2008's *The Dark Knight*, which offered more variations on the comic book source material.

In the comics, the "Hush" storyline from 2002 saw Harvey's handsome features restored with reconstructive surgery. Later, during a James Robinson-penned tale, Batman left Gotham for a year to rediscover his mission, putting Harvey Dent in charge. The former D.A. embarked on his own novice vigilante career. Harvey's emotional wounds proved much harder to mend than his physical ones, and soon he decided to scar himself again in order to fully release his Two-Face persona in the 2006 *Batman* crossover "Face the Face," beginning



in *Detective Comics* #817. Tragically, Harvey has once again taken up his role as one of Gotham's most notorious criminals, despite how desperately Batman continues to fight to bring his old friend back to the surface.



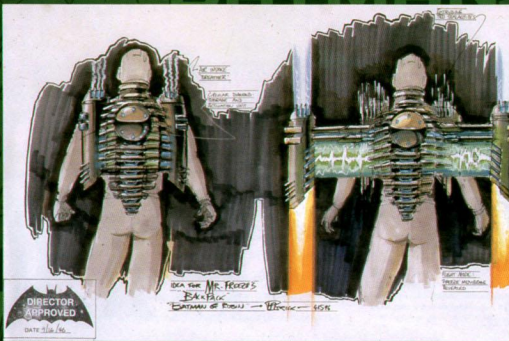
ABOVE: A 1946 Sunday newspaper strip written by Bill Finger and drawn by Jack Burnley and Win Mortimer. ABOVE RIGHT: Mr. Freeze was redesigned for the futuristic world of the *Batman Beyond* animated series.

## MR. FREEZE

From the start, he was a zero. Debuting in *Batman* #121 in 1959, Mr. Zero was a villain with a futuristic freezing gun, not much more exciting than the normal mad scientist of the month. However, the villain would amass a bit more staying power after his introduction to the 1966 *Batman* show, where he was played by several different actors and given the slightly catchier name of Mr. Freeze. The comics were quick to follow suit, and though he would never reach the ranks of superstardom that his fellow Gotham criminals enjoyed, Mr. Freeze became a recurring character in Batman's world, often wearing a new costume reflective of each artist that drew him, a trend that continues to this day.



A lasting villain with no real origin to call his own, Freeze was finally given a backstory by writer Paul Dini during an episode entitled "Heart of Ice" of the 1990s cartoon *Batman: The Animated Series*. This origin was lifted by director Joel Schumacher in Freeze's screen debut by Arnold Schwarzenegger in the 1997 film *Batman & Robin*: When his wife, Nora, was diagnosed with an untreatable disease, cryogenic scientist Victor Fries had her frozen in suspended animation until he could devise a cure. After a tragic lab accident, Victor's body chemistry was altered, making him vulnerable to warmth. Clad in a protective cold suit and armed with a gun capable of freezing the very water molecules in the air, Mr. Freeze began his criminal career with a heart numb to the pain and suffering of others.



THIS PAGE: Character designs for Mr. Freeze's appearance in Joel Schumacher's *Batman & Robin* film (1997). With Arnold Schwarzenegger cast in the part, they needed to leave his distinctive features visible while still addressing the character's need for constant refrigeration.

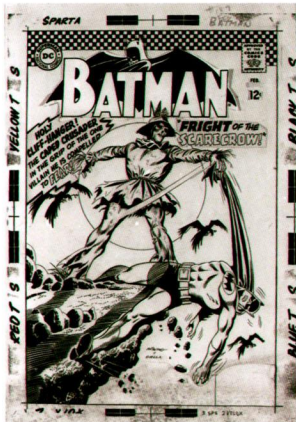
## THE MAJORS

Does the Batman inspire the criminals, or do the criminals inspire the Batman? Despite how their individual careers were put into motion, with breakouts at Arkham as common as check-ins, the many foes of the Batman have kept Gotham's resident vigilante busy since his humble beginnings.

Around the time of the creation of other heavy hitters such as Joker and Penguin, *World's Finest Comics* #3 from 1941 birthed another creature of the night that would go on to become one of Batman's regular sparring partners. When Jonathan Crane was fired from his job teaching psychology at Gotham University, he sought revenge as the sinister Scarecrow, continuing his experiments of terror on the helpless populace of Gotham, using his patented fear gas to aid him in his cause. Crane continued to instill fear in the hearts of his city's citizens throughout four generations of comics, and he even



ABOVE: A detail from the Scarecrow's first appearance from *World's Finest Comics* #3, with art by Bob Kane, Jerry Robinson, and George Roussos. ABOVE RIGHT: After two appearances in the 1940s, the Scarecrow didn't return to menace the Caped Crusader until 1967, in *Batman* #189. This is the original art for that cover, drawn by Carmine Infantino and Joe Giella.



appeared in two Batman films—2005's *Batman Begins* and 2008's *The Dark Knight*—portrayed by the actor Cillian Murphy.

In *Detective Comics* #40, Batman met a more run-of-the-mill rogue who would later pose a much more dangerous threat. When a crazed actor named Basil Karlo utilized stage makeup to get away with his murders, the press dubbed the mysterious man Clayface. The character was reinvented in 1961 in the pages of *Detective Comics* #298 as Matt Hagen, a corrupt adventurer who stumbled upon a cave with an enigmatic puddle of mud that transformed him into the morphing, putty-like supervillain, Clayface II. Later, in *Detective Comics* #478 and *Outsiders* #21, respectively, the fabled Mudpack would gain two more characters when Preston Payne and Sondra Fuller each experimented with the

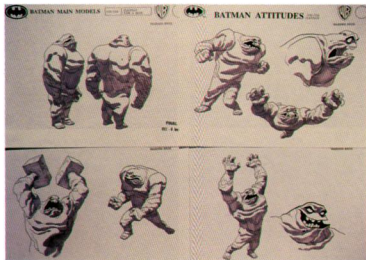
deceased Hagen's blood. The results were Clayface III and Lady Clayface, flights of madness that eventually led to a bizarre love affair and the birth of their son, Claything. Today, Basil Karlo has returned to reclaim his mantle, following suit with his compatriots and injecting himself with Clayface blood to become the shape-shifting Ultimate Clayface.

Jervis Tetch, the hat-obsessed, Lewis Carroll-inspired Mad Hatter, was Batman's next major foe to surface in *Batman* #49 in 1948. The Mad Hatter went through several different incarnations over the years, just as did the sharpshooting marksman Deadshot, who first emerged just ten issues later in *Batman* #59 from 1950. As the Mad Hatter was constantly reinvented by different creative teams, he went from being a common criminal, to a bizarre hat-themed thief, to a high-tech mind manipulator. Meanwhile, Deadshot, also known as the tuxedo-wearing, bored socialite Floyd Lawton, was reinvented in the pages of 1977's *Detective Comics* #474 by writer Steve Englehart and artist Marshall Rogers. He later went on to be a starring player in both the *Suicide Squad* comic of 1987, the *Secret Six* ongoing series in 2008, and even two solo miniseries.

As Denny O'Neil and Neal Adams helped darken Gotham City in the 1970s, the scene was set for a new host of major villains. One of the first was Man-Bat, who



debuted in the pages of 1970's *Detective Comics* #400. A scientist trying to cure his own growing deafness, Dr. Kirk Langstrom accidentally transformed himself into a human bat. Through the years, Man-Bat has been the subject of several miniseries as he constantly switches back and forth from hero to villain; in 1975, he was even the subject of his own ongoing series, which lasted only two issues. Ra's al Ghul also sprang up about the same time in the pages of *Batman* #232 (1971). Ra's helped to



**BELOW LEFT:** Character designs for the Scarecrow's appearance in Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins*, in which Cillian Murphy played the part of the Scarecrow. **ABOVE:** Animation designs for Clayface. There have been numerous rogues of that name that have fought Batman in the comics.

broaden the Dark Knight's scope and became the main adversary in the 2005 film *Batman Begins*, in which Liam Neeson played the terrorist's character.

In 1984's *Batman* #357, Killer Croc came to power in Gotham's underworld. A mob boss with ties to the murder of Jason Todd's parents, Killer Croc slowly devolved over the years as his physical crocodile-like appearance began to overshadow his once strategic mind. The year 1988 brought about the introduction of the Ventriloquist and Scarface in *Detective Comics* #583, the pairing of an inanimate wooden puppet with a human "dummy," Arnold Wesker, who the puppet seemed to boss around. Later, during the "Face the Face" story arc of 2006, Wesker was murdered, and his fiendish mannequin was passed on to Peyton Riley, another disturbed puppeteer obeying the persona of a twisted block of wood.

Despite the belief of many that all the good ideas are used up by now, the late-modern era has birthed many interesting new foes to challenge the Dark Knight Detective. Perhaps the most notable was Bane, the creation of writer Chuck Dixon and artist Graham Nolan for the special *Batman: Vengeance of Bane* #1 (1993). Birthed in the prison of the corrupt country Santa Prisca, Bane trained his body and mind in



order to conquer Gotham's champion and create a fearful reputation for himself. After arranging his escape, he traveled to Gotham and freed nearly all of Batman's rogues, finally ending his onslaught by snapping Bruce Wayne's back. Despite subsequently being beaten by Batman on numerous occasions, Bane still remains an ominous presence in Gotham, swearing to have his revenge someday.

Another creature of revenge was Hush, who first debuted in *Batman* #608 in 2002. Hush was Bruce Wayne's childhood friend Tommy Elliot, who, like Bruce, grew up with a silver spoon in his mouth, and unlike Bruce, hated every minute of it. When Thomas Wayne saved Elliot's parents from a death the boy himself engineered, he swore vengeance on the Wayne family, returning to Gotham years later and targeting Batman after learning of his dual life. Originally defeated by Batman and presumed dead, Hush has attacked Gotham several times, his threat ever increasing, just like that of most of the villains in Batman's life.

## THE MINORS

It's a Rogues Gallery more elaborate and memorable than any other comic character's. To this day, the lulls in Batman's battles with his big-name foes are often filled with a plethora of minor villains, all eager to stake their claim on Gotham. The first of these second-tier threats was actually Batman's first real archfoe, the mad scientist Professor Hugo Strange. Although the character first

debuted in *Detective Comics* #36 way back in 1940, he lacked the same charisma that carried brightly clad villains like Joker and the Penguin on to the realm of superstardom. Instead, Hugo evolved quietly as a psychologist obsessed with Batman's double life, even going so far as to deduce the identity of the man behind the mask. Besides Strange, the 1930s and 1940s also saw the first appearances of the criminal pair Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum, the machinating Dr. Death, the swashbuckling Cavalier, the immoral Crime Doctor, and the vampiric Monk.

Focusing on science-fiction influences such as aliens and time travel, the 1950s were a quiet era for the creation of Batman rogues. The similarly themed Killer Moth and Firefly both debuted, however, along with the holiday-obsessed Calendar Man and the gaudy Signalman. The multiplying Dr. Double X also was created during this age, an obvious product of this newly discovered sci-fi backdrop for Gotham City.

Like the preceding decade, the 1960s started out slowly, with characters such as Catman, the animal-inspired Terrible Trio, and the extremely nonthreatening Kite-Man making appearances, but none really brimming with originality. But around the time of the 1966 *Batman* live-action television program, with its



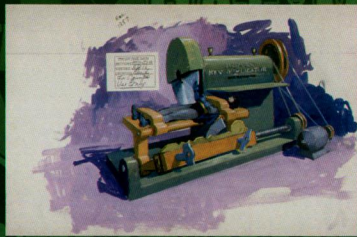
ABOVE LEFT: Animation designs for Bane, the Venom-fueled international menace who fought Batman in the comics, in the live-action *Batman & Robin*, and on *Batman: The Animated Series*. ABOVE: A production drawing of Arkham Asylum from *Batman Beyond: Return of the Joker*. OPPOSITE PAGE: Artists Don Newton and Alfredo Alcala gathered a who's-who of Gotham rogues for Batman's 500th appearance in *Detective Comics* #526 (May 1983).



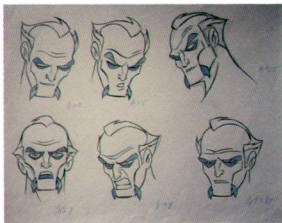
tendency to deliver a new villain nearly every week, the Batman office worked furiously to match the creativity of the show. Characters like the hulking Blockbuster, the Riddler-esque Cluemaster, and the mesmerizing Spellbinder debuted alongside the mystic Outsider, the elusive Getaway Genius, and a martial artist extraordinaire and future Batman threat, the Sensei.

A particularly odd time for Batman villains, the 1970s birthed some of the most peculiar second-stringers ever to grace the pages of *Batman* and *Detective*

*Comics*. The ocular transplant victim Ten-Eyed Man, prison escape artist the Spook, and the cruel pirate Captain Stingaree were just some of the offbeat creations that dotted Gotham's landscape in the disco era. However, toward the end of the decade, more enduring faces such as crime boss Rupert Thorne, the struggling drug addict Black Spider, the radioactive Dr. Phosphorus, martial arts master Lady Shiva, and self-proclaimed god Maxie Zeus emerged to help bring Batman's world back into familiar territory.



TOP: These rare production paintings were created by Leslie Thomas for the *Batman* TV series. (Left) In the 1968 episode "The Yegg Foes in Gotham," the villain Egghead attempted to wrest ownership of Gotham City from the last of the Mohicans, Chief Screaming Chicken. (Right) In the 1968 episode "The Joker's Provokers," Batman was immobilized in this giant human key duplicator. ABOVE LEFT: Another Leslie Thomas production painting of the Joker and Catwoman reaming up during the 1968 episode "The Joker's on Catwoman," set in the Grismalkin Novelty Company. ABOVE RIGHT: Norm Saunders' artwork for a Topps trading card series featured Batman fighting an invisible foe.



**ABOVE:** Animation designs for Ra's al Ghul, perhaps Batman's most apt physical and mental match. **RIGHT:** In this Dermot Power painting for a 1996 *Batman Masterpieces* trading card, it appears that the serial killer Mr. Zsasz has defeated Batman. The scars on Zsasz's body are a gruesome tally of his victims.

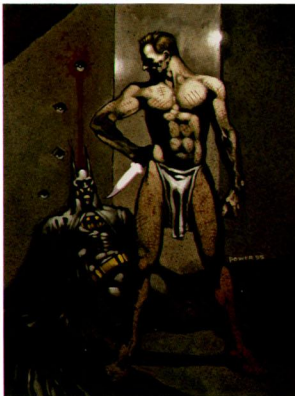
With the audience adapting to a more mature form of storytelling and Batman fully returning to his noir roots, the 1980s were a virtual hotbed of creativity. Crime boss Black Mask, serial killer Cornelius Stirk, the juiced-up Electrocuter, and the degrading Corrosive Man were given a warm welcome by fans, along with the sewer-traipsing Ratcatcher, cold war-inspired KGBeast, cutthroat vigilante Reaper, and the child genius and counterculture extremist, Anarky. To top it all off, in the pages of Batman's first special in 1984, fans were treated with meeting the flip side to Batman's personality, the mysterious Wrath.

As the Batman's number of comic titles increased in the 1990s, so, too, did his Rogues Gallery. Dark villains continued to debut, such as the heartless killer with a literal body count, Mr. Zsasz; Amygdala, the brute with the mind of a child; and the mysterious gun-toting Tallyman. The half-man, half-machine Gearhead appeared, along with the western-themed Trigger Twins, and the self-proclaimed keeper of the peace from *Batman: The Animated Series*, Lock-Up. Assassin David Cain became a major manipulator in Gotham, as did Prometheus, a Justice League villain who was a re-creation of the evil Batman idea first introduced in the character of the Wrath.

With so many adversaries to choose from, the comics of the 2000s seemed to produce fewer new supervillains to match wits with the Gotham Guardian.

While Batman faced the likes of the Great White Shark and Orca, Ra's al Ghul's heretofore unknown daughter Nyssa, the humorous buffoon Batzarro, and the master planner Zeiss, more of an emphasis was placed on raising the bar of existing villains' crimes. However, writer Grant Morrison took to the idea of blending both the old and the new seamlessly with his run on *Batman*, starting with issue #655. In these new classic comics, Batman faced a variety of old threats such as Talia, the Joker, and even the Spook, while also meeting a group of new faces in the Club of Villains, led by the enigmatic Black Glove.

And so today, as Arkham Asylum and Blackgate Penitentiary continue to overflow with new and dangerous threats, Batman's mission seems to be an unending one, more work than any one man could accomplish in a single lifetime. Thankfully, a character as popular as Batman doesn't seem to be hindered by that meager limitation.





FROM THE DUST AND TUMBLEWEEDS OF THE WILD WEST TO THE IMMACULATE STREETS OF THE FAR-FLUNG FUTURE, BATMAN IS A CHAMELEON, AT HOME IN NEARLY ANY ENVIRONMENT.

# BATMAN BEYOND:

*WHERE HE'S GOING AND WHERE HE HASN'T YET BEEN*



THEY'RE ALL IMAGINARY STORIES, but some are more imaginary than others.

Ever since the formation of the Justice Society of America and the idea of a shared universe for the various DC heroes to inhabit, there have been stories that have extended past the limits of that standard continuity, telling alternate versions of familiar heroes, many times without explanation, to a confused fan base. The idea of otherworldly dimensions is a concept nearly as old as science fiction itself. So when editor Julius Schwartz re-imagined the concept of characters like the Flash and Green Lantern in the 1950s, he quickly played the dimension card to explain away the vast differences between his new heroes and their ghosts from the 1940s. Deciding that heroes from the World War II era hailed from an alternate world called Earth-2, Schwartz carved the idea in permanent ink in the pages of 1961's *The Flash* #128, in the famous "Flash of Two Worlds" storyline. This landmark comic made it okay for there to be two Flashes or two Green Lanterns, and a team-up between Earth-1's Justice League and the Justice Society of Earth-2 became an annual and highly anticipated occurrence.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** In 1999, Alex Ross painted this montage of Batman heroes and villains—past, present, and future—for a Warner Bros. Studio Store lithograph. **LEFT:** In the popular *Red Rain* trilogy, Batman became a vampire, inspiring this 2005 Crimson Mist Batman figure from the DC Direct Elseworlds Series. Its appearance was based on the art of Kelley Jones and sculpted by Erick Sosa.

Like most of the other major heroes of the time, Batman had an Earth-2 counterpart: an aged version of himself who had married Catwoman and fathered a child named Helena, who would grow up to fight crime herself as the Huntress. But two universes simply weren't enough for the writers of the time. Soon, in *Justice League* #29 from 1964, the Crime Syndicate appeared, evil Earth-3 versions of the Justice League, who found it more to their liking to pillage than protect. Owlman was the Batman of this universe, an evil genius who proved a near match for his Earth-1 variant.

More and more Earths sprouted up, and more of these imaginary stories came with them. So many new creations were now populating the DC Multiverse that the powers that be decided to clean house on the company's 50th anniversary in 1985, using the epic miniseries *Crisis on Infinite Earths* to kill off many of the characters, and combine the leftover scraps into one streamlined timeline.



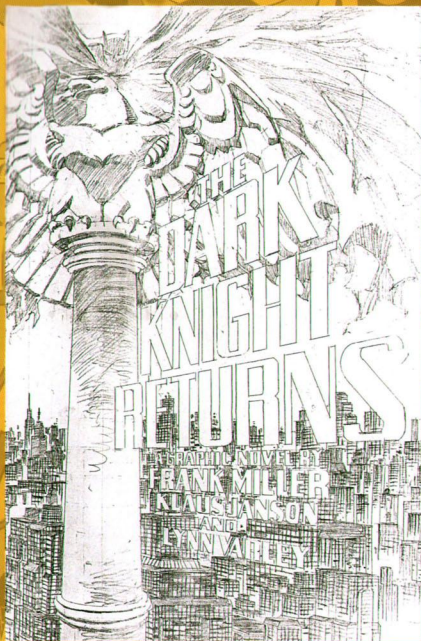
Things had become more simplified, but the writers still felt the need to experiment by placing the timeless concept of Batman into a variety of unexplored realities or possible futures. When Frank Miller's seminal *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* made its debut in 1986, DC realized the market for a series of alternate realities in its prestige format was too good to pass up. Letting writers and artists loose to create their own simplified world in which to tell their epic tales still had a place at DC, and writer Brian Augustyn and artist Mike Mignola's one-shot entitled *Batman: Gotham by Gaslight* only served to reinforce that point. In this prestige-format issue, Augustyn and Mignola transplanted Batman to Victorian England in order to combat the threat of Jack the Ripper. With this special's success, the concept of Elseworlds was born.

The idea behind Elseworlds was to take familiar names and concepts and transplant them into places that "have existed, and others that can't, couldn't, or shouldn't exist." Although *Gaslight* was an obvious example of this, the first special



LEFT: Mike Mignola's cover for *Gotham by Gaslight*, a 1989 tale of Batman's hunt for Jack the Ripper. ABOVE: Mignola's designs gained new life as a fully articulated action figure sculpted by Jon Matthews, part of DC Direct's Elseworlds line in 2006.

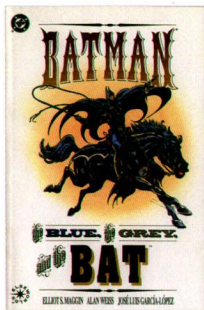
to bear the new Elseworlds logo was actually a comic entitled *Batman: Holy Terror* by writer Alan Brennert and artist Norm Breyfogle, in which a reverend Bruce Wayne was forced into becoming a vigilante against a world controlled by a corrupt church. Dozens of other Elseworlds specials and miniseries followed suit, but the simple



**THIS PAGE:** Sketches and pencils from Frank Miller's groundbreaking 1986 miniseries, *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*. The splash page (left) shows how he integrated text into the overall design. The above left sketch includes notes on the look of the world. The above right and top sketches demonstrate the evolution of the style.

ROBIN

BAT MAN



artist in a gloriously painted special by artist Mark Chiarello and writers Howard Chaykin and John Francis Moore; and *Batman: The Blue, the Grey, and the Bat* by writers Elliot S. Maggin and Alan Weiss and artist José Luis García-López, in which Batman fights crime as a Wild West hero. The Elseworlds concept has been applied to other characters in the DC Universe as well, such as the Justice League and Justice Society. It was also used to combine heroes, as was the case in *Superman: Speeding Bullets* by writer J. M. DeMatteis and artist Eduardo Barreto, in which baby Kal-El is found by the Waynes instead of the Kents. When the Waynes meet their tragic end, Kal-El grows up to be their superpowered avenger, calling himself Batman. In *Batman: In Darkest Knight* by writer Mike W. Barr and artist Jerry Bingham, Bruce Wayne discovers an alien power ring, becoming his own dark version of a Green Lantern.

For as many times as they traveled back into the past, Elseworlds also delved into the future. Writer Mark Waid and painter Alex Ross's *Kingdom Come* was easily the most popular of these prophetic adventures. In this groundbreaking four-issue work from 1996, the DC Universe was examined from an almost Dickensian viewpoint

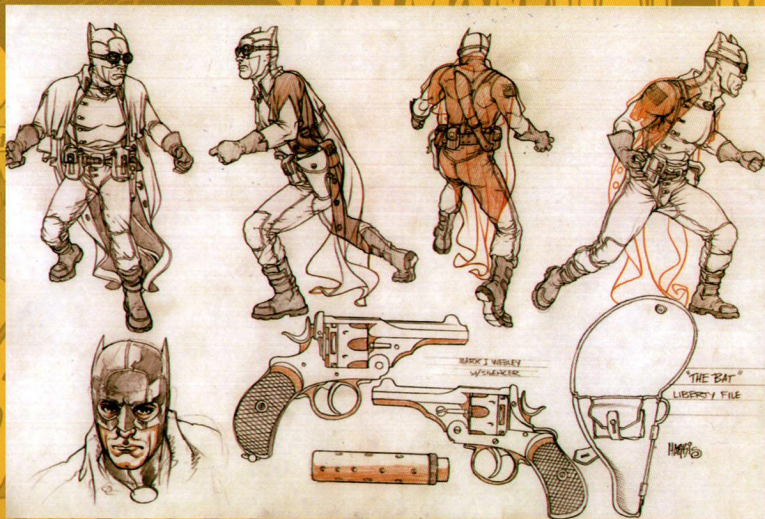
labeling of their covers with the Elseworlds logo (which denoted that the stories weren't supposed to fit squarely within continuity) helped to erase any confusion that was prevalent during the age of the Multiverse.

Some of the many noteworthy Elseworlds series include writer Doug Moench and artist Kelley Jones's *Rod Rain* trilogy, in which Batman fights Dracula; *Batman/Houdini: The Devil's Workshop*, in which Bruce Wayne trains with the master escape

artist as an outsider named Norman McCay witnessed the birth of a new generation of heroes that lacked guidance in a world where Superman had retired. Featuring a dramatic battle between Superman and Captain Marvel, as well as an old and bitter version of Batman, reduced to letting robots do his dirty work for him, *Kingdom Come* has spawned several sequels and many reprints and action figures.



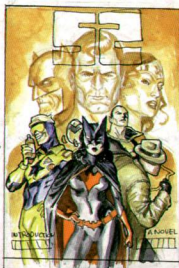
ABOVE LEFT: Alan Weiss' stylish cover to *Batman: The Blue, the Grey, and the Bat*, a tale set during the Civil War. ABOVE: This 2007 DC Direct Elseworlds action figure, sculpted by Dave Cortes, was inspired by the *JSA: The Liberty Files* miniseries, which imagined a cloak-and-dagger Batman operating in Europe during World War II.



ABOVE: Artist Tony Harris drew these designs for the JSA: The Liberty Files Batman action figure. This version of the character placed more emphasis on espionage than super-heros.

ROBIN

BAT MAN



BOOSTER GOLD  
WITH GREATS  
BATMAN AND ROBIN  
JAMES EARL RAY  
WESTER  
SOUND BY

HOSTED  
BY SUPERHERO  
READS OF  
THE FINEST  
SOUND BY  
WESTER  
SOUND BY

BLACK  
ADAM

THE  
QUESTION

THE  
QUESTION

BATMAN



BLACK  
ADAM

BOOSTER  
GOLD

ADAM  
STRANGE STEEL BATMAN



Black  
Adam →

STEEL →



← Batman

WRITER

ABOVE: J. G. Jones' colored cover roughs for Greg Cox's prose novelization of DC's year-long '52' series. With Batman, Superman, and Wonder Woman out of action, other champions rose to prominence in this series, including Booster Gold, a new Batwoman, the Question, and Black Adam.

BATMAN



As DC slowly began to phase out Elseworlds, the need to play in other ballparks once again took hold of its creative staff, and in 2006's weekly 52 miniseries, the Multiverse was reborn, this time limited to only fifty-two universes. Most of the Earths in these fifty-two worlds were the previously established Elseworlds

realities: One Earth housed the vampire version of Batman from *Batman & Dracula: Red Rain*, while another played home to the cast from *Kingdom Come*, and so on. The restoration of the Multiverse was a move that left readers wondering if old continuity problems would recur. DC is addressing those issues with new storylines exploring the current canonical origin for each of their premier heroes.

Whatever the fictional and nonfictional future might hold, the universal idea of Batman is likely to thrive in it. Batman is a character that has been reinvented more times than most care to count. He's been a brooding loner, a doting father, a comedian, and a straight man. He's been a carbon copy, a groundbreaking new voice, and the basis for numerous imitations. The Batman is an international icon, a media sensation, and a role model for generations of overachievers. But more than anything, Batman is a vehicle for expression, a chameleon of the times, and an inspiration. A character like Bruce Wayne is what all good fiction strives to create. And his comic book medium, which allows his story to be developed month after month, year upon year, packs creative punch like no other genre is capable of. So thankfully, within DC's comic-book pages, Batman will continue to be re-created, layer upon complex, colorful layer, for generations to come.



ABOVE LEFT: Alex Ross drew this unused armored Batman character design for the seminal *Kingdom Come* comic miniseries (1996). ABOVE: Seven decades of "smashing exploits" would follow this ad from *Batman* #9.

## ESSENTIAL READING

### BATMAN

*Batman* #1–current (1940–present)  
*Batman Chronicles* #1–23 (1995–2001)  
*Batman Confidential* #1–current (2007–present)  
*Batman: Gotham Knights* #1–73 (2000–2006)  
*Batman: Shadow of the Bat* #1–34 (1992–2000)  
*The Brave & The Bold: Batman co-starring* from #74–200 (1967–1983)  
*Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight* #1–214 (1989–2007)  
*Batman & The Outsiders* #1–current (1983–present)  
*Detective Comics* #27–current (1939–present)  
*Superman/Batman* #1–current (2003–present)  
*World's Finest Comics* #2–323 (1940–1985)

### ROBIN

*Star-Spangled Comics* #65–129 (1947–1952)  
*Robin* #1–5 (1991)  
*Robin II* #1–4 (1991–1992)  
*Robin III: Cry of the Huntress* #1–6 (1992–1993)  
*Robin* #1–183 (1993–2009)

### NIGHTWING

*Nightwing* #1–4 (1995)  
*Nightwing* #1–153 (1996–2009)

### SUPPORTING CAST

*Batman: Sword of Azrael* #1–4 (1997)  
*Azrael* #1–100 (1995–2003)  
*Batgirl* #1–73 (2000–2006), #1–4 (2008–2009)  
*Batman Family* #1–28 (1975–1978)  
*Birds of Prey* #1–127 (1999–2009)  
*Gotham Central* #1–40 (2003–2006)

### VILLAINS

*Catwoman* #1–4 (1999)  
*Catwoman* #1–34 (1993–2001), #1–82 (2002–2006)  
*Harley Quinn* #1–38 (2000–2004)  
*Joker* #1–4 (1975–1978)

### MAJOR COLLECTIONS

*Batman Archives* Vols. 1–7  
*Batman: The Dark Knight Archives* Vols. 1–6  
*Batman: The Dynamic Duo Archives* Vols. 1–2  
*Batman In World's Finest Archives* Vols. 1–2  
*Batman: Cataclysm*  
*Batman: Cantagion*  
*Batman: A Death in the Family*  
*Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*  
*Batman: The Dark Knight Strikes Again*  
*Batman: Dark Victory*  
*Batman: Hush* Vols. 1–2  
*Batman: Knightfall* Vols. 1–5  
*Batman: The Long Halloween*  
*Batman: No Man's Land* Vols. 1–5  
*Batman: Year One* (1988)  
*Batman & Superman: World's Finest*  
*Showcase Presents Batgirl* Vol. 1  
*Showcase Presents Batman* Vols. 1–3  
*Showcase Presents Batman and the Outsiders* Vol. 1  
*Showcase Presents Batman in the Brave and the Bold* Vols. 1–2  
*Showcase Presents Robin* Vol. 1  
*Showcase: World's Finest Comics* Vols. 1–2  
*Batgirl: Year One*  
*Robin: Year One*

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LEFT: *Batman* #35 (June–July 1946) by Dick Sprang.  
PAGE 192: *Batman* #75 (February–March 1953), written by  
David Vern and drawn by Dick Sprang and Charles Paris.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

ROBERT GREENBERGER was given his first comic, *Superman*, at age six. Since then, he has been a passionate fan of the medium. He wrote and edited for his various school newspapers, serving as editor in chief of *Pipe Dream* at Binghamton University.

Greenberger's professional career began at Starlog Press where he created *Comics Scene*, the first nationally distributed magazine to cover comic books, comic strips, and animation. He then joined DC Comics as an assistant editor, working on the seminal Crisis on Infinite Earths and Who's Who. He rose to full editor, and his titles included *Star Trek*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Suicide Squad*, *Starman*, *Atlantis Chronicles*, and *Doom Patrol*. He then switched to the administrative side of the company, to become the manager of editorial operations.

In 2000, Greenberger left DC for a job as a producer at Gist Communications, then returned to comics in 2001 as Marvel Comics' director of publishing operations. In 2002, he went back to DC Comics as a senior editor in its collected editions department. He joined *Weekly World News* as managing editor until its demise in 2007. Since then he has been a full-time freelance writer and editor, including a stint as news editor at *ComicMix.com*.

As a freelancer, Greenberger has written numerous *Star Trek* novels and short fiction in addition to short works of science fiction and fantasy. His adult nonfiction includes co-authoring 2004's *DC Comics Encyclopedia* for DK Books and Del Rey's 2008 release *The Essential Batman Encyclopedia*.

In his hometown, he serves as an elected member of its Representative Town Meeting, presiding as its moderator. He makes his home in Fairfield, Connecticut, with his wife, Deb, and their dog, Dixie.

For more information, see his Web site, [www.bobgreenberger.com](http://www.bobgreenberger.com).

Born in a rural town in Ohio, MATTHEW K. MANNING can't remember a day when he wasn't writing and drawing comics. After journeying to New York City to attend the School of Visual Arts, Manning quickly dropped the notion of becoming a comics artist when he realized there was actual work involved. Instead, Manning adopted the idea of simply writing comic books, and he is still amazed that no one has caught wise to his crafty machinations. Manning's work includes scripts for DC's *The Batman Strikes!*, *Legion of Super-Heroes in the 31st Century*, *Justice League Adventures*, and *Looney Tunes*. He also has worked for Marvel on titles such as *Spider-Man Unlimited* and *Marvel Romance Redux* and has written scripts for several other minor comic book companies, some of which even paid him.

When not writing comics, Manning writes about comics in books such as *Marvel Chronicle*, *The Amazing Spider-Man: The Ultimate Guide*, *Hulk: The Incredible Guide*, *Marvel Heroes: Greatest Battles*, and *Wolverine: The Ultimate Guide*. He currently lives in Brooklyn with his beautiful, blushing bride, Dorothy, ten thousand DC comic books, and the coolest Red Hood Halloween costume known to civilized man.

Visit him online at [www.matthewkmanning.com](http://www.matthewkmanning.com).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Batman and I have suddenly found ourselves spending a lot of time together, and I couldn't be happier.

It's said that everyone breaks down as either a *Superman* fan or a *Batman* fan, and I have always gravitated more toward the *Caped Crusader*. Spending a year researching and writing 2008's *The Essential Batman Encyclopedia*, naturally primed me for this project.

No *Batman* project can possibly exist without the seventy years' worth of stories in comics, comic strips, cartoons, serials, movies, novels, thrill rides, and more that makes up *Batman's* history. It all started with Bob Kane, aided and abetted by Bill Finger, Jerry Robinson, and over time countless others. Their work has entertained and delighted me and many generations of readers since that cool spring of 1939.

And *The Batman Vault* was not written without some help. The first thing I did when I was offered the project was to pick the brains of fellow writers including Mark Waid, K. C. Carlson, Martin Pasko, Paul Kupperberg, Michael Eury, John Ordover, and Greg Cox.

Chris Cerasi, Benjamin Harper, and Steve Korte at DC were enthusiastic supporters, and their faith is appreciated.

Friendship, advice, and support came from numerous sources as I was writing this book, especially given the personal travails that followed my family for much of 2008. Friends from home and around the country chimed in and are all thanked.

John Wells gave this a once-over because I can't imagine writing something involving the DC Universe without his expert eye and keen mind. When personal tragedy clashed with deadlines, Matt Manning ably stepped in to polish and add his own perspective. He was a true hero and has my thanks.

Closer to home, my wonderful wife, Deb, gave me the time to focus on this project, and my incredible son, Robbie, was a shining example of strength and grace under impossible conditions until his passing. Further from home, my daughter, Kate, was an exuberant cheerleader.

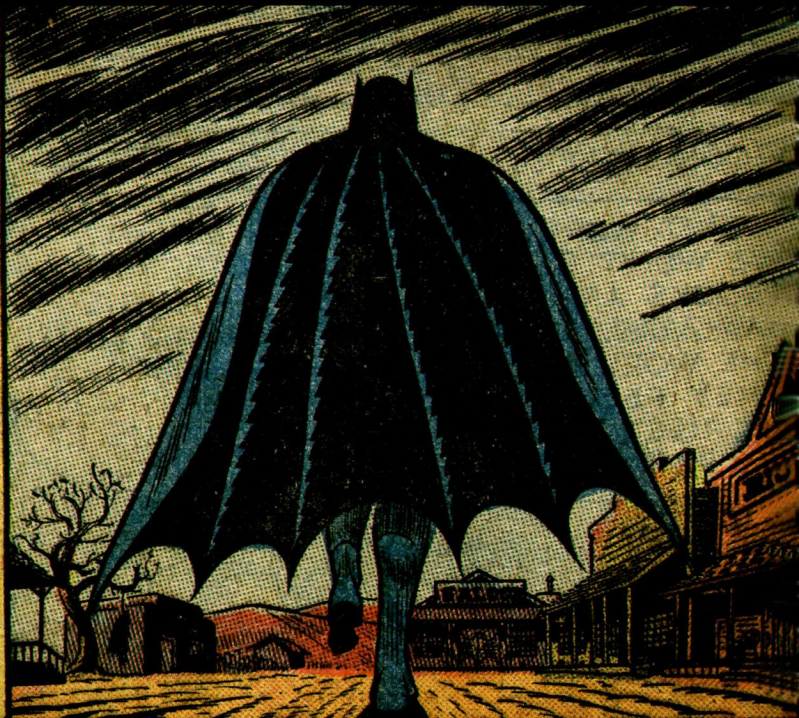
—Robert Greenberger, 2008

First I'd like to thank Robert Greenberger, my partner in crime on this project, who through his extensive body of work, has taught me more than he's aware. I'd like to thank Steve Korte, Chris Cerasi, and Benjamin Harper over at DC Comics for their willingness to work around my wedding and honeymoon schedule, and Mike Zagari, for introducing me to them in the first place. Thanks also to my parents, Janet and David Manning, for fueling my rather indulgent comic habit over the years, as well as to my friends and family for putting up with my absence in recent months. But most important, I'd like to thank my wife, Dorothy, for tolerating fourteen-hour writing days the week before our wedding, long *Batman*-related conversations the hour before she'd like to go to sleep, and more comic books strewn haphazardly around her apartment than any normal person should ever have to contend with. Yes, she can expect a good birthday present this year. And no, it probably won't be *Batman*-themed.

—Matthew K. Manning, 2008

DC Comics thanks the following experts who offered advice, artwork and support: Arnold Blumberg, Mike Essl, Joe Desaris, Saul Ferris, Kail Fromm, Jared Green, Halley Hagan, Andy Hershberger, Terence Kean, Chip Kidd, Sarah Miller, Barry Sandoval, David Siegel, Mark Waid, Chris Ware, John Wells, Alex Winter, and Mark S. Zaid. Many DC and Warner Bros. staffers helped as well, including Allan Asherman, Roger Bonas, Georg Brewer, Mike Carlin, Mark Chiarello, Joe Daley, Larry Daley, Paul Dini, Bob Harras, Matt Idelson, Joel Jay, Kevin Kiniry, Jay Kogan, Paul Levitz, Michael Marts, Drew Moore, John Morgan, Joel Posen, Barbara Rich, Michael Siglin, Wayne Smith, Bruce Timm, Bob Wayne, and Michael Woolen.

THE  
TIME-HONORED  
**CHALLENGE**  
-- AND  
**BATMAN**  
**ACCEPTS!**  
BUT **THIS**  
DUEL IS  
DIFFERENT  
THAN THOSE  
OF THE  
PAST. FOR  
WHILE A  
KILLER WAITS  
WITH LOADED  
PISTOLS--  
**BATMAN**  
STALKS HIM  
**UNARMED!**



Explore tangible treasures from Batman's dark world in this marvelous volume!

IT WAS A TIME PRIMED FOR SUPER HEROES, and Gotham City needed a Guardian. Born out of the rich and dark atmosphere of the pulps, Batman swung onto the scene in 1939 and has since enthralled generations of comic fans, while confronting a barrage of villains, mentoring a series of sidekicks, and saving Gotham time and time again.

*The Batman Vault* unlocks little-known nuggets about the Caped Crusader's origins and exploits, assembling stories, sketches, and memorabilia from the DC Comics archives into one definitive volume on the Dark Knight. Fully illustrated with drawings from Batman's most celebrated artists, this fascinating collection features 19 plastic-encased pieces of ephemera to remove and pore over, such as creator Bob Kane's sketches, a make-your-own Batplane, and a hand-pencilled "Right Way to Draw Batman" booklet. Detailing the backstories of each villain, femme fatale, and Bat-gadget, and spanning Batman's entire crime-fighting career, *The Batman Vault* is a colorful and compelling biography that will resonate with any fan.

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ROBERT GREENBERGER'S penchant for comics led him to DC Comics, where he oversaw numerous titles as an editor. He left DC in 2002 as a senior editor, and has since authored both fiction and nonfiction works, including several novels in the Star Trek universe and a tome on the Caped Crusader, *The Essential Batman Encyclopedia*.

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