

STATE OF THE ART

STaTe of thE aRt 3

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previous issues for rowrbrazzle were
named brush dances. this issue is
more or less A Terrible Mistake 156.

Lack of time and space are going to restrict me to very little editorial writing. The majority of the issue goes to catching up on mailing comments for the last two Brazzles. At this point I'm not even sure whether there'll be art to go with it. I hope though there's room for a first page layout, so I can use a piece I did called "Linda Glasgow".

The work was commissioned for a book catalog, and all I was asked for was something dark and mysterious. The werewolf that resulted seemed to have personality to me, so I invented a few background details: Linda may have been bitten by a werewolf when she was very young, or perhaps she suffers from a freak metabolism. Whichever the case, she began turning into a wolf-girl at the age of 12, for short periods at first. She isn't violent, but when a werewolf she's a loner and might hurt someone badly who bothered her. As Linda grew older she discovered that she wasn't transforming just when the moon was full, but a little earlier each time, and remaining in her lupine form a while after. From a single evening each month, Linda was a werewolf for nearly a week at a time by the age of 18, and foresaw that she probably wouldn't revert to human form at all by the time she was 20. The situation calls for a romantic interest that Linda can shy away from because of her secret life in the Canadian woods. But that's as far as my idle imagination got before turning to new art.

Next mailing I expect to begin parodies of other members' strips. Be warned! I also hope to finally explain Starship AWOL and other projects that I've been reluctant to discuss as long as work was stalled. And, oh yes, I changed the title of this zine for no better reason than I liked the new one. I'm keeping the numbering just to vex fanzine indexers like myself.

MAILING COMMENTS ON ROWRBRAZZLE 3

Greg Bear Your comments to other people seem as if you basically don't like funny animals to be anything but big-foot characters with



names like Silly Goose, who slip on banana peels and hit each other over the head with mallets. I know I'm going out on a limb here. Nevertheless, you've told more than one person that you didn't like the sort of funny animal or humour they do. This seems a little narrow minded, if this is the case. And if we're going to be close-minded about things, I could say that I have virtually no interest at all in 50's funny-books, with no adult humour. (Though I do like Sheldon Meyer's elegant drawing style.) I much prefer Pogo, Carl Barks, or Krazy Kat.

Just so that we're perfectly clear where we stand, I want to talk about that remark of yours, that "there's nothing funny about drug abuse, period." I understand that you have personal reasons to dislike drug users, but you've apparently misplaced the blame on the drug rather than on the user. I've only experimented with drugs a couple of times. So far I've found altered states of awareness less interesting than my normal state of mind. Yet I've several friends who use drugs more or less regularly. They're not drug addicts, they haven't gone berserk, nor do they have psyche-destroying bad trips. Most people I know use mild drugs socially, and I'll wager a majority of Brazziers have tasted a joint before. I don't see the appeal myself, but neither do any of the people I know who use drugs lead the wreckage of a drug-oriented life like the Freak Brothers, (which I suppose you don't find funny either). I'll grant that drugs aren't for everyone, that some people have addictive personalities, and that others take drugs because it's an excuse to act stupid. Alcohol is far and away the most abused of all drugs, followed closely by Mom's tranquilizers. However, getting that Old Time Religion, or becoming a body-builder seems to have as radical an effect on a normal life as gaining a coke habit. And certainly born-again and muscle-men are fit subjects for humour. What it comes down to is that drugs are funny, but you've lost the ability to laugh at them.

John Cawley Schirm's problem with the length of the mailing would have been lessened if you had xerox-reduced your list of fox works. At 75% reduction you could have fit those 16 pages of single-columns into 4 pages of double-columns. And saved yourself money too.

Allen or not, Saara does have fur. I could point out other resemblances to funny animals, though I don't know how they happened. She only wears a shirt and no trousers. She's barefoot and has three toes. She has long ears. Perhaps Wertham was right about the effect of all those comics I read when a child. Or more likely it's a coincidence. Either way, it's fine with Saara and I if you prefer died-in-the-wool funny animals. It's just that I'm not going to stop doing my special thing so that I can conform to an apa. I had always presumed that Schirm invited me into Brazzle for what I did, not what I could be made into. Of course I could mass produce seductive bunnies, cute squirrels, and pussy cats easily, and satisfy Steve Martin's wildest dreams. But I don't feel cut out to be a pimp.

I echo your remarks to Edd Vick. Only a poor artist -- or one who's going to stay poor -- is content with his work. Your doubts only get more subtle as you grow better.

Tim Fay Don't take this as criticism, but The Kangaroo Kaper must be the archetypical Brazzle story. (It's either your story or Kuntash, and The Kangaroo Kaper is more complimentary to the membership.)

Steve Gallacci Well, we met in poor circumstances, didn't we? There was always a crowd. My charisma was at low ebb all through the con, so I didn't make any effort to talk to you, and you had no reason to take any particular notice of me. Whenever one of

your sketchbooks went by I gave it a look and quickly surfelited on Armoured Personnel Carriers and Gun Ships. Albedo, on the other hand, is very good, since there's life to the characters and story that the hardware doesn't have by itself. I especially like the new direction you're taking with the NIMH story. The style is different, and the lights and darks make the story more dramatic than your tighter drawing.

Charles Garofalo The concept of The Bunnies in the Box is interesting, but it doesn't seem quite fully developed, and the pacing is uneven. You'd have to show the rebellion grow in the boy's mind, or else show how a crisis forced him to rebel. As the story is, events don't build on each other, and the boy changes his mind rather unconvincingly. At about twice the length, and with a clearer dramatic movement the story might be sold to, say, Fantasy & Science Fiction.

Jim Groat My unshakeable belief is that the real treachery of Viet Nam was the betrayal of the ordinary soldiers of both sides, who were led to their slaughter by the Glaps and Westmorelands, the Ho Chih Minhs and Richard Milhous Nixons. They were told to fight for Freedom, and all they really fought for was Exxon or The Party. For Nixon's ego and Ho's. No doubt next week the US and Viet Nam will be allies, and already Hollywood is grinding out Chuck Norris films to prove you could have whipped the gooks if you'd really wanted...

From an artistic rather than political viewpoint, your visualization of Billy Joel's song didn't seem as powerful as the lyrics. Perhaps you were too literal in interpreting them, and not actually visual enough. After all, "Goodnight Saigon" is not so much the story of Viet Nam as an impression of it. And there was little in your drawing aside from the characters and the occasional helicopter to make an impression. I hesitate to criticize your work, though. At the animation show, where we met, you seemed eager to talk yourself out of doing the story at all, and I don't want to discourage future effort. So how about a C for execution, and an A for effort?

sigh Play it again Sam. No, I don't use an air-brush, but I guess you've read Brush Dances 2 so know that I've already explained this. I use a ball point pen for shading effects. Lately I've fooled around with screens, but it's self-evident when I do.

I remember the real P-70 now -- a souped up version of the Havoc, which is itself a British modification of the original Douglas design, etc. I'd forgotten this not too well known aircraft until you brought it up. So I've bumped the Sidewinder fighter up to a P-71. There's probably one of those too, but I can't find a reference to one. The Sidewinder is an attempt to design the ultimate two engine fighter that's no bigger than a Spitfire, using 1945 technology. Only the basic design is in advance of its time. Recently I redrew the whole thing with a simpler wing platform and improved nose, so I've reached the definitive model.

I do build kits, as a form of relaxation from drawing or writing. I simply can't leave my hands idle. Even while reading I may fidget with small toys. The only real exception I make is to give my complete attention to music.

"Chilw" means "rats", "damn", "Oh?", "Whoops", or "Oh!" and is pronounced "Chil + w" (without any extra vowels).

Jim Korkis As you inferred from your trip to the LA zoo, funny animals are far more about people than about animals. The form grants the artist a licence, though, to exaggerate action and broaden character. He can gloss over unnecessary detail that the realistic strip has to get right or loose plausibility, since the funny animal strip isn't plausible to begin with. At the same time the strip can make light of things that in

other circumstances would be far from humorous. So Rabbit can go to war without there being POW camps and gangrene. Fox can lose all his money in a back-fired swindle without defaulting on his mortgage. Cat and Dog can fight like cats and dogs without divorce or impotence. The artist needn't exercise his freedom from realistic consequences though. Interesting things can be done with funny animals that bleed or can't get it up. Read Waller's Omaha, is an instance. And Charlotte's Diary, if and when it's ever presented to Brazzle, will be an example of a funny animal strip in which the real specter of death walks.

I loved the Muppet show too, except for the weakly conceived "human" characters, like "Elton John" or "Leslie Uggams".

I read some of Johnny Chambers work in Trumpet, and I'm pretty sure his strip has appeared in other 60's SF fanzines that weren't on your list. But it's be difficult to find them among so many zines in my collection.

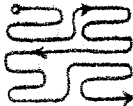
I also loved Wonder Warthog. I once invented a character from a description by a school-friend. Later I discovered that he was describing a real cartoon character. Both Wonder Warthogs had ridiculous noses and bad complexions, but mine was short and rather grim looking, with a yellow and purple uniform. It was in the mid-60's, I guess. Although a lot of drawings and comics I did then still exist, my version of Wonder Warthog doesn't seem to be one of the survivors.

Yours is another list that might have been xerox-reduced.

Fred Patten A little bird told me that you're partial to grandiose schemes of empire building. Showing Brazzle art at conventions isn't terribly grandiose, but doing it to "publicize" the apa suggests something equally dubious. There isn't room for many new members, so what's the point of a public profile? Now, if we were talking about editing Brazzle, offset print runs of several thousand, and distribution, so that in effect Brazzle became a comic magazine and made everybody money, you'd have my attention.

Bill Scott Good. Very good. Sell this to a newspaper in case you haven't already.

Jerry Collins Although I have no idea what fascinated you about Starship Yamato, I enjoyed your Haku-Hasin/Gammalon war. It's the most sustained effort I've seen from you, and I hope you'll do more like it. On the other hand, I had a bit of trouble reading it at first. The pages were in the right order, but because of the way they were pasted-up the panels had to be followed more or less as follows:



which was a bit confusing.

I relinquish all rights to the Beaveroids (c) 1984 by Tara Collins & Jerry Wayne. You'll get me in trouble with the Rowbrazzle Self-Appointed Vice Squad if you aren't more careful.

Ronn Sutton Bakka had some spirit in the first couple of years, when Charlie had parties and art shows, but after that there was just an inner circle who had fun. Charlie could also be a very difficult duck to deal with, as you must know. Although there's nothing very colourful about the present day store, owned by Jon Rose, I get better vibes from it now than at any time since about 1975.

Deal Whitley You're a man who knows his Disney, sir. The face was sketched from The Illusion

of Life, page 449, and is indeed Mowgli's girl. I saw the book in New York, and made several sketches from it, never expecting to own one. (That little detail was looked after last Christmas though.)

Saara doesn't belong in any other universe with other characters, but there is a drawing of mine of her with an anonymous Bambloid, and Jerry did a drawing of Saara and some Ganarfs, so I suppose anything is possible to imagine.

I think your stories have an insidious effect. I didn't care for the first one. But when I read the second story I went back and read the first again, and liked it after all.

MAILING COMMENTS ON ROWRBRAZZLE 4

Jim Groat And you know what Saara says to you? ("Yain chislet deisiehloi sin del!")

Seriously Jim, you could use a bit more tact, even if you don't feel that my art belongs in Brazzle. When you make an abrupt statement like "that's unacceptable" you not only wound my sensitive artistic nature, you begin to overstep yourself. Instead of such a brusque reprimand, you might have said something like "is this really suitable for a funny animal apa?"

It's Schirm's business, whether or not my art gets in Brazzle, but I have two arguments to present to the hypothetical jury. Vootia had unwritten guidelines which can be construed as relevant to Brazzle. One said that humans could appear in the apa if accompanied by a funny animal. Half or more of the characters I put through Brazzle were at least non-human, and arguably funny animals of some sort if not the funny Ha-Ha type. And I thought the rest were adequately chaperoned. Secondly, the rules said that machines, vegetables, minerals, and (as far as Fletch and Waller were concerned) aliens were deemed funny animals.

The question of Brazzle's definition of a funny animal is an important one, and I liked Ken Sample's pertinent remarks in the last mailing. Do "exotics" such as his art and my Saara Mer belong? If they don't belong when depicted as realistic people, do they belong if cartooned? Obviously not all the apa feels the same way you appear to feel about exotics. Both Ken and I (and others who've stretched the definition) have had our share of compliments from the membership. My own opinion is that variety improves Brazzle, gives room for more ideas. An apa strictly for animated cartoons and funny books is no doubt intensely interesting to some people, but the majority of members probably have wider interests than that. What does the apa gain by enforcing a narrower vision? Or by having me quit?

My intentions, then, are to go on doing pretty much what I've already done in Brazzle. Schirm thinks I should refrain from purely human art, and that seems like a reasonable request, as long as people realize this means I'll have this much less to run through the apa. So you're going to see Kjoia, other aliens and fantasy figures, and even Homo Sapiens from time to time. You don't have to like it, but you have everything to gain by trying.

Steve Gallacci Does the name Bill Marks ring a bell? He publishes comics called Vortex and Mr. X. We've known each other for a few years, and he occasionally comes to my parties. He'd heard of Albedo but hadn't seen a copy, so I showed him mine. He liked it. If you ever find you can't finance your own comic, Bill might go for a deal.

It's good to see someone attempting criticism in Brazzle, but I think you should develop your remarks further than "this is a story and this isn't." How was it drawn? Were the characters believable? Might there be good backgrounds or interesting hardware? There's so much else art can be than a story.

can, perhaps your spaceships can whip those I designed for the Starships For Sale flyer. I don't make any great claim for them since they are studies for the ships used by Innore's people in Starship AWOL. In the story, Mesuldans are unwarlike, and have only just built their own first armed fleet. I wouldn't expect them to have benefitted from much combat experience. A Kjoia starship, on the other hand, is little short of awesome. When I designed the early version of the Starfire, Saara's ship, I had a number of parameters in mind which generated others. So without specifically intending it, I ended up with a ship with the available energy to turn the Earth into a vapour in a second, then fully ionize the gas. The "brightness" of the ship's drive is about the same as Sol, though most of the released energy goes into exotic pair-production. Moreover, the four and a half million tons of mass produced by the "imaginary" quark-quark capture process (Nu-Syn, or Nucleon Synthesis) is diffused throughout a volume of 90% of the curvature of space-time. Instead of a local hot-spot, the "real" mass of the universe is increased infinitesimally. The ship's hull is a surface gravitational effect called a "continuity" in analogy to a "singularity". The gravitational field produced exerts itself at right angles to the hull's curvature, but not tangentially. The hull behaves much like a black hole of four and a half million tons, giving it excellent defensive capabilities since anything fired at it arrives infinity later, by which time the ship is long, long gone. Enclosed by the hull is an artificially sustained four dimensional space larger than the apparent outside diameter of about 35 feet. The plan of the interior is a tesseract though only a small number of three dimensional spaces are normally maintained. Starfire's hull is continuous with the two excursion craft held inside, as well as with the silvery tunic Saara wears. In a sense, she carries a part of the ship around with her at all times she's dressed. Starfire can operate independently as a semi-sentient being, but is in effect part of Saara's unconscious mind, and she (or any other Kjoia) can merge into the ship's systems consciously. While there isn't a theoretical upper limit to relative velocity, (matter is only forbidden to travel at the speed of light), in practice a ship such as the Starfire can only hold to a speed of 20,000 times the speed of light against the drag of Planck's constant. At 20 kilo-lights it's still 7 and a half days to the Pleiades, where Saara's home is, so this still isn't the ultimate starship. All the same, you might find this a tougher opponent than Innore's simple battlecraft.

Say, are starships funny animals?

Tim Fay Compared to apas I've been in, Brazzle has a long way to go before it becomes even mildly unpleasant. Some years ago most of the people I know belonged to Azapa. Then they formed an apa of their own, called Oasis. It got so bad that people cringed when one arrived in the mail, and merely opening a mailing caused a form of prementory nausea. Among some of the highlights were a divorce that submitted mailings of Oasis as evidence in court, a worldcon committee feud, people black-balling each others candidates for membership as tit-for-tat, and at least one person hounded out of the apa by jokes about his penis size. What Brazzle's problem is isn't nastiness, it's sensitivity combined with intolerance.

I gave up Devo after "Look Out, It's Devo." It was an awfully thin album, and I traded it for a 12 inch single of Peek-a-Boo, the only cut I particularly liked. "I'm a Big Pirate" was fun, but didn't stand up to repeated listening. So how was the recent release?

Is Mark Mothersbaugh a funny animal?

Jerry Collins Don't ever get so lazy that you leave Brazzle. If you do, I think I'll do such a parody of Bamboids that you'll never dare rejoin. (In fact, I may do a parody anyway.) Honestly, while there are several

top notch, professional and amateur, artists in Brazzle, there are only a couple who are unique. You're one of them. Brazzle would be just another comics apa to me if you left.

John Cawley I can barely grasp the idea that there are artists who are only interested in funny animals, but artists who are only interested in foxes boggles the mind. (Personally, I like ~~bad~~ foxes.) Off hand I thought of only one possible fox item for your list, but it may not count. In The Road to Oz, Dorothy, Button Bright, and the Shaggy Man meet King Dox of the foxes. Renard (the king's other name) bestows the favour of changing Button Bright's head into a foxe's. The artist John R. Neill's, neat illustrations show a little boy in a sailor suit with a snout, long ears, and bushy whiskers.

Is Button Bright a funny animal?

Is Brazzle a "professional arena for new and established funny animal folk?" Granted that there are professionals working in Rowbrazzle, but no-ones paying us. The mailings aren't for sale, we print our own contributions, and the majority of members are amateurs. To me, Brazzle looks like an amateur arena for people interested in funny animals, as good a thing to be as any other.

Ronn Sutton When are you doing something new, Ronn. I read all the Chuck the Duck stories nearly ten years ago. And since I know all the people in real life, I can't imagine them as cartoon characters. (One of them is a weird-fantasy collector and publisher of the new Borderland magazine. Another has cornered distribution to comics stores in all of Southern Ontario.)

Is the proprietor of a book store a funny animal?

Mark Wallace "The best cartoons are the ones that are done with the fewest lines and the simplest shading." Well... yes and no. With a couple of exceptions, what I've put through Rowbrazzle has been fairly clean, but were atypical of my usual style. When speaking of cartoons you can say that it's generally true that simplicity distracts less from the expression and action of the characters. Moreover, like a Japanese play, only the props essential to the story are left on the stage. Everything else is a backdrop, to set time and place or mood. If you restate that as clarity that the artist strives for, you see that simplicity is just one way of achieving that end. There are other ways of being clear without being simple. The artist can control contrast, for instance. The characters and foreground business can be set apart from their surroundings by making them bolder, by giving them different textures, by giving them a different amount of detail, by lighting them against a dark background (or vice versa), and by any number of other ways. Another useful device is composition. A strong grouping of objects will stand out against a more random background. Or you can use movement to organize your drawing. There are endless ways to one common artistic end -- to produce the best effect on the eye.

Is a realistically rendered funny animal still a funny animal?

Steven Scharff Yes, I do build starships to order at 1/1,000,000 of the cost quoted. The hulls are made from plastic containers of two sizes, and can be roughly three to six inches long. The work isn't too demanding, but it does take several hours for an elaborate type. So prices are steep for what amounts to a toy.

Ken Sample "Why do people want me to do a story or strip? What's the obsession?" That's what I'd like to know. I suspect that the answer lays in the interests of some members, who want Brazzle to be exclusively a

funny-book apa or animation apa:

The kitty I criticized wasn't "a bad effort." I wouldn't have remarked on the inking technique if I had thought the drawing was a complete mess. (I'd have said that it was a complete mess.) The intent was to point out how I thought a slight improvement might have been made, but then again I might have only been telling you how to do things my way instead of yours. It occurs to me, for instance, that the gloss effect you want on fur would probably work perfectly when your figures are coloured. The zip-a-tone you mentioned may very well capture the same effect.

Your comment to Robert Haynie makes good sense. ("I will not draw anyone's character without first asking permission.") I don't know how well it covers all situations though. Will you never draw Popyeye without King Features' permission? Is it alright to draw a Bambloid if you're friends with Jerry and have been doing drawings for each other all along? But by and large, asking is a good idea if you're dealing with a person who loves his characters and you're not certain if they want other people messing with them. Even when you know it's alright, permission to use another person's characters should never be taken for granted. Your other rule, giving the person the original, is also a good one. But I have an obsession with originals. Normally I give the person a good copy, even if I have to draw the thing over again to do it.

Fanzines deteriorate as a result of exposure to light and air. If they're kept stacked, they'll keep pretty good. I have ditto fanzines from the mid 1940's that haven't either faded or discoloured. The worst you might expect is discolouration around the edges of the pages, where air seeps in. In the case of recycled paper, discolouration can happen in only a year or two, but shouldn't get much worse. If you can afford it, bag fanzines like comic books, and they should last as long as you do. If you're thinking in terms of posterity, you need acid free bags and acid free paper for interleaving the pages.

"Exotic" is a good word to describe not merely aliens, but also fantasy creatures, semi-humans, deities, and anything else that isn't an animal caricature. Are

exotics funny animals for the purposes of Brazzie?

Steve Martin Cat's eyes are very hard to make expressive, since they don't seem to be looking up or down. You can raise and lower eyelids, knot brows, and so on, but the slitted pupil still makes the eye look blind or staring. What I suggest is making the pupil a bit more round, so that you can show white at the bottom or top.

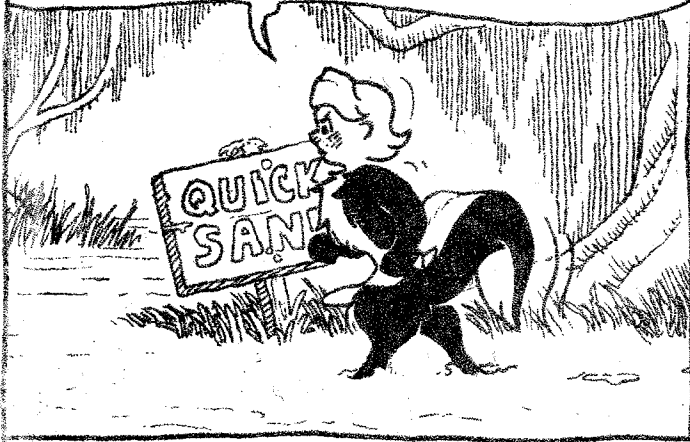
Robert Haynes I have done the occasional story, most of them unsuitable for Brazzie even by my lax standards. For instance, there were ten or eleven daily strips called 2020 that were SF humour. More recently I did a two page story for my Trans-Atlantic fan fund campaign (I lost anyway), that featured the candidates in a time-wars plot that led to a confusion of alternate worlds. There are unfinished stories that I began as much as 10 years ago. Some are only pencilled, a couple have been inked as far as they went, but they were all SF or fantasy. Then there were the two comics with Saara in earlier mailings of Brazzie. More recently I've discovered the so-called alternate comic, such as Cerabus and Albedo, and have plans for a couple of stories. One involves "exotics" and the other funny animals. Like most things I do, though, it's a dead heat between me and continental drift.

What, exactly, is the detail on your Foxfire's uniform? Metallic reflection, or glow? Is the costume glass or is it made of a force field? Saara's tunic, partly explained in comments to Steve Gallacci, is an extension of her starship, and has a frictionless, reflective surface. It's lightweight, pliable, but at right angles to the surface it's hard and stiff as steel. While wearing it Saara is completely protected, can control her personal environment, draws power from the ship, and has access to Starfire's sensors and software. She can do gaudy things like direct energy beams, tractor beams, operate the aporther effect, and so on. It's also possible to use the ship's drive field to produce personal flight, but that's sheer exhibitionism...

Schirm Actually, when you come right down to it, are all your characters funny animals?



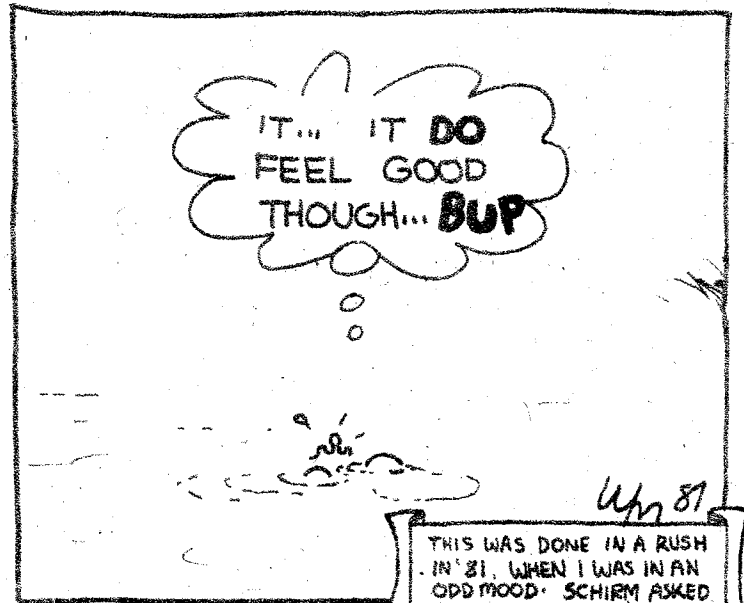
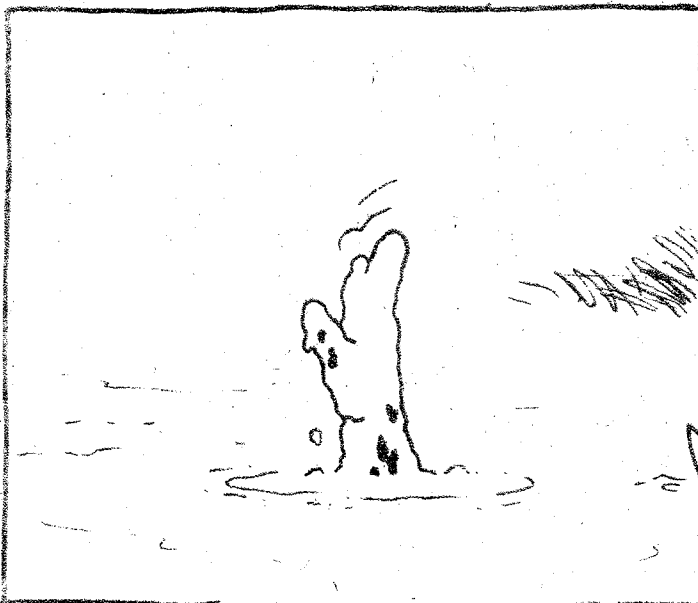
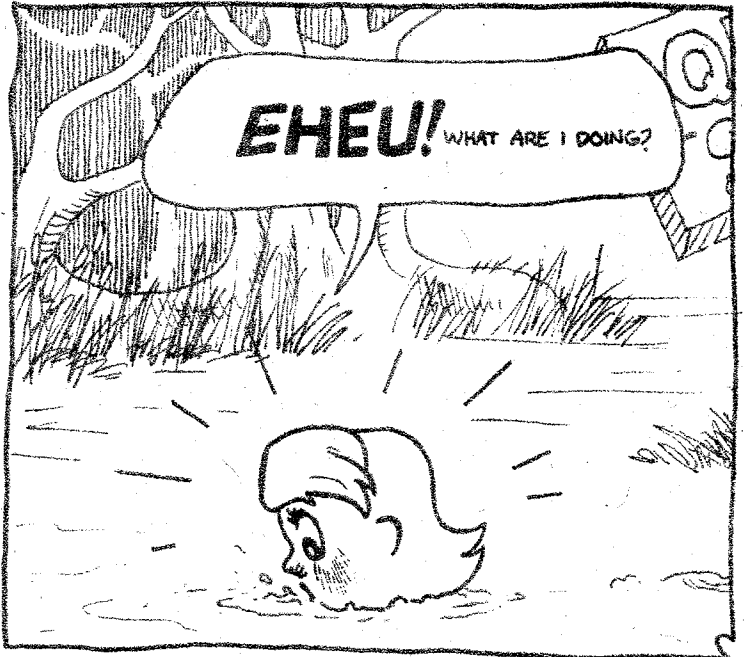
HMPH, THAT POGO, HE NEVER NOTICE ME. I CAN BE DROWNINGS IN THIS QUICKSSANDS AND HE NOT CARE. HMPH. I COULD WALKING INNOCENT ALONG PATH AND **PHOOSH** , MY FEET SINKS IN MUCK!



JUST LIKE THATS I CAUGHT IN QUICKSSAND AND IS SINKING TO SMOTHERY DEATH IF I NOT ESCAPE. IN LESS THAN NO TIMES I UP TO HIP IN SMELLY MUDS...



THE MORE IS STRUGGLE, THE DEEPER I SINKS. **HEE HEE** IT FEEL NICE AND SOFT... IN MINUTE I DISAPPEAR IN MUDS FOREVER AND NO-ONE IS EVEN KNOW I GONE...



4/21/81
THIS WAS DONE IN A RUSH IN '81. WHEN I WAS IN AN ODD MOOD. SCHIRM ASKED ME TO RUN IT IN BRAZZLE. DON'T BLAME ME. Janal