MAD

WHAT, ME WORRY?

THE ART AND HUMOR OF MAD MAGAZINE

Large Print Labels

"Strange that a man who has wit enough to write a satire should have folly enough to publish it."

—Alfred E. Neuman, MAD #34, August 1957, from Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanack

It is difficult to imagine a time when irreverent humor was uncommon across media, but in the 1950s, anti-establishment messaging was not the cultural norm. Enlightening and offensive in equal measure, MAD Magazine cast a skeptical and satirical eye on American life with its distinctive blend of images and text.

This counter-culture touchstone has delighted readers and spoken truth to power for seven decades. Silly, serious, and shocking, often all at once, MAD was controversial from the start. Originally launched in 1952 as an EC Comics comic book series, it was founded by editor Harvey Kurtzman and publisher William Gaines with an inaugural issue titled *Tales Calculated to Drive You Mad*. Reimagined in 1955 as a bi-monthly magazine, MAD tackled the nation's most pressing concerns with its unique brand of subversive humor—from McCarthyism and the Cold War to political corruption, consumerism, and the

defining social movements of the day. No one was safe from MAD's satirical eye.

Between 1952 and 2021, MAD published 585 issues, along with commemorative specials, paperbacks, and compilation projects. Sharp satirical humor, brilliant visual commentary, zany gags, and a penchant for double entendre have been the magazine's hallmarks, made possible by the so-called "Usual Gang of Idiots"—the talented band of creators whose work has been showcased on its pages for decades. Gifted next-generation contributors, who surreptitiously read the magazine in their youth, have also found a home within its zeitgeist.

EC Comics
(American, 1944–)

Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD:
Humor in a Jugular Vein
Issues #1 through #11, 1952 to 1954

Comic Books
Collection of Robert L. Reiner, Bill
Harrison pedigree

First published in August 1952, with a cover dated October/November, MAD began as a humor comic book, part of the EC line published by Bill Gaines from the offices on Lafayette Street in Lower Manhattan. Although editor Harvey Kurtzman shortened it to MAD, the title *Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD* was inspired by the radio show Suspense, which opened with "Tales well calculated to keep you in…suspense!" The phrase "Humor in a Jugular Vein" reflected the publication's cutting-edge satire. Written almost entirely by Harvey Kurtzman, the first issue featured art by Jack Davis, Will Elder, Kurtzman, John Severin, and Wally Wood.

EC Comics
(American, 1944–)

MAD Magazine
Issues #24 through #41
(minus #28 and #39)

Magazines
Collection of Robert L. Reiner

In 1955, with issue #24, MAD transitioned from a comic book to a magazine. Though this helped MAD avoid content regulations imposed by the Comics Code Authority (CCA), Harvey Kurtzman was intent on recreating MAD as a magazine, a shift that Bill Gaines supported to keep his editor from defecting to Pageant, a monthly journal, for higher pay. After Kurtzman's ultimate departure due to a disagreement over terms, Al Feldstein stepped in as editor with issue #29, in September 1956. The magazine's logo, which remained virtually unchanged throughout its history, was designed by Kurtzman.

Established in 1954 by the Comics Magazine Association of America, the CCA enabled comic publishers to self-regulate content. It was a direct response to widespread public and governmental concerns over the graphic content and violence in comic books.

1952 to 1956
The Kurtzman Years

Harvey Kurtzman began working for William Gaines's EC Comics in 1950, editing cautionary anti-war tales disguised as adventure comics. Looking to increase Kurtzman's in-come, Gaines suggested he edit a third title. Debuting in late summer 1952, Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD—or, more simply, MAD—was unlike any comic book then on the stands. In fact, its entire purpose was to make fun of other comics.

After a slow start, MAD hit success with issue #4, which featured "Superduperman," illustrated by Wally Wood. Sales soared, and Kurtzman followed with parodies of other superheroes, as well as takedowns of newspaper comic strips, TV shows, movies, and even politics. Two years into its run, Kurtzman tried to convince Gaines to retool MAD as a magazine. With the comic book industry under pressure from Congress, which held hearings to assess whether comic books were creating a generation of juvenile delinquents, Gaines decided he had nothing to lose and granted Kurtzman's request. Issue #24, dubbed "the New MAD,"

appeared in the spring of 1955.

Written almost entirely by Kurtzman and illustrated mainly by the same trio of artists who anchored the original comic book—Will Elder, Jack Davis, and Wally Wood—the new, "slick" incarnation of MAD, taking on nearly every aspect of American culture, was an immediate sensation.

Sam Viviano (American, b.1953)

Portrait of Bill Gaines, 2023
Illustration for the upcoming documentary
When We Went MAD! The History and
Influence of MAD!

Ink and Dr. Martin's Dyes on Bristol board
Collection of Sam Viviano

Marie Severin (American, 1929–2018)

The EC Comics Bullpen
circa 1950s

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

In this drawing by Marie Severin, the artists, writers, and staff of EC Comics surround MAD publisher William Gaines—creators of popular comic books focusing on horror, crime, military, and science fiction themes. A trailblazing female cartoonist, Severin began her career as a colorist and became a full-time member of the Marvel Comics team, developing characters such as Spider-Woman, the Cat, and the Living Tribunal. Known for her caricatures of her colorful colleagues, she also created cover concepts for many of Marvel's top artists.

Initially known as Educational Comics, EC was founded by Maxwell Gaines, who specialized in youth-oriented titles. Following his death in 1947, his son Bill took over the reins and began

publishing stories with mature and progressive themes, including MAD.

Wally Wood (American, 1927–1981)

Superduperman, 1953
Illustration for "Superduperman" by
Harvey Kurtzman, *Tales Calculated to Drive
You MAD* #4, April/May 1953

Ink over graphite on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

A parody of both Superman and Captain Marvel,
Superduperman appeared in the fourth issue of
MAD, revolutionizing its approach to storytelling
and sparking an uptick in the publication's sales.

John Severin (American, 1921–2012)

Sheik of Araby, 1953
Story illustration for "Sheik of Araby" by Harvey Kurtzman, *Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD* #3, February/March 1953

Ink over graphite on Craftint Duotone board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

The Sheik of Araby parodies a 1921 song by Harry B. Smith and Francis Wheeler, with music by Ted Snyder, following the release of *The Sheik*, a feature film starring Rudolph Valentino. The tune became a Tin Pan Alley and New Orleans jazz standard, quoted in F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1925 book, The Great Gatsby. Severin's drawing cleverly portrays a French Foreign Legion soldier reading a newspaper that depicts his real-life experiences.

In addition to *Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD*, Severin's work appeared in *Cracked, Crazy, Creepy, Two-Fisted Tales, Frontline Combat, Our Army at War, Journey into Mystery, Savage Tales, The Incredible Hulk*, and many others.

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

Casey at the Bat! 1953
Story illustration for "Casey at the Bat!"
by Ernest Lawrence Thayer, *Tales
Calculated to Drive You MAD #6*,
August/September 1953

Ink over graphite on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Jack Davis's fluid brushwork and attenuated figures
capture the excitement of *Casey at the Bat*, a mock-
heroic poem written in 1888 by Earnest Lawrence
Thayer and reprinted at least five times in MAD
publications.

A stanza from the poem read:

*There was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped
into his place;
There was pride in Casey's bearing, and a smile lit
Casey's face.
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly*

doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the bat.

Davis's work appeared in the first 30 issues of MAD, in *Panic and Cracked*, and other publications edited by Harvey Kurtzman including *Trump, Humbug, and Help!* He went on to create illustrations for record jackets, movie posters, books, and magazines, including *Time* and *TV Guide*.

Wally Wood (American, 1927–1981)

Smilin' Melvin, 1953
Story illustration for "Smilin' Melvin" by Harvey Kurtzman, *Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD* #7, October/November 1953

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Wally Wood's Smilin' Melvin parodied *The Adventures of Smilin' Jack*, a popular, long-running aviation comic strip created by cartoonist Zack Mosley that first appeared in the Chicago Tribune in 1933. A skilled comic book artist, writer, and publisher, Wood worked for MAD from 1952 to 1964, and created drawings for other EC titles, including *Weird Fantasy* and *Weird Science*. He self-published a graphic novel series titled *The Wizard King* and produced imagery for trading cards, packaging, advertisements, and album covers. Wood was posthumously inducted into the Jack Kirby Hall of Fame in 1989 and the Will Eisner Comic Book Hall of Fame in 1992.

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

Beware of Imitations, 1954
Advertisement for *Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD* #11, May 1954

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Johnny Craig (American, 1926–2001)

Crime SuspenStories, 1954
Cover illustration for Crime SuspenStories #22, May 1954

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

EC Comics published 27 issues of the bi-monthly crime comic, *Crime SuspenStories*, from 1950 to 1955. This image, created by cartoonist, writer, and editor Johnny Craig, served as evidence during the 1954 Senate hearings as proof of the corrupting influence of comics on America's youth. The Code of the Comics Magazine Association of America was announced to the public on October 26, 1954, to regulate children's exposure to violent content.

When asked by U.S. Senator Estes Kefauver whether he thought this cover was in good taste, EC publisher Bill Gaines responded, "Yes, sir, I do, for the cover of a horror comic." Gaines cancelled *Crime SuspenStories* and other titles because, due to the controversy, distributors refused to carry

them. Jack Davis, Will Elder, Al Feldstein, Frank Frazetta, Harvey Kurtzman, Joe Orlando, Wally Wood, and others created art for EC's crime and horror line as well as MAD

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

Hah! Noon! 1954
Story illustration for "Hah! Noon!" by Harvey Kurtzman, *Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD #9*, March 1954

Ink and Zipatone over graphite on Bristol board James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

In *High Noon*, a popular western film released in 1952, Marshal Will Kane, played by Gary Cooper, faces a gang of deadly killers at "high noon" when his nemesis arrives on the 12 p.m. train. Chaos ensues in this raucous parody, which features the exaggerated speech that MAD employed as comedic emphasis, as in "Dyew Not For-Sake Me Oh Mah Dallink!"

In addition to movie parodies, Davis created publicity posters for major motion pictures, including Woody Allen's *Bananas*, Robert Altman's *The Long Goodbye*, and Stanley Kramer's *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World.*

Will Elder (American, 1921–2008)

Woman Wonder, 1954
Story illustration for "Woman Wonder" by Harvey Kurtzman, *Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD* #10, April 1954

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

In this zany drawing, a diverse group of questionable characters races to escape Woman Wonder, a superhero inspired by DC Comics' *Wonder Woman*, created by American psychologist and comic book writer William Moulton Marston in 1941. When published, MAD was a four-color comic; a staff artist later colored the drawing.

Will Elder was an illustrator and comic book artist known for his madcap style. He layered gags and humorous details one upon another in an approach that he described as "chicken fat" in the making of soup. The term came from what Elder and editor Harvey Kurtzman knew "were the parts of the strip that gave it more flavor but did very little to

advance the storyline." Elder said, "That's what chicken fat does… it advances the flavor of the soup and, as we all know, too much chicken fat will kill you!"

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

You Axed For It! 1955
Story illustrations for Panic #7, March 1955

Ink over graphite on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Wally Wood (American, 1927–1981)

The Cane Mutiny, 1955
Story illustration for "The Cane Mutiny!" by Harvey Kurtzman, *Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD* #19, January 1955

Ink, graphite, and Zipatone on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Wally Wood's Cane Mutiny spoofs *The Caine Mutiny*, the popular 1954 film based on Herman Wouk's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. The artist's drawings, like the movie, are set in the Pacific Theater of World War II, portraying life aboard a Navy destroyer and the court-martial of its executive officer for mutiny—with a touch of romance and a post-trial "slosh and slip" fight scene. Humphrey Bogart, José Ferrer, Van Johnson, and Fred MacMurray were among the movie's stars.

Wood was a MAD contributor from its start as a comic book from 1952 to 1964. Widely known for his work on *Weird Science* and *Weird Fantasy*, published by EC Comics, as well as *Creepy* by

Warren Publishing, Wood also wrote and illustrated graphic novels, and created art for advertising, packaging, posters, trading cards, and record album covers.

Wally Wood (American, 1927–1981)

The Cane Mutiny, 1955
Story illustration for "The Cane Mutiny!" by Harvey Kurtzman, *Tales Calculated to Drive You* MAD #19, January 1955

Ink, graphite, and Zipatone on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

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Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

Paul Revere's Ride, 1955
Story illustration for "Paul Revere's Ride!" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Tales Calculated to Drive You* MAD #20, February 1955

Ink over graphite on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Poetry parodies presenting twists on literary verse were popular MAD features. Editor Harvey Kurtzman noted that they "saved on writing time and scriptwriting fees." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's fictionalized poem commemorating Paul Revere's midnight ride on April 18, 1775, inspired this uproarious work. *The Atlantic Monthly* first published the poem in January 1861.

Harvey Kurtzman (American, 1924–1993)

The New MAD, 1955
Cover illustration for MAD #24, July 1955

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

This historic illustration for the cover of the new
MAD—reimagined as a magazine following its 23
issue run as a comic book—boasted a cover logo
and border by editor Harvey Kurtzman. Borrowing
from classical motifs, including scrolls, flourishes,
and insets that illustrate MAD themes, the border
drawing mimics a skilled engraving, giving the
new MAD a sense of gravitas. Then unnamed, the
grinning boy who came to be known as Alfred E.
Neuman appears at the top of the page.

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

Wrestling, 1955
Story illustration for "Wrestling" by
Harvey Kurtzman, MAD # 24, July 1955

Ink wash, ink, and graphite
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

Here Now The Escape-From-The Nazis Scene The Way We'd Like To See It, 1955
Illustration for "Scenes We'd Like to See!" by Harvey Kurtzman, *Tales Calculated to Drive You* MAD #23, May 1955

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Scenes We'd Like to See became a staple of MAD magazine, written and illustrated by a variety of artists and writers. The series of one-page vignettes turned world events, advertising, and popular culture back on themselves to present more agreeable outcomes, as seen here.

Wally Wood (American, 1927–1981)

Is a Trip To The Moon Possible, 1955
Story illustration for "Is a Trip to the Moon Possible?" by Harvey Kurtzman,
MAD #24, July 1955

Ink on Craftint Duotone Board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Published in MAD's first magazine issue, Wally Wood's detailed pen-and-ink illustration documents the many spaces and functions needed for imaginary, interplanetary travel. At the very top is the Pilot Room, where the "pilot sits upright in extreme tip top of rocket…preferably man with pointy head."

Will Elder (American, 1921–2008)

Is This Your Life, 1955
Story illustration for "Is This Your Life?" by Harvey Kurtzman, MAD #24, July 1955

Ink over graphite on Craftint Duotone board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Will Elder's lively illustration parodies the hit program *This Is Your Life*—an early reality show that launched on NBC radio in 1952 and continued on television from 1953 to 1961. Hosted by creator Ralph Edwards, the show revisited people's lives through commentary from family, friends, and colleagues. Abraham Lincoln, Bob Hope, Marilyn Monroe, Groucho Marks, Donald Duck, and The Lone Ranger, as well as logos like the Quaker Oats Man, Aunt Jemima, and Snap, Crackle, and Pop, are among the audience members.

Elder drew this work on Craftint Duotone Board, an illustration board used by commercial artists during the mid-twentieth century. Imbued with a latent surface pattern, it revealed a pattern of dots

and lines when brushed with a liquid developer, showing areas of light and shade in art designed for reproduction.

Will Elder (American, 1921–2008)

It's so funny the way Poppa's eyes bug out because he doesn't have the Sanofranized label, 1955
Illustration for "Sanofranized" by Harvey Kurtzman, MAD #26, November 1955

Ink and ink wash with white paint
on illustration board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Will Elder's humorously macabre drawing is a double parody. It spoofs Charles Addams' long-running *New Yorker* cartoon series, *The Addams Family*, as well as Sanforization, a process of pre-shrinking fabric before it is made into a garment. Elder puts Gomez through the ringer in the same way cloth is fed through a sanforizing machine and moistened with water or steam during the process.

Will Elder (American, 1921–2008)

What's Happened to the…Pulp Magazines, 1956
Illustration for "Pulp Magazines"
by James Blish, MAD #30, December 1956

Ink and watercolor over graphite
on illustration board
James Halperin Collection,
Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Wally Wood (American, 1927–1981)

Real Estate Ads, 1956
Illustrations for "Real Estate Ads" by
Al Feldstein, MAD #29, September 1956

Ink and wash on Craftint Duotone Board
Collection of Nell and David

Misleading real estate ads promising the fulfillment
of the American Dream are parodied in this series,
which portrays a family seeking a spacious
suburban home.

Wally Wood began his association with EC Comics
in 1952. He inspired Bill Gaines to publish the
science fiction comics, *Weird Science* and *Weird
Fantasy*, and created art for *Two-Fisted Tales* and
Tales from the Crypt. Wood continued working for
MAD until 1964.

Don Martin (American, 1930–2000)

**Two weeks ago,
I was laid off my job, 1956**
Story illustration for "Alfred E. Neuman
Answers Your Questions" by Al Feldstein,
MAD #29, September 1956

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

In the recurring feature, *Alfred E. Neuman Answers
Your Questions*, Don Martin responded to life's
perplexing problems through the art of humor. In
1956, he began working for MAD and was given
an assignment on his first visit to the office. "They
encouraged me to loosen up a little bit, and that's
what I did," said Martin, who continued to create
gag cartoons and television, film, and literary
parodies for more than three decades.

The Feldstein Rebuild

On the heels of MAD's enormous success, Harvey Kurtzman approached Bill Gaines, demanding majority ownership of the magazine. When Gaines refused, Kurtzman left and took his talents—along with those of Jack Davis, Will Elder, and Al Jaffee—to Playboy publisher Hugh Hefner, who financed a humor magazine titled Trump. It lasted two issues.

With no editor and practically no writers or artists, Gaines reached out to Al Feldstein, who had helmed most of the EC Comics line, and put him in the editor's chair. With the help of associate editors Jerry DeFuccio and Nick Meglin and art director John Putnam, Feldstein recruited freelancers whose names would become synonymous with MAD—writers Frank Jacobs and Tom Koch; artists Bob Clarke, Kelly Freas, Mort Drucker, and George Woodbridge; and cartoonists Don Martin and Dave Berg. He also commissioned Norman Mingo to paint the official portrait of Alfred E. Neumann; the gap-toothed kid Kurtzman had used as a running joke. The "What – Me Worry?" kid debuted on the cover of issue #30 and has appeared on virtually

every cover since.

Over the next seven years, Feldstein continued to experiment, adding more MAD legends, including writers Larry Siegel, Arnie Kogen, Dick DeBartolo, Lou Silverstone, and Stan Hart; artists Paul Coker and Jack Rickard; cartoonists Antonio Prohias, Duck Edwing, and Sergio Aragonés; and photographer Lester Krauss. Each brought innovative ideas for features that would go on to become MAD staples, including "The Lighter Side of…," "Spy vs. Spy," and Al Jaffee's "Fold-Ins", which debuted in 1964 in issue #86.

Sam Viviano (American, b.1953)

Portrait of Al Feldstein, 2023
Illustration for the upcoming documentary,
*When We Went MAD! The History and
Influence of MAD!*

Ink and Dr. Martin's Dyes on Bristol board
Collection of Sam Viviano

Bob Clarke (American, 1926–2013)

Planning Where to Go, Impressing the Girl Financially, 1957
Illustrations for "The MAD Dating Technique," MAD #32, April 1957

Ink over graphite on Craftint Duotone board
Collection of Sam Viviano

An illustrator who worked for both advertising and editorial clients, Bob Clarke was known for his versatility and ability to emulate any style. His earliest professional job as a *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* comic book artist, his work on Stars and Stripes, and his staff job at the advertising firm Geyer, Newell, and Ganger prepared him to be an artist at MAD. One of the magazine's mainstays, Clarke created art for more than 600 MAD articles between 1956 and 1998. John Ficarra, who succeeded Al Feldstein as editor in 1985, said of Clarke, "He was a great designer and a terrific mimic of other people's styles. And if there was a problem, you could give it to Bob, and he would usually solve it for you."

J. Fred Muggs (Cameroonian, b.1952)

[Abstraction], 1958
Cover illustration for MAD #38,
March 1958

Oil on canvas
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

This unique MAD cover was painted by J. Fred
Muggs, an African chimpanzee who appeared on
various television shows in the 1950s, including
NBC's *Today Show* with host Dave Garroway.
Dressed in human clothing for his appearances,
Muggs created finger paintings in oils that spoofed
the abstract expressionist art of the era. He was
also parodied in MAD by Harvey Kurtzman under
the name of J. Floyd Gluggs.

Left
J. Fred Muggs

Wally Wood (American, 1927–1981)

MAD's Discount Center Owner of the Year, 1963
Story illustration for "MAD's Discount Center Owner of the Year" by Larry Siegel, MAD #79, June 1963

Ink and ink wash over graphite
on illustration board
James Halperin Collection,
Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

The first of a five-page story, Wally Wood's work parodies Dorothy Kilgallen, a well-known mid-century journalist, columnist, and game show panelist who was a regular on the popular television show, *What's My Line?* In 1960, Kilgallen was among the first 500 celebrities to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Scripted by writer Larry Siegel, this story features "Dorothy Killfifth" interviewing the owner of "Kuttrayte City," a discount store that is frequented by Superman and Mighty Mouse, among others.

Bob Clarke (American, 1926–2013)

Mother's Day Cards from Some Children Who Didn't Turn Out Very Well, 1960
Illustrations for "Mother's Day Cards from Some Children Who Didn't Turn Out Very Well" by Frank Jacobs, MAD #55, June 1960

Ink, graphite, and gouache on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Bob Clarke's series of satirical cards offer Mother's Day greetings from a cadre of notorious villains, including Blackbeard, a fearsome English pirate; Lizzie Borden, who murdered her father and stepmother in Fall River, Massachusetts; John Wilkes Booth, the stage actor who assassinated President Abraham Lincoln; Nero, a tyrannical Roman emperor; gangster and mob boss Al Capone; and Benedict Arnold, a traitor to the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War.

Bill Everett (American, 1917–1973)

It's a Cracked World! 1958
Cover illustration for Cracked #1,
March 1958

Acrylic on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Founded in 1958, *Cracked* was one of several
humor magazines created in MAD's likeness. It also
proved to have the most longevity, as it remained
in print for almost 50 years. This historic work
by comic book writer and illustrator Bill Everett
appeared on the cover of the magazine's first issue.
Here, the world is cracked open by the masses—
factual and fictional characters including President
Eisenhower, Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Marilyn Monroe
and Arthur Miller, Jayne Mansfield, Marlon Brando,
Cleopatra, Santa Claus, Atlas, and Adam and Eve.

After surviving tuberculosis and a troubled youth,
Everett worked in advertising and served in World
War II before going on to become a prolific comic
book artist and writer. He is best known for creating

Namor: The Sub-Mariner, and for co-creating Marvel Comics' *Zombie* and *Daredevil* with writer Stan Lee.

George Woodbridge
(American, 1930–2004)

See Them Now, 1958
Illustration for "See Them Now" by
Ernie Kovacs, MAD #37, January 1958

Ink on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Jack Rickard (American, 1922–1983)

MAD's Physical Fitness Program, 1961
Illustration for MAD #7, December 1961

Ink and wash on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Jack Rickard (American, 1922–1983)

**A Mad Guide to
Party Conversation, 1962**
Illustration for MAD #72, July 1962

Ink on board
Collection of Sam Viviano

Known as an exceptional draftsperson and humorist, Jack Rickard worked in advertising for prominent agencies such as J. Walter Thompson and Young & Rubicam, but he also spent part of his workweek on assignments for MAD. After studying art at the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rickard illustrated covers for popular men's magazines like *Adventure* and *True Detective* and helped Al Capp with his Li'l Abner strip. He began working for MAD in 1961, and his art appeared in 175 issues of the magazine.

Don Martin (American, 1930–2000)

[Manhole], 1962
Cover illustration for MAD's *Maddest Artist Don Martin Steps Out!* by Don Martin, Signet Books, 1962

Ink and watercolor over graphite
on illustration board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

This animated cover illustration enticed readers to the first collection of Don Martin's gag cartoons and story illustrations featuring his original characters, Fester Bestertester, a hard-boiled private eye, and Karbunkle, his sidekick.

Don Martin (American, 1930–2000)

The Epicure, 1964
Illustration for "The Epicure"
by Edgar A. Guest, MAD #84,
January 1964

Ink over graphite on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

**The Mad Academy Awards
for Parents, 1964**
Story illustration for "The MAD Academy
Awards for Parents" by Stan Hart,
MAD #89, September 1964

ink on paper
Collection of Nell and David

Mort Drucker and his wife Barbara were the parents
of two daughters, so the subject of this series must
have felt close to home. His comic scenarios parody
award shows that reward performers and athletes
for their accomplishments in specific categories.
Scripted by comedy writer Stan Hart, *The MAD
Academy Awards for Parents* presented a unique
group of honors particular to people with children,
including the Coming Home Late Award, You're
Making Me a Nervous Wreck Award, and the Never
Mind, I'll Do It Myself Award, to name a few.

The Classic Era

Once the basic formula was set, Al Feldstein allowed his writers and artists to do what they did best: create sophisticated satire and sophomoric humor. MAD's antismoking campaign and anti-Vietnam War articles gave added weight to much of its cultural commentary, and Nixon and Watergate proved to be a gold mine for the magazine. The creative team was at its peak. Irving Schild took over as MAD's resident photographer, and artists Angelo Torres, Bob Jones, and Harry North joined the group now known as "The Usual Gang of Idiots," along with cartoonists Paul Peter Porges and John Caldwell. In the late 1970s, several new writers also began contributing, including Dennis Snee, Barry Liebmann, Mike Snider, and John Ficarra. MAD's popularity was at an all-time high, with its circulation reaching over 2.5 million by 1973.

The era ended with two significant losses. Norman Mingo, the artist of the majority of MAD's covers over the preceding quarter-century, died in May 1980, and art director John Putnam passed away

six months later. Leonard Brenner, who had been Putnam's production manager since 1958, moved into the art director's chair, while artist Jack Rickard assumed the role of MAD's primary cover artist.

Sergio Aragonés
(Spanish-Mexican-American, b. 1937)

Drawn-Out Dramas, 2006
Marginal illustrations by Sergio Aragonés, MAD #159, June 1973

Ink on paper
Collection of Sergio Aragonés

Drawn-Out Dramas, also known as *MAD Marginals*, are a running stream of gag cartoons by Sergio Aragonés that appear throughout the magazine—in corners, margins, and the narrow spaces between panels. Like *A MAD Look At...*, marginals debuted in MAD #76 and have appeared in every issue since then, except for MAD #111. The artist was in Europe at the time, and his drawings did not arrive at MAD's offices in time for publication.

Norman Mingo (American, 1896–1980)

Alfred as Santa Claus, 1967
Cover illustration for MAD #108,
January 1967

Gouache and watercolor on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

George Woodbridge
(American, 1930–2004)

The High Diver, 1970
Illustration for "The High Diver" by Sergio
Aragones, MAD #132, January 1970

Ink on paper
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

George Woodbridge
(American, 1930–2004)

43-Man Squamish, 1965
Story illustration for "MAD Magazine Introduces 43 Man Squamish" by Tom Koch for MAD #95, June 1965

Ink and gouache on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

A spoof of the complexities and commercialization of college sports, *43-Man Squamish* had more of an impact on America's youth than writer Tom Koch and illustrator George Woodbridge ever imagined. What is Squamish, and how is it played?

According to MAD:

"There are 43 players on each side; positions include Grouches, Brooders, Wicket Men, Niblings, Frummerts, Overblats, Underblats, Back-Up Finks, Leapers, and a Dummy. The game is played on a pentagonal field, or Flutney. Players can carry,

kick, or throw a spheroid Pritz, made from ibex hide and stuffed with bluejay feathers. A game is made up of five Snivels, or downs, within which to score, generally by running across the goal line for a 17-point Woomick or by smacking the Pritz across the line with a Frullip, a stick shaped like a shepherd's crook."

Although the game seemed unplayable, students in both colleges and high schools in North America found a way to play and challenged other teams. According to Professor Jeffrey Segrave at Skidmore College, students played at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, SUNY Stonybrook, Marquette University, and the Universities of Calgary and Alberta. "Since no one had a Pritz, players used a two-foot-long green plastic alligator. No one had Frullips either, so players used an assortment of hockey sticks, lacrosse sticks, rakes, and brooms."

Dave Berg (American, 1920–2002)

Sure Cure, 1971
Illustration for MAD's Dave Berg Looks at Our Sick World, Warner Books, 1971

Ink on paper
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

A keen observer of human nature and life's small moments, Dave Berg drew in a more realistic style than many at MAD. Caricatures of his family and his own alter ego—the cranky hypochondriac Roger Kaputnick—turned up in his drawings, as did caricatures of MAD staff members and fellow artists. Sixteen collections of Berg's cartoons were published between 1964 and 1987, including his 1971 look at "our sick world."

In addition to his comedic work, Berg held an honorary doctoral degree in theology. MAD avoided religious themes, but Berg produced more serious artworks for *Moshiach Time*s and the B'nai Brith newsletter. Al Jaffee noted that Berg wanted to be taken seriously, but "the staffers at MAD just didn't take anything seriously. Most of all, ourselves."

Dave Berg (American, 1920–2002)

Kid Stuff, 1969
Illustration for MAD's *Dave Berg
Looks at Modern Thinking* by
Dave Berg, Warner Books, 1969

Pen and ink on paper
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

Humorous illustrator Dave Berg worked for MAD
from 1957 until 2002—for nearly half a century.
Berg's pipe-smoking alter ego, Roger Kaputnick,
was created in his likeness, and other than Alfred
E. Neumann, made more appearances in MAD
art than any other character. Mr. Kaputnick was a
regular in *The Lighter Side Of…*, a feature that Berg
developed in 1961.

Dave Berg (American, 1920–2002)

The Lighter Side of Fashion, 1990
Illustration for Dave Berg's "The Lighter Side of…," MAD #293, March 1990

Ink and marker on Bristol board
Collection of Sam Viviano

MAD artists often appeared in each other's art, and in this case, Nick Meglin became the star of Dave Berg's comic—Meglin was Editor of MAD from 1985 to 2005.

Dave Berg (American, 1920–2002)

Headline Story, 1971
Illustration for MAD's *Dave Berg Looks at Our Sick World*, Warner Books, 1971

Ink on paper
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kamineste

Dave Berg (American, 1920–2002)

The Lighter Side of Collecting, 1975
Illustration for "The Lighter Side of Collecting," MAD #173, March 1975

Ink on board
Collection of Jason Levine

Dave Berg (American, 1920–2002)

"The Lighter Side of…{Nick in track suit}"
Icomic strip for MAD #290,
October 1989 llustration

Ink and graymarker on Bristol board
Collection of Sam Viviano

Sergio Aragonés
 (Spanish-Mexican-American, b. 1937)

A Mad Look at Musicians, 1967
Illustration for MAD #112, July 1967

Ink on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Born in Spain, Sergio Aragonés immigrated to France during the Spanish Civil War and eventually settled in Mexico with his family when he was six years old. His love of drawing began at an early age, encouraged by his parents. His work earned him recognition and helped him gain footing in a new country. Described as "one of the most prolific and brilliant cartoonists of his generation," he was also known as the fastest.

Aragonés arrived in New York City in 1962 with little cash and a portfolio of drawings that he eventually brought to MAD. He was received warmly by Antonio Prohías, who spoke less English than he, and Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein encouraged him to hone and submit his work. First published in MAD in 1963, Aragonés continues to contribute cartoons

to this day. "*A MAD Look At…,*" his popular wordless strip that appeared in every issue, focused on themes inspired by daily life, like the one seen here.

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

**The Mad Primer of Bigots, Extremists
and Other Loose Ends, 1969**
Illustrations for "The Mad Primer of Bigots,
Extremists and Other Loose Ends" by
Frank Jacobs and Stan Hart, MAD #129,
September 1969

Pen and ink
Collection of Nell and David

Known to be critical of extremists of every stripe,
MAD published the still-relevant *MAD Primer
of Bigots, Extremists and Other Loose Ends*—
an examination of strident social and political
movements presented in the form of a children's
reading primer. Jack Davis is at his best as a social
commentator in this series of drawings, which were
accompanied by this excerpt of Frank Jacobs' text:

See the Super Patriot.
Hear him preach how he loves his country.
Hear how he hates "Liberals" …
And "Moderates" …and "Intellectuals" …

And "Activists" … and "Pacifists"
And "Minority Groups" … and "Aliens" …
And "Unions" … and "Teenagers" …
And the "Very Rich" … and the "Very Poor" …
And "People with Foreign-Sounding Names" …
Now you know what a Super Patriot is.
He's someone who loves his country.
While hating 93% of the people who live in it.

Frank Frazetta (American, 1928–2010)

Early One Morning in the Jungle, 1966
Back cover illustration for MAD #106,
October 1966

Watercolor
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Renowned twentieth-century fantasy and science fiction illustrator Frank Frazetta infused his art for MAD with humor, as in this back cover sequence for the magazine. An occasional contributor to EC Comics, Frazetta created one cover and three back cover illustrations for MAD—and may have done more if not for the fact that the company kept original artworks.

The DC Years

Bill Gaines sold MAD in the early 1960s, and by the time he died in 1992, it had become a small part of Time Warner and its subsidiary, DC Comics. The new management tasked Nick Meglin and John Ficarra with rebooting the magazine to make it "edgier." Over the next decade, they added new features like "The MAD 20 Dumbest People, Events and Things," the magazine's best-selling end-of-year roundup.

Many new contributors were added, including writers Frank Santopadre, Michael Gallagher, Anthony Barbieri, Scott Maiko, and Jeff Kruse; artists C.F. Payne, Drew Friedman, Rick Geary, Bob Staake, Hermann Mejia, Roberto Parada, and Mark Stutzman; and cartoonists P.C. Vey and Peter Kuper. In 2003, Mark Fredrickson became MAD's primary cover artist and is now the most published as well.

The twenty-first century saw changes to the MAD staff, as Amy Vozeolas, David Shayne, Dave Croatto, Greg Leitman, Jonathan Bresman, and Jacob Lambert took stints as editors, and Sam

Viviano slipped into the art director's chair. Along with key members of the art department—Nadina Simon, Ryan Flanders, Patricia Dwyer, and Doug Thomson—he ushered MAD into the digital era and its transition to a full-color magazine. New features, including the "Fundalini Pages" and "The Strip Club," introduced next-generation cartoonists Keith Knight, Teresa Burns Parkhurst, and Emily Flake; writers Stan Sinberg and Tim Carvell; and artists Tom Richmond, Liz Lomax, and Ward Sutton.

In 2004, Nick Meglin retired after a five-decade career as a MAD editor, and John Ficarra remained at the helm until the end of 2017.

C.F. Payne (American, b. 1956)

The 1996 Summer Olympics, 1996
Cover illustration for MAD #34, July 1996

Acrylic, watercolor, ink, and
colored pencil on board
Collection of C.F. Payne

In C.F. Payne's cover illustration for MAD's
"Unofficial Magazine of the 1996 Olympics,"
Alfred E. Neuman leads the way while unknowingly
torching the publication's masthead.

Payne is an award-winning illustrator for *Time*, The
*New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Boy's
Life, Der Spiegel, The Atlantic, Rolling Stone*, and
many others. A Cincinnati artist, his back cover
illustrations for Reader's Digest appeared in every
issue for four years. John Lithgow's *The Remarkable
Farkle McBride and Micawber*, Steve Martin's
Late for School, Mark Kelly's *Mousetronaut and
Mousetronaut Goes to Mars*, and *Casey at the Bat*
are among the many books illustrated by Payne.

C.F. Payne (American, b. 1956)

Austin Powers, 2002
Cover illustration for MAD #421,
September 2002

Acrylic, watercolor, ink, and
colored pencil on board
Collection of C.F. Payne

Cincinnati artist C.F. Payne's humorous cover
illustration features Goldmember, the third
installment in the Austin Powers comedy film series
created by Mike Myers, which satirizes the popular
spy genre, its outlandish plots, and goofy, one-
dimensional characters. Vibrant and incisive mixed-
media caricatures of politicians, celebrities, and
everyday people are hallmarks of Payne's work.

Sam Viviano (American, b.1953)

Britney Spears, 2002
Cover illustration for MAD #417,
May 2002

Ink and Dr. Martin's Dyes on Bristol board
Collection of Sam Viviano

In this cover illustration, MAD artist and art director Sam Viviano recalls Britney Spears' performance of *I'm a Slave 4 U* at the 2001 MTV Video Music Awards, a memorable moment in the channel's history. "One of my favorite performances was with an albino python." Spears said. "I still remember how scared I felt when I was handed this snake and took the stage!" In Viviano's art, the snake becomes an Alfred look-alike.

Dale Stephanos (American, b. 1965)

18. Fatties vs. Fast Food—Ronald McDonald is Sworn in Before a Jury of His Peers, 2003
Illustration for "The MAD 20 Dumbest People, Events and Things of 2002," MAD #425, January 2003

Acrylic and oil on board
Collection of Dale Stephanos

Since 1998, the "20 Dumbest People, Events, and Things" of the previous year was a highlight for readers in every January issue of MAD. Rankings are random, and a wide range of topics populate the feature, including food and commercial culture, as seen in Dale Stephanos' realistically rendered illustration of mascot Ronald McDonald on trial.

The artist's working process with art director Sam Viviano is illustrated here in a note and sketch that served as a jumping-off point for the art. "Dale— here's the basic layout: Ronald McDonald is being sworn in by a court clerk before a jury of his peers:

Mayor McCheese, Grimace, Hamburglar, the Burger King, Wendy, Big Boy, Col. Sanders, Little Caesar, Popeye, the Taco Bell Dog, etc. You can fix the composition to clear up space for the jury." Following these instructions, Stephanos brought his aesthetic to the work and the icons of popular culture that we regularly encounter.

1993 to 2009
The Warner Bros. Years

The Great Recession of 2008 had a profound impact on MAD, including staff reductions, decreases in freelance rates, and the cancellation of MAD Specials, as well as the newly launched MADKids. MAD went from a monthly to a quarterly publishing schedule.

Less than a year later, Diane Nelson moved from Warner Bros. movie division to head DC Comics. She increased MAD's frequency to bi-monthly and established a plan to move the entire company from New York City to Burbank, California. The New York office closed at the end of 2017, and since no one on the MAD staff was willing to move, the magazine was relaunched in 2018 from Burbank with an entirely new staff. By 2020, only art director Suzy Hutchinson and associate art director Bern Mendoza remained, overseeing a commemorative reprint version of MAD that featured some new covers, fold-ins, features, and specials, which continues today.

Rick Geary (American, b. 1956)

William Shakespeare, Pothead, 2016
Illustration for "William Shakespeare, Pothead?" by Desmond Devlin,
MAD #538, April 2016

Ink, watercolor, and colored pencil on paper
Collection of Sam Viviano

Movie theater candies, a psychedelic Fillmore poster, and Grateful Dead memorabilia surround William Shakespeare in this humorous take on the 16th-century English playwright and poet.

Illustrator and cartoonist Rick Geary began working for *National Lampoon and Heavy Metal* in the 1970s and has illustrated graphic novels based upon classic literary works, including Great Expectations, *The Invisible Man*, and *Wuthering Heights*. His non-fiction graphic novel series, *A Treasury of Victorian Murder*, sheds light on the stories of Lizzie Borden and Jack the Ripper, among others.

Sergio Aragonés
(Spanish-Mexican-American, b. 1937)

A MAD Look at Avatar, 2006
Illustrations for "A MAD Look at Avatar" by Sergio Aragonés, MAD #503, MAD 2010

Ink with red marker with
vellum overlay on Bristol board
Collection of Sergio Aragonés

Sergio Aragonés' beautiful, decorative typography was often a feature of his pages for *A MAD Look At…*, as is clear in this sequential illustration inspired by the 2009 epic science fiction film Avatar, set in the mid- twenty second century.

Aragonés's work is almost exclusively done with a fountain pen and permanent ink. The speed and clever application of his work has enabled him to create crowded, complex scenes with something happening in every corner of the page.

Sergio Aragonés
(Spanish-Mexican-American, b. 1937)

A MAD Look at Illegal Immigration, 2006
Illustrations for "A MAD Look at Illegal Immigration" by Sergio Aragonés, MAD #468, August 2006

Ink with red marker with
vellum overlay on Bristol board
Collection of Sergio Aragonés

Sergio Aragonés has written and drawn the regular MAD feature *A MAD Look At…* since it debuted in issue #76 in January 1963. These lively gag cartoon strips focus on a theme conveyed through pantomime and visual storytelling, rather than word balloons filled with text to express ideas. Signage occasionally becomes integral in carrying a punchline, as seen in the case of a homeowner who flip-flops on the subject of illegal immigration

Who was Alfred E. Neuman?

In April 1956, when he appeared on the inside back cover of MAD #27, the smiling, gap-toothed "What-Me Worry" boy was yet unnamed— appropriated from an antique postcard by editor Harvey Kurtzman, who considered him to be "part leering wiseacre, part happy-go-lucky kid." A supporting character in earlier issues, the tousled redhead was first presented as the magazine's official color mascot in December 1956, in MAD #30 by new editor Al Feldstein. Initially portrayed as a write-in candidate for president by illustrator Norman Mingo, Alfred E. Neuman has run in every national election and been pictured on all but a handful of the magazine's covers since then.

Despite Alfred's prominence in MAD, the origin of his likeness remains elusive. In 1965, when cartoonist Harry Spencer Stuff's widow brought a lawsuit against MAD, claiming that Alfred had been copied from her husband's 1914 cartoon, "The Original Optimist," known also as "Me-worry?" the magazine sought evidence of his earlier existence. MAD reader and patent attorney Peter Reitan identified many early antecedents—from low-budget advertisements to theatrical comedies—

determining that Kurtzman based his Alfred on different characters dating back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Stuff may have codified the caricature, but earlier iterations of the clueless grinning boy predated his cartoon. Given the evidence, the court ruled in MAD's favor, placing Alfred's likeness firmly in the public domain for the enjoyment of all.

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

Bust of Alfred E. Neuman, 1960

Prototype bust on wood platform
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Artists have created portrait busts for centuries to record distinctive likenesses of their subjects for posterity. This sculptural prototype by Kelly Freas captured the visage and spirit of MAD's mascot for future castings.

Handcrafted American Ware
Chatham, NH, 1960

**MAD's Alfred E Neuman,
What-Me Worry? bust**

glazed/unglazed ceramic
Collection of Jason Levine

Champknit by Norwich
(Incorporated in 1969), Manufacturer

What – Me Worry? circa 1950s

Ink on cotton
Collection of Jason Levine

**Alfred E. Neuman, circa 1960s
Collegeville Halloween Mask**

Paint on molded plastic
Collection of Jason Levine

During MAD's heyday, costume masks featuring Alfred E. Neuman's likeness were popular, even for celebrities. In a 1959 television special, dancer Fred Astaire performed in an Alfred mask, which had been carefully prepared and applied by make-up artist John Chambers.

Parker Brothers
(American, 1883–1991),
Manufacturer

MAD Magazine Card Game, 1960

Lithograph on cardboard,
Collection of Jason Levine

Baby Barry Company
(Incorporated on December 8, 2016),
Manufacturer

Baby Barry Doll, circa 1961

Doll
Collection of Jason Levine

Released in 1961, the Alfred E. Neuman Baby Barry Doll featured Alfred's signature gap-toothed grin and freckles, along with a yellow jacket, white shirt and tie, blue pants, and red sneakers. The white necktie is marked with his signature phrase, "What, me worry?"

Storyland Puppets
(American, Incorporated 1954),
Manufacturer

Alfred E. Neuman Hand Puppet, 1960

Paint on plastic, cloth
Collection of Jason Levine

Harry S. Stuff (American, 1869–1938)

The Eternal Optimist, Me – Worry? 1914

Print, Stuff and Wilson Publishers,
San Francisco, Collection of Jason Levine

Me – Worry? Superior 1941 pin

Lithograph on metal
Collection of Jason Levine

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

The MAD Show, 1965
Album cover illustration for
"The MAD Show," Columbia Records

Sleeve and vinyl record, Collection of Jason Levine
Featuring 16 songs, *The MAD Show* was an off-
Broadway musical written and conceived by Larry
Siegel and Stan Hart, regular writers for MAD.
Devised as a series of skits, the show had a score
composed by Mary Rodgers. Its original cast
included Linda Lavin, Jo Anne Worley, Paul Sand,

Richard Libertini, and MacIntyre Dixon.

Norman Mingo (American, 1896–1980)

Musically MAD, 1959
Album cover for *Musically MAD*,
RCA Victor

Sleeve and vinyl record, Collection of Jason Levine
Released in 1959, Musically MAD features 13 tracks
written and composed by Bernie Green, with help
from the Stereo Mad-Men. Norman Mingo's Alfred
E. Neuman appears on the album's cover, and
Wally Wood designed the back jacket. Originally
released by RCA Victor, the album is now available
for streaming on Apple Music, YouTube Music,
and Pandora.

Scan the QR code to
enjoy *Musically Mad.*
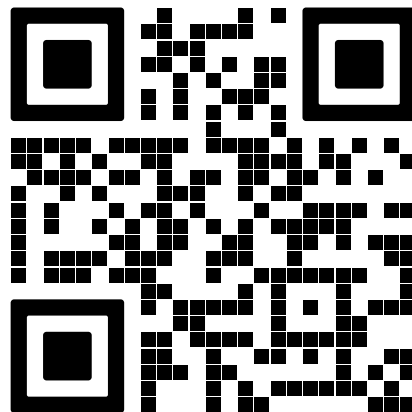
Norman Mingo (American, 1896–1980)

What…Me Worry?, 1957
Cover illustration for MAD #33, June 1957

Acrylic on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

This cover illustration of Alfred E. Neuman as a jack-in-the-box was the fourth created by artist Norman Mingo, who established the mascot's official likeness. Early iterations of the impish boy had an archaic look, but in 1956, editor Al Feldstein hired Mingo to update his appearance.

An accomplished commercial illustrator and the only World War I veteran to have worked for MAD, Mingo came out of retirement at age 60 to accept the commission. He learned of the project through a *New York Times* advertisement that read, "National magazine wants portrait artist for special project." When Mingo arrived at their offices and learned that the magazine was MAD, he almost walked out. Feldstein asked him to reconsider

and showed him historical likenesses. "I want a definitive portrait of this kid," he said. "I don't want him to look like an idiot; I want him to be lovable and have intelligence behind his eyes."

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

[Alfred E. Neuman as a Scarecrow], 1958
Cover illustration for MAD #43,
December 1958

Acrylic on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Between 1958 and 1962, Kelly Freas painted more than 30 classic portraits of Alfred E. Neuman, as well as many more for MAD advertising parodies, paperbacks, and specials. "Frank imparted everything he did with a great credibility," wrote assistant editor Jerry DeFuccio. "I was burning out on Alfred," Freas recalled. "I was afraid that everyone I painted would wind up looking like him."

Born in New York and educated at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, Freas was an accomplished science fiction and fantasy artist, a winner of the prestigious Hugo Award for fantasy and science fiction several times over, and the second to be inducted into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame.

George Woodbridge
(American, 1930–2004)

A Mad Guide to Leisure Time, 1976
Cover Illustration for *A MAD Guide to Leisure Time* by Dick DeBartolo, Warner Books, 1976

Ink and gouache on board
Collection of Jason Levine

Known as *MAD's Maddest Writer*, Dick DeBartolo imagined what leisure time might look like with the help of illustrator George Woodbridge. In this illustration, the artist places Alfred E. Neuman in a classic island scene for the cover of a humor book of writings and drawings.

DeBartolo's work has been featured in MAD for the past 50 years, and he currently appears on Ask The Tech Guys, hosts The Giz Fiz, and produces a weekly podcast called The Giz Wiz with Chad Johnson. He also appears as a commentator on ABC's World News Now.

Norman Mingo (American, 1896–1980)

[Baby Alfred and Father Time], 1958
Cover illustration for MAD #37,
January 1958

Gouache on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

[Totem Pole], 1962
Cover illustration for MAD #74,
October 1962

Watercolor, gouache, and graphite on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

In this MAD cover, Kelly Freas animates the carvings
on a totem pole with Alfred E. Neuman at its
base, near a curious dog. The artist referenced the
monumental carvings found in western Canada
and the northwestern United States, created by
Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast.
The word totem derives from the Algonquian word
odoodem, meaning kinship group. Cultural beliefs
and traditions were fodder for many mid-century
humorists, but MAD's editors strove to ensure that
contributors did not cross the line.

Norman Mingo (American, 1896–1980)

Season's Greetings, 1965
Cover illustration for MAD #92,
January 1965

Gouache on board
The Guiffreda Christmas Collection

Though Norman Mingo created the quintessential Alfred E. Neuman for MAD #30 in 1956, he took a leave of absence two years later after painting just eight covers. At the time, he was working at an advertising agency, and recalled, "I didn't have time for Alfred. I had to paint ads for L&M Cigarettes and U.S. Army Recruiting." Kelly Freas, who stepped in for Mingo at the time, kept Alfred's distinctive demeanor and likeness. However, in 1962, Mingo returned to painting memorable covers, such as Season's Greetings, at the behest of art director John Putnam; he continued to work for MAD until 1979.

Norman Mingo (American, b. 1956)

Alfred E. Neuman for President, 1972
Cover study for MAD #153,
September 1972

Pencil, pastel, and gouache on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Norman Mingo's defining portrait of Alfred E. Neuman appeared on the cover of MAD #30 in 1956 as a supposed write-in candidate for president, and he has been on the "ballot" in every presidential race since. In this study, Alfred is in the spotlight with a broken campaign hat around his neck. In the final work, Richard Nixon cheers in the background.

Many public figures have been likened to Alfred E. Neuman, including Pete Buttigieg, a candidate in the 2020 presidential race. *The Washington Post* reported that, "President Trump dismissed the youngest candidate in the Democratic field by comparing him to a caricature created decades before Buttigieg was even born." "Alfred E. Neuman cannot become president of the United

States," Trump said when asked by Politico what he thought of Buttigieg. The reference to Alfred did just as much to show Trump's age as Buttigieg's. "I'll be honest. I had to Google that," Buttigieg said. "I guess it's just a generational thing. I didn't get the reference. It's kind of funny, I guess."

Norman Mingo (American, b. 1956)

**[Alfred E. Neuman with alien
Jack in the Box], 1967**
Cover illustration for MAD #113,
September 1967

Watercolor and graphite on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Norman Mingo (American, b. 1956)

Help Stamp Out MAD, 1963
Cover illustration for MAD #78, April 1963

Watercolor on illustration board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Norman Mingo (American, b. 1956)

Help Stamp Out MAD, 1963
Cover illustration for MAD #78,
April 1963

Watercolor on illustration board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Norman Mingo (American, b. 1956)

**[Alfred E Neuman
Over the Goal Post], 1968**
Cover illustration for MAD #117,
March 1968

Gouache on board
Collection of Jason Levine

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

The MAD Frontier, 1964
Cover illustration for The Mad Frontier by
Al Feldstein New York: Signet Books, 1964

Acrylic on illustration board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Most MAD compilation books have undergone
multiple printings. For the cover of the first issue
of *The MAD Frontier* in 1962, Kelly Freas painted
Alfred E. Neuman in a rocking chair resembling
the one used by John F. Kennedy in the White
House. After the president's assassination,
MAD respectfully replaced that image with a
cover featuring Alfred in a Conestoga wagon
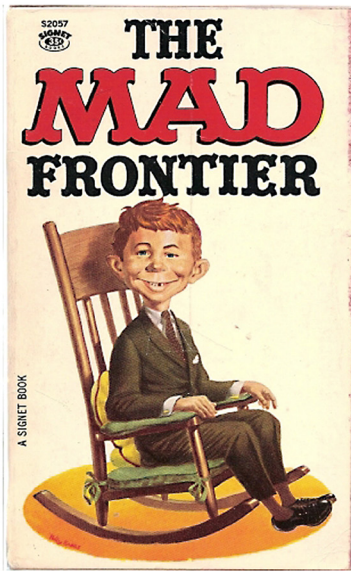getting a speeding ticket from a trooper.

Photo credits:
(left) Kelly Freas, Cover illustration for The MAD Frontier, 1964;

(right) President John F. Kennedy sits in a rocking chair during a 1961 meeting with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson. AP Photographer Unknown.

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

**[Alfred E. Neuman
Through the Window], 1959**
Front cover illustration for MAD #44,
January 1959

Oil and mixed media on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

[Alfred E. Neuman Skiing into Tree], 1980
Cover study for MAD #212, January 1980

Ink and graphite on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Norman Mingo (American, 1896–1980)

[Alfred E. Neuman Skiing into Tree], 1980
Cover study for MAD #212, January 1980

Pencil, crayon, and gouache on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Though Norman Mingo originated this cover
concept for the January 1980 issue of MAD,
he unfortunately passed away before creating
the final illustration. Jack Davis completed
a later black-and-white study and went on
to finish the magazine's colorful cover.

Jack Davis (American, 1924–2016)

[Alfred E. Neuman Skiing into Tree], 1980
Cover study for MAD #212, January 1980

Ink and graphite on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Norman Mingo (American, 1896–1980)

[Alfred E. Neuman Skiing into Tree], 1980
Cover study for MAD #212, January 1980

Pencil, crayon, and gouache on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Though Norman Mingo originated this cover
concept for the January 1980 issue of MAD,
he unfortunately passed away before creating
the final illustration. Jack Davis completed
a later black-and-white study and went on
to finish the magazine's colorful cover.

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

**Alfred's girlfriend
stares out window, 1959**
Back cover illustration for MAD #44,
January 1959

Oil and mixed media on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

[Alfred with Carolers], 1960
Cover illustration for MAD #52,
January 1960

Oil on illustration board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Jack Rickard (American, 1922–1983)

Raiders of a Lost Art, 1982
Cover Study for MAD #22, January 1982

Gouache and marker on board
Collection of Jason Levine

In addition to his long-running career at MAD creating art inspired by the movies, Jack Rickard also illustrated posters and advertisements for the film industry. *The Pink Panther, Bingo Long* and the *Traveling All Stars, Serial,* and *Movie Movie* are among the projects he worked on.

Released in 1981, Raiders of the Lost Ark stars Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones—an archeologist who battles with Nazi German forces to recover the Ark of the Covenant, which is said to make any army invincible. Here, Alfred E. Neuman is the adventurer's great find.

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Bob Jones (American, 1926–2018)

MAD Tell It Like It Is, 1989
Jacket illustration for The MAD Tell It Like It Is Book, New York: Warner Books, 1989

Watercolor and ink on Bristol board
Collection of Jason Levine

Ray Alma (American, b. 1965)

**Trapped Alfred Chews
Through Own Leg, 2018**
Illustration for "The Fundalini
Pages—The Cover We Didn't Use,"
MAD #550, April 2018

Sepia ink and watercolor on paper
Collection of Ray Alma

Ray Alma was exposed to MAD as a child because
his mother was a fan and had a collection of
magazines at home. He felt destined to be a
cartoonist and studied at the School of Visual Arts,
where MAD artists Harvey Kurtzman, Joe Orlando,
and Sam Viviano were among his instructors. Alma's
earliest assignments for *Field & Stream* and *Golf
Illustrated* launched his career, but in 1996, he
submitted his first five-page story illustration to
MAD and continued to create art for the magazine
for more than 20 years. In this absurdist work,
Alfred E. Neuman is caught in a bear trap but
chews off the wrong leg, hoping to free himself.

Ray Alma (American, b. 1965)

Fantastic 5, 2005
Illustration for "The Fundalini Pages—The Cover We Didn't Use," MAD #456, August 2005

Sepia ink and watercolor on paper
Collection of Ray Alma

MAD's *Fundalini Pages* featured a recurring section called "The Cover We Didn't Use," which claimed to present the second choice for that issue's front cover illustration. Ray Alma's *Fantastic 5* includes Marvel Comics' Fantastic Four—Mister Fantastic, Invisible Woman, Human Torch, and Thing—along with Alfred E. Neuman, disguised as a bottle of Fantastik.

An illustrator, caricaturist, and storyboard artist, Alma has created art for magazines, newspapers, books, and television. In addition to his commercial projects, he serves as the director of The Ink Well Foundation, a group of cartoonists who travel to pediatric hospitals to

draw for children. In 2010, he began volunteering for the USO, creating art at Veterans' Hospitals and for American troops at home and abroad.

James Warhola (American, b. 1955)

Son of MAD Sucks, 1985
Cover illustration for Son of MAD Sucks,
New York: Warner Books, 1985

Oil on Masonite
Collection of James Warhola

The MAD Show Broadway Poster

Ink on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

The Headless Horseman, 1960
Cover illustration for MAD #59,
December 1960

Mixed media on pressboard
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

In keeping with MAD's ethos, the magazine
published a special Halloween issue in December
of 1960 featuring a haunted Headless Horseman
on its cover. This archetypal figure appeared
in European folklore during the Middle Ages,
inspiring works such as Washington Irving's "The
Legend of Sleepy Hollow," published in 1820.

Fabulous Fold-Ins

Debuting in MAD #86, Al Jaffee's iconic fold-ins have made a lasting impression on readers who have awaited and enjoyed this special feature in almost every issue since April 1964. Conceived, written, and drawn by the gifted and untiring Jaffee until 2020, retiring at 99, fold-ins live on in the hands of Jaffee's successor, Johnny Sampson, who his mentor invited to continue the series. Jaffe's fold-ins were a clever response to the popular centerfolds that appeared in Playboy and other mid-twentieth-century publications. "Playboy had a foldout of a beautiful woman in each issue, and Life had these large, striking foldouts in which they'd show how the earth began…some massive panorama," Jaffee explained. "Many magazines were hopping on the bandwagon, offering similar full-color spreads to their readers. I noticed this and thought, what's a good satirical comment on the trend? Then I figured, why not reverse it?" Editor Al Feldstein was pleased with Jaffee's initial concept, and publisher Bill Gaines believed that fold-ins would increase sales—readers would want one copy to fold and another to keep in pristine condition. The first 33 installments were published in black and white, switching to color with issue #119 in

June 1968.

A puzzle every time for the artist and reader, each fold-in consists of a single drawing accompanied by a paragraph of text below and a panel above that poses a question. When the image is folded so that points "A" and "B" are touching, the remaining unobscured text beneath the picture becomes the answer to the question, and the image is transformed to reflect the revised copy. Except for the use of a computer for typographic elements, Jaffee's fold-ins are hand-drawn and painted. Working on a flat board, "I cannot fold it. That's why my planning has to be so correct." Jaffee's final fold-in appeared in MAD #14 in August 2020, as a personal farewell to readers—expecting his demise, he had designed it six years earlier.

Al Jaffee (American, 1921–2023)

What Old Indian Trick is Actually Avenging the White Man's Massacres? 1973
Fold-in illustration for MAD #162, October 1973

Gouache on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

MAD's strong stance for social justice is reflected in this fold-in by Al Jaffee, which portrays the massacre of Indigenous people by the United States Army. "The U.S. Govt's Indian Policy Has Always Been Badly Tainted," the copy read. "Such Wars Were Always the Preface to Smelly Treaties Calculated to Keep Indians Broke." The text block in the upper left, as pasted in by the artist, read: "What Old Indian Trick is Actually Avenging the White Man's Massacres?" When folded, three men with a cigar, pipe, and cigarette appear, and smoke, forming a skull and crossbones, accompany the response, "They Taught Paleface to Smoke."

Al Jaffee (American, 1921–2023)

What Beloved Four-Legged Creature Won't be Around to Light Up Kids' Lives this Christmas? 1997
Fold-in illustration for MAD # 364, December 1997

Gouache on board
The Guiffreda Christmas Collection

This holiday fold-in holds a dire note relating to the dangers of smoking. "Jolly holiday spirits are affected when we can't see old friends," Al Jaffee's text reads. "This sad fact is emphasized by the melancholy that many people feel." A downtrodden Santa's reins are empty in the artist's holiday scene—when folded, the snow is transformed into the face of Joe Camel, the Camel cigarettes logo.

Art provided a safety net for Jaffe, who grew up in both the United States and Lithuania, in near poverty. As a teenager, Jaffee was accepted into the High School of Music and Art in New York City, where he met Will Elder and Harvey Kurtzman,

cartoonists who played a prominent role in the early years of MAD. It took years to establish himself and gain financial stability. "When you live from freelance check to freelance check, your mind is always on 'what's the next piece I'm going to write or draw that will pay this month's rent,'" he said.

Al Jaffee (American, 1921–2023)

When Is There Never a Shortage of Gas? 1974
Fold-in illustration for MAD #164, January 1974

Gouache on board
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

Al Jaffee's fold-ins were often timely, as in this work, which relates to the gas shortages that impacted the United States in late 1973 and early 1974. At the time, an embargo by Middle Eastern producers ceased imports of oil to the country from participating OAPEC nations, and production cuts quadrupled the price of oil. The embargo was lifted in March 1974, but higher oil prices remained.

Al Jaffee (American, 1921–2023)

What Simple Pastime is Fast Becoming a Luxury that Many Americans Can No Longer Afford? 1975
Fold-in illustration for MAD #172, January 1975

Gouache on board
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

In this Jaffee fold-in, a hike in a lush forest setting transforms into an array of edibles, from ham and cheese to carrots, celery, and eggs. The response to the artist's question about what simple pastime Americans can no longer afford is eating. The inflation rate in 1975 was 24.24%, resulting in the cost of food and other commodities reaching a new high.

Al Jaffee (American, 1921–2023)

What Incredible Green Marvel are Many Eagerly Waiting to See? 2003
Fold-in illustration for MAD #431,
July 2003

Gouache on board
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

As Al Jaffee's text reads, "People are waiting in droves for an upcoming event which they hope will bring them great glee." In the folded image, medical marijuana is revealed as the answer to the question. In 1996, California became the first state to legalize medical cannabis, but by 2003, when this fold-in was published, Oregon, Alaska, Washington, Maine, Hawaii, Nevada, Colorado, and Maryland had followed suit.

Al Jaffee (American, 1921–2023)

Where Should Most Modern Classic Exploitation Horror Films Be Kept, 1983
Fold-in illustration for MAD #241, September 1983

Gouache on board
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

Al Jaffee (American, 1921–2023)

What Has Replaced the Bald Eagle as America's Symbol All Over the World, 1984
Fold-in illustration for MAD #248, July 1984

Gouache on board
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

Johnny Sampson (American, b. 1974)

What's one of the hardest things about losing a giant like Al Jaffee? 2023
Fold-in illustration for MAD vol.2 #18, August 2023

Acrylic and gouache on board
Collection of Johnny Sampson

This fold-in tribute by Johnny Sampson to Al Jaffee appeared in the first MAD issue following Jaffee's death. An illustrator and musician, Sampson began creating MAD's fold-ins when Jaffee ended his long tenure with the magazine in 2020. His humorous artworks have appeared in magazines, books, and advertisements, and on posters and greeting cards.

In 2013, *Pitchfork Review* invited Sampson to create a parody of a MAD fold-in. When it was completed, he sent it to both the magazine and Jaffee, accompanied by a fan letter. The piece portrayed Jaffee himself answering nature's call. Three months later, Jaffee replied that he "couldn't have done it better," and, acknowledging that he was in his nineties, offered to introduce Sampson to

the magazine's editorial staff. Sampson's first MAD illustration appeared in the Letters Department in December 2016, in issue #542.

Johnny Sampson (American, b. 1974)

What Group has Long Been the Victim of False Advertising, 2024
Fold-in illustration for MAD #35, February 2024

Gouache on illustration board
Collection of Johnny Sampson

MAD has long cast a critical eye on shameless advertisers making false promises, a tradition continued in this fold-in, which touts a path to eternal youth. "It's a dream job and it's big for me," said artist Johnny Sampson of his work for MAD. "I'm trying to stay faithful to Al Jaffee's methods. I prefer analog materials—starting with the idea, I begin drawing with pencil and paper." Being one of the last MAD keepers of the flame is bittersweet for Sampson. "For me, that's part of the responsibility and the honor of doing the fold-in. It's heavy," he said.

Johnny Sampson (American, b. 1974)

What Debunked Phenomenon Do People Still Emphatically Believe In, 2022
Fold-in illustration for MAD #27, October 2022

Gouache on illustration board
Collection of Johnny Sampson

Johnny Sampson's *Cavalcade of Cons* presents a sideshow of wonders, from spoon bending and levitating to psychic surgery and palm reading. "Time and time again," his text reads, "people are duped by grifters, con men, and hoaxers. Despite mountains of evidence disproving their implausible assertions, there's always a sucker who will take the bait."

In 2019, when MAD moved to Burbank, California, from its longtime home in New York City, it began renumbering its issues, starting with #1, accompanied by a fold-in by Al Jaffee. There was concern that staff would be upset with this approach, but "we were very happy with that," said editor John Ficarra. "That was an easy

differentiation between MAD New York and MAD California. I got the staff black jackets with the MAD logo in red, and underneath it, we added New York."

Johnny Sampson (American, b. 1974)

**Who Will Feel it the Most if Taylor
and Travis Break Up, 2024**
Fold-in illustration for MAD #36, April 2024

Gouache on illustration board
Collection of Johnny Sampson

Celebrity romances and break-ups are often
subjects of interest in the media, and Taylor
Swift and Travis Kelce are no exception. Trouble
is brewing in this fold-in illustration as the artist
speculates about how the relationship between
these two superstars might inspire a new song
by Swift.

Comics & Cartoons

MAD's regular features, presented to the reader in varying formats, reflected a wide range of comedic themes drawn from popular culture, current events, and daily life. Theatrical multi-page movie and television parodies; wordless "Spy vs. Spy" strips; revelatory "Fold-ins"; sequential drawings on "The Lighter Side of…"; riotous gag and single panel cartoons; whimsical "Marginals"; catch-all "Fundalini Pages"; interactive "Snappy Answers to Stupid Questions"; and "The Strip Club", with its series of questionable recurring characters like Father O'Flannity (who conducts interviews in the bathtub), Santon (a hero robot), and Patient Man (a superhero who is slow to stop crimes), naming just a few.

Over time, new voices have blended with the tried and true. Throughout its seven-decade history, 960 artists and writers have had bylines in at least one issue, and just 41 have appeared in 100 or more. Writer-artist Al Jaffee tops the pack as his art appeared in 500 of the first 550 issues. "To use an old cliché, I'm like an old racehorse," he said, officially announcing his retirement at age 99.

Savvy by Trau & Loevner

What – me Worry?
What, me Furry?, 1996

Shirt, ink on cotton
Collection of the late Andrew Flint,
now Sydney Flint

Alfred E. Neuman
on $1 Million Tie, 1996

Tie, ink on polyester
Collection of the late Andrew Flint,
now Sydney Flint

Alfred E. Neuman Filming Tie, 1992

Tie, ink on polyester
Collection of the late Andrew Flint,
now Sydney Flint

Norman Mingo (American, 1896-1980)

MADtv, 1997

VHS Tape
Collection of the Late Andrew Flint,
Now Sydney Flint

MADtv was a sketch comedy series based on MAD
magazine that ran for fourteen seasons. Popular
among teenage audiences, it averaged 2.6 million
viewers per show upon its cancellation in 2008.
Alfred E. Neuman Trunks

Trunks, ink on cotton
Collection of the late Andrew Flint,
now Sydney Flint

Don Martin (American, 1930–2000)

**Peace on Earth and
Goodwill Toward Men, 1962**
Cover illustration for MAD #68,
January 1961

Ink and watercolor over graphite
on illustration board
James Halperin Collection,
Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Interpersonal challenges were not lost on
cartoonist Don Martin, who portrays two sidewalk
Santas arguing over their turf. Dubbed *MAD's
Maddest Artist*, Martin emphasized dramatic
gestures and drew figures with signature
hinged feet that drooped or folded when in
motion. As spontaneous as they appear, his gag
cartoons were redrawn many times until he and
his editors were satisfied with the results.

Charles Schulz (American, 1922–2000)

Stupid Leaf, 1964
Illustration for "Comic Strips They'd Really Like to Do," MAD #89, September 1964

Ink on paper
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Charles Schulz's beloved Peanuts comic strip was an ongoing source of inspiration for MAD artists, writers, and staff, and the feeling was mutual. In 1972, Schulz wrote a letter to the magazine from World War I Flying Ace, Snoopy, which read, "We flying aces like your magazine. I find it in all the trenches." A close friend for more than three decades, MAD artist Sergio Aragonés said of Schulz, "In a couple of centuries, when people talk about American artists, he will be one of the very few remembered. And when they talk about comic strips, his will probably be the only one ever mentioned."

Paul Coker, Jr. (American, 1929–2022)

A Nostalgic Look at Dogs, 1969
Illustrations for "A Nostalgic
Look at Dogs" by Dean Norman,
MAD #131, December 1969

Ink on board
Collection of Nell and David

Born in Lawrence, Kansas, Paul Coker, Jr. began
his art career in high school, creating his school's
mascot. Cocker worked at Hallmark Cards in
Kansas City and became a production designer
for Rankin/Bass, working on programs such as
Frosty the Snowman and *Santa Claus Is Coming to
Town*, among others. He began his tenure at MAD
in 1961 and continued for 47 years until 2018.

The expressive quality of Coker's line is character-
istic of his work. "My tools are simple," he said,
"a bottle of ink and a crowquill pen—and I don't
recommend these to anyone. You have to press
down on these points to get a thicker line, and too
often, they splatter or break. I buy them by the
gross.…" These humorous Coker vignettes follow
the adventures of humans and their faithful friends.

Paul Coker, Jr. (American, 1929–2022)

Why not have the next issue sent directly to your home, 1972
Illustration for MAD #150, April 1972

Ink with Rubylith overlay
Collection of Sam Viviano

Through the years, Paul Coker, Jr. regularly contributed to MAD's lighthearted subscription ads—funny illustrations that drew less attention than the publication's detailed multi-page story illustrations. "One of my favorite Coker features was his run of *MAD* subscription ads," said art director Sam Viviano. "In every issue there'd be a little ad on the letters page with a tiny illustration, and every single one was a gem." In this drawing, the mail carrier goes all out to deliver MAD to a man high atop an elephant in a howdah—an elaborate carriage positioned on the back of an animal for passenger transport.

Peter Paul Porges (Austrian, 1927–2016)

Recycling Toilet Seats, 1988
Illustration for Peter Paul Porges'
"Recycling Toilet Seats,"
MAD #276, January 1988

Ink and wash on paper
Collection of Sam Viviano

Don "Duck" Edwing
(American, 1934–2016)

Quasimodo (Igor's Pizza), circa 2000
Illustration for The Idiotical,
a MAD online blog

Ink on paper
Collection of Sam Viviano

Don "Duck" Edwing created this whimsical
drawing for *The Idiotical*, a MAD online blog,
and readers were invited to write their own
captions. A gag cartoonist whose work appeared
regularly in MAD, Edwing often signed his
name with a drawing of a duck, as seen here.

Edwing wrote for MAD for more than a decade
before contributing his drawings to the magazine.
He also authored many of Don Martin's gag
cartoons, and the two had a close relationship.
"Martin and I corresponded mostly with phone
calls. The MAD editors did all the work by putting
us together. I merely cheered Don up on a daily
basis by telling him jokes, which had nothing to do

with the work in front of him. I marveled at how he would take my chicken scratch sketches of a gag and transform them into a…spectacular scene."

Don Martin (American, 1930–2000)

Pay Toll Fifty Feet, 1980
Back cover illustration for MAD #213,
March 1980

India and colored inks on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy
of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

P.C. Vey (American, b. 1956)

Vey to Go – Yes your wife is better and no you can't shoot her again, 2001
Illustration for MAD #409, September 2001

Ink and wash on paper
Collection of Sam Viviano

Cartoonist P.C. Vey sold his first cartoon to The New Yorker in 1993 and has been a regular contributor to the magazine since then. His contributions to MAD included *Duke Bissell's Tales of Undisputed Interest*, as well as one-panel gag cartoons, such as this one, titled "Vey to Go." The artist's work has also appeared in *National Lampoon, Playboy, The Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*, and he has published three cartoon collections inspired by the antics of cats.

P.C. Vey (American, b. 1956)

Duke Bissell's Tales of Undisputed Interest—Tired Cat, 2002
Illustration for MAD #422,
October 2002

Ink and wash on paper
Collection of Sam Viviano

Duke Bissell's *Tales of Undisputed Interest* by
P.C. Vey was a series of absurdist one-page
MAD comic strips that presented humorous non-
sequiturs in the guise of a linear storyline.

Don "Duck" Edwing
(American, 1934-2016)

Werewolf

Ink on paper
Collection of Sam Viviano

Keith Knight (American, b. 1966)

Father O'Flannity's Hot Tub Confessions with Paula Deen, 2012
Illustration for "The Strip Club,"
MAD #515, June 2012

Ink on paper
Collection of Keith Knight

When Keith Knight created this strip, Food Network star Paula Deen was in the news—her show had been canceled following the news that the chef and restaurateur had admitted to using racial epithets. Other cancellations included her sponsorship partnerships with Ballantine Books, Home Depot, JCPenney, Sears, Smithfield Foods, Target, QVC, and Walmart.

Keith Knight (American, b. 1966)

Father O'Flannity's Hot Tub Confessions with Lady Gaga, 2010
Illustration for "The Strip Club,"
MAD #506, December 2010

Ink on paper
Collection of Keith Knight

John Caldwell (American, 1946–2016)

**8 Suggestions to Soften the
Blow on Death Row, 2013**
Illustration for "8 Suggestions to Soften
the Blow on Death Row" by John Caldwell,
MAD #521, June 2013

Magic marker and ink on paper
Collection of Sam Viviano

John Caldwell's humorous drawings suggest
eight ways that penitentiaries can ease the
minds of convicted criminals on death row.
Suggestions include retiring their inmate number,
converting the holding cell into a bounce
house, and providing a last meal with singing
Applebee's wait staff and a place mat to color.

Caldwell was a cartographer for the state of
New York before becoming a cartoonist and
a regular contributor to MAD. His drawings
have also appeared in *National Lampoon,
The New Yorker, The Wall Street Journal,
Playboy, Barron's, Reader's Digest, Harvard
Review,* and *Recycled Paper Greetings.*

John Caldwell (American, 1946–2016)

The Fundalini Pages—Stupid Ideas Quickly Nixed By the New Pope, 2013
Illustration for MAD #522, September 2013

Magic marker and ink on paper
Collection of Sam Viviano

Here, John Caldwell focuses on the then newly elected Pope Francis, who was chosen to succeed Pope Benedict XVI. Written and illustrated by Caldwell, his cartoons represent three ideas that the new Pope could have implemented but were rejected.

Teresa Burns Parkhurst (American)

From the Files of Wanda Goldstein Flenkman: Animal Psychiatrist – "…and the nightmare is always the same…" 2006
Illustration for "From the Files of Wanda Goldstein Flenkman: Animal Psychiatrist" by Teresa Burns Parkhurst, MAD #172, December 2006

Pen, watercolor pencil,
colored pencil, and marker on vellum
Collection of Teresa Burns Parkhurst

Teresa Burns Parkhurst began contributing her hilarious cartoon drawings to MAD in 2003. Born in Albany, New York, her parents encouraged her constant drawing, "my father was very witty and funny, and we'd draw horses and cowboys together," she said. After high school, Parkhurst studied commercial art and taught special needs children before submitting her work for publication. In the 1990s, her first

commissions came from greeting card companies,
a market that she continues to work in today.

Teresa Burns Parkhurst (American)

Nice bluff, but I know you're holding a "Living with Hemophilia," 2010
Illustration for "9 Ways to Pass the Time in Your Doctor's Waiting Room" by Teresa Burns Parkhurst, MAD #505, October 2010

Pen, watercolor pencil,
colored pencil, and marker on vellum
Collection of Teresa Burns Parkhurst

Ideas for Parkhurst's cartoons come from daily life and are slightly exaggerated for humorous effect. She came to MAD with encouragement from cartoonist John Caldwell, who lived nearby and worked for the magazine. "He took me under his wing and sent me some MAD magazines," she said, and turned her attention to gag cartooning—single-panel drawings with one-liner jokes. In addition to her work as a cartoonist, Parkhurst "had a couple of part-time jobs and sang with a band."

Teresa Burns Parkhurst (American)

You remember special occasions by the illness you thought you had at the time, 2011
Illustration for "Signs That Your Hypochondria Is Out of Control" by Teresa Burns Parkhurst, MAD #509, June 2011

Pen, watercolor pencil, colored pencil, and marker on vellum
Collection of Teresa Burns Parkhurst

The process of submitting cartoons for publication can be intensive, as ten concepts at a time are typically required for review by each publication. "You send your ideas in and wait to hear if the editors like them—there is a lot of writing and waiting," Parkhurst said. "I am very good at finding the funny and drawing it on paper. And coloring it in. And deadlines. And taking art direction without crying real hard. Oh, and I write my own funny to go with the pictures and am able to handle

editorial direction semi-professionally unless I am really good friends with the editor." *The New Yorker, the Wall Street Journal*, Barron's, the *Harvard Business Review, Reader's Digest, Playboy*, and many more have published her cartoons.

Teresa Burns Parkhurst (American)

The Romance of Bagpipes, 2006
Illustration for "America's Least Favorite
Prom Themes" by Teresa Burns Parkhurst,
MAD #466, June 2006

Pen, watercolor pencil,
colored pencil, and marker on vellum
Collection of Theresa Burns Parkhurst

Emily Flake (American, b. 1977)

Look, I Know I'm Your Sponsor, 2012
Illustration for "The Fundalini Pages—
Gimme a Flake," MAD #518,
December 2012

Ink and watercolor on paper
Collection of Emily Flake

Known for her humorous drawings inspired by
everyday life, which appear regularly in The
New Yorker, Emily Flake began contributing
to MAD in 2006, with her cartoon art
often featured on *The Fundalini Pages*, the
magazine's most eclectic section. Flake also
performs as a "stand-up cartoonist," and is
the proprietor of St. Nell's Humor Writing
Residency in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Emily Flake (American, b. 1977)

Satan is My Co-Pilot, 2016
Illustration for "The Fundalini Pages—
Gimme a Flake," MAD #540, August 2016

Ink and watercolor on paper
Collection of Emily Flake

Rick Tulka (American, b. 1955)

**New Grammy Award Categories
We'd Like to See, 1994**
Illustration for "New Grammy Award Categories We'd Like to See" by Mike Snider, MAD #326, March/April 1994

Pencil on Strathmore Bristol paper
Collection of Rick Tulka

Rick Tulka's intricate drawing wakes up the 1994 Grammys by replacing the "stodgy old awards" with some innovative options. Author Mike Snider suggests these categories and more: "Best Incoherent and Obscenity-filled Acceptance Speech from Last Year's Grammy Telecast; Best Gimmick Designed to Distract Attention from the Fact that Performers Have No Musical Talent Whatsoever; and Best New Rock Group That Will be Split Up in Six Months Because They Couldn't Handle Success."

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Tulka studied at the Brooklyn Museum Art School, the Art Students

League, and at Pratt Institute. He launched his professional illustration career in 1976, published his first MAD drawing in 1988, and has lived and worked in Paris for 30 years

Tom Bunk (German, b. 1945)

Bunkenstein—Dastardly Dr. Bunk's MAD Monster Lab, 2020
Illustration for MAD #16, December 2020

Ink, watercolor, and gouache on paper
Collection of Tom Bunk

Tom Bunk caricaturizes himself as Bunkenstein, a dastardly doctor who transforms Alfred E. Neuman into a Frankenstein-like creature. The diploma on the wall of his laboratory confirms his qualifications as a MAD Scientist.

Tom Bunk (German, b. 1945)

**MAD's Tom Bunk
Visits Coney Island, 2016**
Illustration for MAD #540, August 2016

Ink, watercolor, and gouache on paper
Collection of Tom Bunk

Alfred E. Neuman, Pinocchio, Dumbo, and King
Kong are among the throngs of characters enjoying
a day at the beach at Coney Island, the popular
seaside recreational area in southwest Brooklyn,
New York. As many have experienced, every inch
of sand is covered by humanity in the summer,
and Nathan's, the Cyclone, Wonder Wheel, and
the Parachute Jump (closed, but damaged by a
MAD blimp) provide a prominent backdrop.

Underground comics, which Bunk contributed to
in his home country of Germany and the United
States, inspired his drawing style. After moving
to New York City in 1983, he began working for
Raw, a comics magazine edited and published by
Françoise Mouly and Art Spiegelman. A regular
contributor to Topps, which created *Wacky*

Packages and *Garbage Pail Kids* trading cards, he became a regular MAD cartoonist in 1990.

Paul Coker, Jr. (American, 1929-2022)

**Season's Greetings 2001
from the Usual Gang of Idiots, 2001**
Illustration for MAD #413, January 2002

Ink and watercolor
Collection of Sam Viviano

Santa must show his photo identification before delivering holiday packages in this satirical greeting. MAD published Paul Coker's cartoon the year that an international coalition led by the United States invaded Afghanistan following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

MAD about Art

What makes a work of art quotable and at once recognizable in the public consciousness? MAD's accomplished artists have explored this question by lampooning and venerating the work of famous and infamous masters whose art has stood the test of time—from Sandro Botticelli, Michelangelo, and Leonardo da Vinci to Vincent van Gogh, Grant Wood, and Norman Rockwell. Crossing the boundaries of art to become everyday references through mass publication, classic works have been cleverly reimagined by MAD's creators, melding the past and present in inventive, amusing ways. Some of the magazine's most memorable art parodies were on view at the MADropolitan Museum of Art—a designated display at the company's Midtown Manhattan office.

Kelly Freas (American, 1922–2005)

Look, Mom – no more cavities! (Crust Gum Paste), 1958
Back cover illustration for MAD #43, December 1958

Magazine
Norman Rockwell Museum Collection

Richard Williams (American, b. 1933)

If Norman Rockwell Depicted the 90's "Monday Morning Pickup," 1958
Back cover illustration for MAD #43, December 1958

Magazine
Norman Rockwell Museum Collection

Richard Williams (American, b. 1933)

Alfred E. Neuman
Triple-Self Portrait, 2002
Cover illustration for MAD Art: A Visual Celebration of the Art of MAD Magazine and the Idiots Who Create It, Watson Guptill, 2002

Oil on canvas
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

An admirer of Norman Rockwell, Richard Williams puts a twist on *Triple-Self Portrait*, the artist's 1960 cover illustration for *The Saturday Evening Post* and his autobiography, *My Adventures as an Illustrator*. Alfred E. Neuman takes Rockwell's seat at the easel to paint the back of his head on a canvas featuring drawings by other MAD greats, Sergio Aragonés and Dave Berg. A sketch of Rockwell reveals his surprise at the scene, which features a MAD dirigible in place of the helmet and a mirror topped with a chicken rather than an eagle.

Williams has created art for many national magazines, including MAD—following Norman Mingo's death in 1980, he painted many of the publication's covers. MAD "allowed me to find and establish my version of Alfred," he said. "I started with Mingo's, of course, that's the classic. But every artist interprets him a little differently."

This artwork has been generously supported by The Casuto Family.

Norman Rockwell (American, 1894–1978)

Triple Self-Portrait, 1960
Cover illustration for
The Saturday Evening Post,
February 13, 1960

Oil on canvas
Norman Rockwell Museum Collection,
Norman Rockwell Art Collection
Trust, NRACT.1973.19

Humor and humility were essential aspects of
Norman Rockwell's character, so when asked to do
a self-portrait that would announce the first of eight
excerpts of his 1960 autobiography, *My Adventures
as an Illustrator*, the result was lighthearted and
self-deprecating. Rockwell's life was far too eventful
to approach summation in a single work, so he
limited the composition to himself, his materials, his
references, a canvas on an easel, and a mirror.

The four self-portraits on his canvas—those of
Albrecht Dürer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Pablo Picasso,
and Vincent Van Gogh—are his references. They

invite us to compare, as he did, how other artists tackled their self-portraits.

This artwork has been generously supported by The Casuto Family.

Norman Mingo (American, 1896–1980)

I Want, Too, 1976
Back cover illustration for MAD #182,
April 1976

Watercolor over graphite on
illustration board
James Halperin Collection,
Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Acknowledging the impact of the women's rights
movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which sought
equal opportunities and personal freedoms
for women, Norman Mingo's *I Want, Too* takes
inspiration from James Montgomery Flagg's famous
1917 recruiting poster, *I Want You for U.S. Army.*
Flagg was a prominent illustrator, cartoonist, and
painter who is often remembered for his stirring
World War I-era poster designs.

James Warhola (American, b. 1955)

Jared Kushner:
The Birth of Treason, 2017
Illustration for "The MADropolitan Museum
of Art—The Trump Collection 2017,"
MAD #547, October 2017

oil on canvas
Collection of James Warhola

James Warhola places Donald Trump's son-in-
law, Jared Kushner, on the half-shell in place of
Venus, the central figure in Sandro Botticelli's iconic
painting, *The Birth of Venus* (circa 1484–1486).
Here, a shirtless Russian President Vladimir Putin
breathes life into Kushner as Trump looks on. When
the piece was published, evidence that the Russian
government launched a hacking and influence
campaign to affect the 2016 election was mounting,
and Kushner's conversations with Russian operatives
became a matter of interest.

Sandro Botticelli (Italian, circa 1445–
1510) *The Birth of Venus* (c. 1484–1486).
Tempera on canvas, Uffizi, Florence, Italy

James Warhola (American, b. 1955)

Howard Dean's Scream, 2004
Illustration for "The 20 Dumbest People, Events, and Things of 2024," MAD #449, January 2005

Acrylic and colored pencil on canvas board
Collection of James Warhola

James Warhola's illustration recalls the infamous Dean Scream, an energetic outcry by Vermont governor Howard Dean during the 2004 presidential campaign. The Democrat was initially ahead in the polls. However, negative advertising by other candidates and the media focused on Dean's hot-headed moments, trying to portray him as unsophisticated and unqualified for the presidency. The scream occurred on January 19, 2004, in West Des Moines, Iowa, where he had lost the Iowa caucus to John Kerry, and was an attempt to reassure his supporters. Within four days, the scream was broadcast 633 times on the national news and is believed to have contributed to his political downfall.

A student of art history, Warhola likened Dean's scream to *The Scream*, a psychological painting by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch, created in 1893. The agonized expression of its subject, symbolizing the state of the human condition, is one of the most recognizable and parodied artworks of all time.

Edvard Munch (Norwegian, 1863–1944), *The Scream*, 1893, Oil, tempera, pastel, and crayon on cardboard National Museum and Munch Museum, Oslo, Norway

Roberto Parada (American, b. 1969)

**Gorilla with a Pearl Earring
by Banannas Vermeer, 2008**
Illustration for "MOMA—The Museum of
Monkey Art—Winter/Spring Catalog,"
MAD #488, April 2008

Oil on illustration board
Collection of Roberto Parada

Roberto Parada's *Gorilla with a Pearl Earring* evokes
the art of seventeenth-century Dutch painter
Johannes Vermeer, who created the now-iconic
Girl with a Pearl Earring in 1665. This striking work
marked Parada's return to MAD after a five-year
hiatus due to health concerns. The illustrator has
been an advocate for studio safety and the
elimination of toxic chemicals in art materials,
which have had repercussions for him and many
other artists.

Parada continued to create art for the magazine
until 2018.

Roberto Parada (American, b. 1969)

X-Files the Spoof is in Here! 1998
Cover illustration for MAD #374,
October 1998

Oil on illustration board
Collection of Roberto Parada

Grant Wood's 1930 *American Gothic* was the
source of inspiration for Roberto Parada's X-Files
cover parody, which features spaceships buzzing
around David Duchovny's and Gillian Anderson's
heads. In the 1998 film, agents Mulder and Scully
uncover a government conspiracy trying to conceal
the truth about alien colonization of Earth.

In addition to his work for MAD, Parada has created
illustrations for *Time, Newsweek, Rolling Stone,
Entertainment Weekly, Esquire,* and others.

Scott Bricher (American, b. 1962)

Dogs Playing Video Games, 2004
Illustrated poster for MAD #441, May 2004

Oil on canvas
Collection of Scott Bricher

From 1998 to 2019, versatile artist Scott Bricher created imagery for MAD on a wide variety of subjects in both traditional and digital media. In this painting, dogs of different breeds play the popular Xbox game, Halo. The work was inspired by *A Friend in Need*, an often reproduced 1903 piece by Cassius Marcellus Coolidge, continuing the magazine's convention of humorous appropriation. The art was a last-minute addition for MAD #441, and he had just days to create the sketches and the final painting to meet the deadline. Lacking a projection device, he used equipment at his daughter's elementary school to transfer his sketch onto canvas, thereby speeding up the process.

Cassius Marcellus Coolidge (1844–1934),
A Friend in Need, 1903, Oil on canvas

Norman Rockwell (American, 1884–1978)

Marriage License, 1955
Cover illustration for *The Saturday Evening Post*, June 11, 1955

Oil on canvas
Norman Rockwell Museum Collection, Norman Rockwell Art Collection Trust, NRACT.1973.014

Norman Rockwell painted two wedding-themed covers for June *Saturday Evening Post* issues, *Organist Waiting for Cue* and *Marriage License*, published in 1928 and 1955, respectively. Set in the town clerk's office just footsteps away from Rockwell's first Stockbridge studio on Main Street, *Marriage License* features an eager young couple while capturing Rockwell's fascination with the somber wood-paneled interiors of his favorite seventeenth-century Dutch painters. In keeping with the older style, Rockwell replaced an existing metal file cabinet in the left foreground with an antique railroad station stove. Variety store owner Jason Braman, who serves as the model for the town clerk, had recently lost his wife, lending authenticity to his feelings and adding poignancy

to this study of youth and old age. The image underscores the significance of marriage, family, and domesticity to bolster communities, a theme prevalent in published imagery of 1950s America.

Richard Williams (American, b. 1933)

If Norman Rockwell Depicted the 21st Century— "The Marriage License," 2004 Illustration for MAD #438, February 2004

Oil on canvas
Collection of Peggy and Miles Feinstein

The legalization of same-sex marriage was in the news when Richard Williams painted this parody of Norman Rockwell's 1955 *Saturday Evening Post* cover, Marriage License. Three months after this updated version was published in MAD, Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage on May 17, 2004. Marriage for same-sex couples became legal in all 50 states on June 26, 2015, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Obergefell v. Hodges, stating that state bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional.

Politics as Usual?

In defense of journalistic freedom, MAD publisher Bill Gaines agreed to testify before the U.S. Senate Sub-committee on Juvenile Delinquency, organized in 1954 to investigate the effects of mass media—and particularly horror, science fiction, and crime comic books—on America's youth. Gaines and Al Feldstein began their careers writing morality tales for EC Comics' crime comics, addressing issues of racism and the need for equal protection under the law that were ahead of their time. Gaines transformed MAD from a comic book to a magazine format in 1955, avoiding censorship by the Comics Code Authority, and claimed that the publication was "more or less apolitical" by design.

But MAD has always been an equal opportunity offender—no president, party, or movement has escaped the witty indignation of the magazine's artists and writers. Beyond the laughs that its stories and features generated, MAD's focus on national events and figures had a significant impact, raising public awareness during the mid-twentieth century when mainstream media was deferential to authority. Those who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s at the height of MAD's popularity began

to question the accepted wisdom of the day, establishing careers in comedy like the creators of *Saturday Night Live*, *Second City Television*, and *National Lampoon*, and taking to the streets to protest racial discrimination and the war in Vietnam.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

MAD Join the Usual Gang of Idiots

Poster
Courtesy of the Drucker Family

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

A Day with J-F-K, 1961
Story illustration for "A Day with JFK" by Larry Siegel, MAD #67, December 1961

Ink and gouache on paper
Collection of Nell and David

In Mort Drucker's post-election drawing, President John F. Kennedy sings to the tune of *When I Was a Lad (Ruler of the Queen's Navy)* from Gilbert & Sullivan's popular comic opera, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, which premiered in London in 1878. During his campaign, much attention was paid to President Kennedy's full head of hair, as reflected in the song's parodied lyrics. Jacqueline Kennedy's lyrics underscore this point: "He tousled up his hair so carefulee—That now he is the leader of the whole countree!" Song parodies were a popular feature in MAD, and musician Weird Al Yankovic considered them a primary source of inspiration in his youth.

Liz Lomax (American, b. 1958)

10. The Catholic Church Sex Abuse Cover-Up: The Sins of Our Fathers
Illustration for "The MAD 20 Dumbest People, Events and Things of 2002," MAD #425, January 2003

Polymer clay and paint
Collection of Sam Viviano

This sculpture by Liz Lomax portrays Cardinal Bernard Law, a high-ranking member of the clergy who ignored the sexual abuse of children in the Catholic Church. The piece is part of a sequence inspired by the phrase, "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil."

Scott Bricher (American, b. 1962)

**Gulf Wars Episode II:
Clone of the Attack, 2002**
Illustration for MAD #424, December 2002

Digital painting
Collection of Scott Bricher

This spoof of *Star Wars: Episode II—Attack of the Clones* takes inspiration from the poster publicizing George Lucas's 2002 epic film. In Scott Bricher's Gulf War interpretation, President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stand in for Hayden Christensen and Natalie Portman, and George H.W. Bush, Dick Cheney, General Colin Powell, and Saddam Hussein are nearby.

Mark Fredrickson (American)

Will Worry for Food, 2009
Cover illustration for MAD #501,
October 2009

Digital painting
Courtesy of Mark Fredrickson

This poignant image reflects a cause for Alfred's worry—the 2009 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress revealed that, due to the 2008 and 2009 recession, the number of homeless families had increased nationwide. Mark Fredrickson's striking artworks for MAD are created digitally, which allows for their smooth and efficient transition from original concept to published piece.

Mark Fredrickson (American)

20 Dumbest People, Events and Things of 2005, 2006
Cover illustration for MAD #461, January 2006

Digital painting
Courtesy of Mark Fredrickson

Smiling nervously, Alfred E. Neuman is underwater because of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. This devastating category five hurricane caused 1,392 fatalities and billions of dollars in damage in and around New Orleans. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) response to Katrina and its aftermath sparked political dispute on governmental preparedness and response.

Mark Fredrickson's award-winning artworks have appeared in *Time*, *BusinessWeek*, *IndustryWeek*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Golf Digest*, and *The Village Voice*, among others. In 2003, he became MAD's principal cover artist and has created more cover illustrations for the magazine than any other artist.

MAD Magazine's Spy vs. Spy

"Each spy thinks he's the good guy—but in the end, they both lose. That's the joke."

— Antonio Prohías

Since 1961, "Spy vs. Spy" has delivered wordless warfare and slapstick sabotage. Created by Cuban cartoonist Antonio Prohías, this iconic comic strip pits two nearly identical spies—one dressed in black, the other in white—against each other in an endless battle of wits, tricks, and explosive gadgets. Their rivalry, marked by booby traps and backfires, parodies the absurdity of Cold War espionage and the threat of mutual destruction.

Prohías fled Cuba shortly before Fidel Castro's regime shut down the press, arriving in the United States with little English but a sharp satirical eye. Within months, he sold "Spy vs. Spy" to MAD, where it quickly became a reader favorite. The strip's silent, visual storytelling transcended language and borders, poking fun at the real-world paranoia between East and West.

Over the decades, other talented artists have

carried on Prohías' legacy, preserving the strip's bold style and dark humor in their own way. Illustrator and graphic novelist Peter Kuper began drawing "Spy vs. Spy" in 1997, following Prohías' death, and continues the series today. From print to animation and video games, "Spy vs. Spy" is still a cultural touchstone—proof that even in a world divided, laughter is a powerful weapon.

DC Direct
(American, 1998-2012), Manufacturer

Spy vs. Spy Black and White Spy
Action Figure, 1998

Plastic
Collection of the late Andrew Flint,
now Sydney Flint

Revell Monogram, Inc.
(American, 1943-2007), Manufacturer

Spy vs. Spy Firebird
Fun Car Hobby Kit, 1998

Hobby Kit
Collection of the late Andrew Flint,
now Sydney Flint

Peter Kuper (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy 50th Anniversary Figurine, 2011

Maquette
Collection of Peter Kuper

This maquette was designed to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of *Spy vs. Spy*, the hilarious, feuding comic secret agents who were first introduced in 1961 by Cuban cartoonist Antonio Prohías.

Antonio Prohías (Cuban, 1921–1998)

Spy vs. Spy (Roller Coaster), 1967
Illustration for "Spy vs Spy,"
MAD #112, July 1967

Ink on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

In creating *Spy vs. Spy*, Antonio Prohías cooked up ever-new challenges and diabolical ways for his protagonists to harm each other. According to Prohías, the spies were on equal footing. "White wins part of the time and loses part of the time, and the same is true of his opposite. One isn't any better than the other—one is as cunning and tricky as his opponent." Prohías carefully devised unique backgrounds and gadgetry to avoid repetition and keep his readers engaged. Due to a language barrier, he created highly detailed sketches for editorial review and then redrew each piece in ink, approximately twice the size of the printed page

Antonio Prohías (Cuban, 1921–1998)

Spy vs. Spy (Electrocution), 1967
Illustration for "Spy vs Spy,"
MAD #113, September 1967

Ink on paper
Collection of Jason Levine

Antonio Prohías saw his spies become "a part of popular culture, and in later years, as they entered the lexicon as kind of shorthand for the Cold War politics that he initially was a victim of, then made a personal triumph over," notes MAD historian Grant Geissman. "Prohías' pen may not have been mightier than the sword (or a revolution), but…it had a powerful impact. Armed with not much more than that pen and his wit, he made people all over the world laugh…. his drawings found a way to escape their borders."

Antonio Prohías (Cuban, 1921–1998)

Spy vs. Spy (Submarine), 1967
Illustration for "Spy vs Spy,"
MAD #109, March 1967

Ink on paper
Collection of Peter Kuper

Born in Cuba, Antonio Prohías was the creator
of *Spy vs. Spy*, the satirical Cold War cartoon
strip that he drew for MAD from 1961 to 1987.
A popular editorial cartoonist in Cuba, Prohías'
political drawings appeared in the island's most
influential dailies and news magazines and won
many awards. In the late 1950s, during Fulgencio
Batista's second long dictatorship, Prohías spoke
out against corruption through his art. When
Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, he voiced
his concerns about the new leader's totalitarian
views. In doing so, Prohías was targeted by Castro's
regime and accused of being a CIA operative.
Seeing the writing on the wall, he left Cuba for
New York City in 1960, working in a garment
factory and building his portfolio of cartoons,
which he brought to MAD 10 weeks later. With his

daughter as an interpreter, he sold his first three *Spy vs. Spy* cartoons to the magazine and received a payment of $800 for his work. "The sweetest revenge," Prohías told a Miami Herald reporter in 1983, "has been to turn Fidel's accusation of me as a spy into a money-making venture."

Antonio Prohías (Cuban, 1921–1998)

Spy vs. Spy (Black Spy Fan Club), 1983
Illustration for "Spy vs Spy,"
MAD #237, March 1983

Ink on paper

Peter Kuper (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy (Nitroglycerin), 2002
Illustration for MAD #414, February 2002

Stencils, spray paint, watercolor, ink,
colored pencil, and collage on paper
Collection of Peter Kuper

The inheritor of Antonio Prohías' *Spy vs. Spy*, Peter
Kuper took over as the feature's lead artist in 1996
and continued in the role for more than 25 years.
An award-winning graphic novelist and illustrator
for The New York Times and other publications,
Kuper worked in a bold style that incorporated
hand-cut stencils and spray paint. This graphic
approach distinguished his work while staying
faithful to the strip's aesthetic. "The stencil and
spray paint approach seemed absurd, but it's what
landed me the job. The editors wanted something
that kept the tradition and looked like Spy vs. Spy,
but nothing like Prohías," Kuper said. In this clever
comic, the white spy tricks the black spy into mixing
a brew of nitroglycerin, believing it to be paint.

Peter Kuper (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy (Boom), 2007
Illustration for MAD #484, December 2007

Stencils, spray paint, watercolor, ink,
colored pencil, and collage on paper
Collection of Peter Kuper

Although *Spy vs. Spy* is a wordless comic accessible
to cultures worldwide, occasionally simple sound
words, like "boom," create emphasis. "I love
that Spy exists in a world that can be completely
out of time," said Kuper, "there's an old-world
quality to it that's comforting." The artist has
always been interested in comics that convey their
message visually, without relying heavily on text.

Peter Kuper (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy (Sawing Wood), 2004
Illustration for MAD #442, June 2004

Stencils, spray paint, watercolor, ink, colored pencil, and collage on paper
Collection of Peter Kuper

In *Spy vs. Spy*, thoughts and dreams become reality. In this clever strip, saws, light bulbs, and stars, plucked from spy thought bubbles, become actual weapons.

Peter Kuper (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy (Sawing Wood), 2004
Study for MAD #442, June 2004

Pencil on paper
Collection of Peter Kuper

Drawing was a lifelong activity for Peter Kuper, who would deliver detailed sketches to MAD editors before moving on to create finished work. For each installment, several concepts were presented for consideration.

As a teenager, Kuper visited Norman Rockwell, an artistic inspiration, when his family visited the Norman Rockwell Museum. "His art really connected to my interest in storytelling and cartooning, and I couldn't believe that it was humanly possible to do what he did," Kuper said. Directed to his home by a staff member, Kuper knocked on Rockwell's door and shared images from his sketchbook, which was filled with drawings of superheroes. Though encouraging, Rockwell advised Kuper to draw from life, advice that he heeded from then on. After moving from Cleveland

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to New York City at the start of his career, Kuper took classes at the Art Students League, Rockwell's alma mater. "I felt like I was walking in Rockwell's footsteps," he said.

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Spy vs. Spy (Sawing Wood), 2004
Study for MAD #442, June 2004

Pencil on paper
Collection of Peter Kuper

Peter Kuper (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy (Sawing Wood), 2004
Study for MAD #442, June 2004

Stencil and spray paint on paper
Collection of Peter Kuper

Tom Bunk (German, b. 1945)

Artist Tribute Mini Poster, 2011
Illustration for "MAD Presents Spy vs. Spy,"
Edited by John Ficarra, January 2011

Ink, watercolor, and gouache on paper
Collection of Tom Bunk

In Tom Bunk's design for a commemorative *Spy vs. Spy* poster, coalitions of black and white spies and their embassies are hard at work, wreaking havoc on each other and the world. Bunk is known for elaborate compositions, which are filled with "chicken fat," or details that add richness and flavor without necessarily contributing to a narrative storyline. "When I paint, I try to keep a balance between my intellect, my intuition, and my ever-present humoristic approach," he said. "In this way, I keep the painting interesting and alive for me. This is also what I would like the painting to be for the viewer, a stimulating and entertaining puzzle."

Dave Manak (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy (Magic Show), 2002

Ink on Bristol board
Collection of Jason Levine

Dave Manak (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy (Helicopter Crash), 1995
Illustration for "Spy vs Spy" by Don
Edwing, MAD #341, December 1995

Ink and Rubylith on board
Collection of Jason Levine

Born in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, Dave Manak
always wanted to be a cartoonist. He began
working at DC Comics for editor Joe Kubert
and met Sergio Aragonés while working on the
ghoulish humor comic *Plop!*, which encouraged
him to contact MAD. First creating front and
back cover and gag concepts for other artists
to draw, Manak eventually developed his own
finishes. He also drew the syndicated weekly *Spy
vs. Spy* newspaper strip based on scripts by Duck
Edwing—the fulfillment of his childhood dream.

Peter Kuper (American, b. 1958)

Spy vs. Spy (Art Museum), 2007
Illustration for MAD #478,
June 2007

Stencils, spray paint, watercolor, ink,
colored pencil, and collage on paper
Collection of Peter Kuper

In this work, readers are taken into the galleries
of a museum filled with masterpieces, overseen
by a sleeping security guard. The art on view
inspires devious imaginings by the white spy, who
awakens the guard when a mobile by Alexander
Calder crashes to the ground. Peter Kuper found
inspiration for *Spy vs. Spy* in everyday things and
experiences. "I was walking through a museum
when I got the idea to apply art history to MAD
with a subtext of the Cold War," he said.

Kuper's work appears in *The New Yorker* and
The Nation, and he is the co-founder of *World
War 3 Illustrated*, a politically focused comics
anthology. He has produced over two dozen
books, including *Sticks and Stones*, *The System*,

Diario de Oaxaca, *Ruins*, and adaptations of many of Franz Kafka's works. In 2011, Kuper began teaching Harvard University's first course dedicated to comics and graphic novels.

MAD for the Movies & Television

For many MAD fans, classic films were relics of the past—known only to readers through the steady stream of satirical features on its illustrated pages—while parodies of contemporary movies and television shows were enjoyed for their inside jokes. Uproarious and irreverent, MAD's brilliant writers and artists have documented and dissected the modern canon since "Lone Stranger!" by Harvey Kurtzman and Jack Davis and "Ping Pong!" by Kurtzman and Will Elder appeared in 1953.

Being spoofed by MAD has been a badge of honor for filmmakers, producers, and actors, including George Lucas, Steven Spielberg, Quentin Tarantino, Howard Stern, Jerry Seinfeld, and Michael J. Fox, whose high-profile projects have been playfully lampooned on its pages. In 1959, Mort Drucker's first official satire—"The Night Perry Masonmint Lost a Case"—transformed the genre with cinematic multi-page storytelling and spot-on caricatures. Angelo Torres, Sam Viviano, Herman Mejia, Harry North, Ray Alma, Tom Richmond, Gary Hallgren, Tom Bunk, Bill Wray, and other artists have partnered with writers to bring their distinctive vision to these ever-popular features.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

TVs Wonder Dog, Lizzie, 1960
Story illustration for "TV's Wonder Dog Lizzie" by Larry Siegel, MAD #59, December 1960

Ink over graphite on Craftint Duotone Board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Mort Drucker's illustrated parody was inspired by Lassie, a popular 1950s television series about the adventures of a heroic Collie and his farm family. Inspired by *Lassie Comes Home*, a novel by Eric Knight, the story was adapted for film in 1943 and ran on television from 1954 to 1973.

The text for MAD's takeoff on Lassie is by comedy writer Larry Siegel, who wrote for magazines, books, and television, including *The Carol Burnett Show* and *Laugh-In*. At MAD, artists and writers worked independently, with editors and writers discussing story directions that the artists then developed. "It was always a matter of choosing

the best person for the job," said art director
Sam Viviano.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

MAD Visits John Wayde on the Set of The Alamo, 1961
Story illustration for "MAD Visits John Wayde on the Set of the Alamo" by Larry Siegel, MAD #63, June 1961

Ink over graphite on Craftint Duotone Board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Mort Drucker's celebrity caricatures emphasized his subjects' features but never seemed to stretch the visual truth. Even the artist's victims became fans. John Wayne, who played Davy Crockett in the epic 1960 film *The Alamo*, said, "I felt honored to take a kick in the rear from MAD magazine—quite a lift that they'd bother to know that picture well enough to rake it over the coals. All in good fun, of course." "I become the camera," Drucker once said, "and look for angles, lighting, close-ups, wide angles, long shots—just as a director does to tell the story in the most visually interesting way he can."

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

The Flying Nut, 1968
Story illustrations for "The Flying Nut" by Larry Siegel, MAD #121, September 1968

Ink and wash on Craftint Duotone Board
Collection of Nell and David

A popular television program that aired 87 episodes between 1967 and 1970, *The Flying Nun* featured Sister Bertrille, an idealistic novice in an order of nuns based in San Juan, Puerto Rico. In Mort Drucker's lively parody, the show's star, Sally Field, takes flight in a strong gust of wind. Fulton J. Sheen, a Catholic bishop known for his appearances on TV and radio, is Bishop Fulton J. Showbiz, who presents a chart ranking current sitcoms. Drucker's drawings also include cameo appearances by Adam West as Batman and Julie Andrews, whose character started as a nun in The Sound of Music.

The speech bubbles in MAD articles were rectangular and strategically placed to allow the art in each story to shine while moving the narrative along clearly and succinctly.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

Put*On, 1971
Story illustration for "Put*On" by Larry Siegel, MAD #140, January 1971

Ink and ink wash on board
Collection of Nell and David

Mort Drucker's opening scene in *Put*On*—a parody inspired by Patton, the 1970 biographical war film about World War II General George S. Patton— is drawn from actor George C. Scott's opening monologue, delivered before a massive American flag. Though the flag does not appear in Drucker's drawing, which captures Scott's hardened snarl, it does appear in the published magazine as a backdrop to the scene.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

The Odd Father, 1972
Story illustrations for "The Odd Father" by Larry Siegel, MAD #155, December 1972

Ink on board
Collection of Nell and David

The Oddfather was inspired by Francis Ford Coppola's 1972 crime film, The Godfather, based on a best-selling novel by Mario Puzo. Its large ensemble cast included Marlon Brando as crime boss Vito Corleone, Al Pacino as Michael Corleone, James Caan as Sonny Corleone, Talia Shire as Connie Corleone, Diane Keaton as Kay Adams-Corleone, and Robert Duvall as Tom Hagen, among many others. *The Godfather* trilogy, which chronicles the Corleone family's history from 1945 to 1955 and Michael Corleone's transformation from reluctant outsider to ruthless mob boss, was also brilliantly parodied by Larry Siegel and Mort Drucker in *Oddfather II* and *III*.

Mort Drucker's film and television parodies, script-ed by his colleagues, featured elegant exaggeration

with stylized yet unmistakable likenesses and expressive gestures. In *The Oddfather*, Drucker perfectly captures the distinctive jowls and under-bite of Brando's Vito Corleone.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

The Odd Father, 1972
Story illustrations for "The Odd Father" by
Larry Siegel, MAD #155, December 1972

Ink on board
Collection of Nell and David

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

The Odd Father Part III, 1991
Story illustrations for "The Part III"
by Arnie Kogen, MAD #304, July 1991

Ink on Bristol board
Collection of Nell and David

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

The Supremos, 2000
Story illustration for "The Supremos" by Arnie Kogen, MAD #389, January 2000

Ink and ink wash on Bristol board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

One of the most engrossing shows of all time, *The Sopranos* was a television series about a fractious mob family that ran from 1999 to 2007. James Gandolfini, Lorraine Bracco, Edie Falco, Dominic Chianese, Tony Sirico, and Michael Imperioli were among its stars.

Capitalizing on the show's wave of success, artist Mort Drucker and writer Arnie Kogen brought the cast of characters together in their rendition of "The Supremos." With a nod to past mob-inspired movies, Drucker's splash page weaves together characters from the show with famous faces from other memorable mob stories, including Robert De Niro's James Conway and Joe Pesci's Tommy DeVito from *Goodfellas* (1990), Marlon Brando's

Don Vito Corleone from *The Godfather* (1972), and Hugh Grant's Michael Felgate from *Mickey Blue Eyes* (1999).

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

Fiddler on the Roof, 1973
Cover illustration for MAD #156,
January 1973

Oil on canvas
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage
Auctions (HA.com)

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

Fun Lady, 1975
Story illustration for "Fun Lady" by Stan Hart, MAD #179, December 1975

Ink on board
Collection of Nell and David

Mort Drucker's expressive portrayal of actor and singer Barbra Streisand was created for *Fun Lady*, a parody of *Funny Lady*, the sequel to her popular 1968 film, *Funny Girl*. Lead character Fanny Brice—changed here to Funny Briss for a touch of Jewish humor—is a beloved comedian who makes her way to fame on burlesque and vaudeville stages as she pursues her dream of becoming a star.

Dr. Leah Garrett, Director of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at Hunter College, noted that for an entire generation, "MAD was one of the most central factors in shaping how we understood the adult world and what it meant. The magazine would end up…inspiring basically every important American comic, particularly all the Jewish comics—Sid Caesar, Mel Brooks, Jerry Seinfeld, Howard Stern,

the writers of *The Simpsons* and *Saturday Night Live*, *The Onion*, and *The Daily Show*, just to name a few. I would say it was the most important comedy vehicle in American history."

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

**Clod Encounters of
the Absurd Kind, 1978**
Story illustration for "Clod Encounters of
the Absurd Kind" by Stan Hart, MAD #200,
July 1978

Ink on board
Collection of Nell and David

Close Encounters of the Third Kind is a 1977
science fiction film written and directed by Steven
Spielberg. Starring Richard Dreyfuss and Teri Garr, it
tells the tale of Indiana electrician Roy Neary, whose
life changes dramatically after his encounter with
a UFO. This scene takes place in Mexico's Sonoran
Desert, when French scientist Claude Lacombe
(Francois Truffaut) and his American interpreter
David Laughlin (Bob Balaban) question a Mexican
man (Eumenio Blanco) about Flight 19, a World War
II airplane that disappeared 30 years earlier in the
Bermuda Triangle.

Now viewed as outdated and insensitive, cultural

stereotypes, as embodied by the Mexican man in this drawing, have long been prevalent in comedy, from the minstrel shows of the nineteenth century to modern films, television programs, and cartoons.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

Jaw'd, Too, 1979
Story illustrations for "Jaw'd, Too" by Dick DeBartolo, MAD #204, January 1979

Ink on board
Collection of Nell and David

Released in 1978, *Jaws 2* is the first sequel in a three-part film series by Steven Spielberg, cleverly parodied in a story by writer Dick DeBartolo and artist Mort Drucker. The film follows the adventures of Chief Martin Brody, played by Roy Scheider, and a great white shark.

In this send-up, sight gags abound, bringing new meaning to this well-known narrative. Okra replaces the name Orca, the famous fishing boat from the original installment; Miss Amity becomes Miss Amnesty; and a mermaid is seen on land trying to remove tar from her tail, among others.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

Flopeye, 1981
Story illustration for "Flopeye"
by Stan Hart, MAD #225, September 1981

Ink on board
Collection of Nell and David

Flopeye spoofs *Popeye*, the 1980 live-action film starring Robin Williams as Popeye and Shelley Duvall as Olive Oyl. The film is based on E.C. Segar's *Popeye* comic strip that ran in newspapers from 1919 to 1992. In the story's art and writing, characters consider why their comic characters should (or shouldn't) be played by famous actors.

Sam Viviano (American, b.1953)

MAD Shoots J.R. and the Rest of His Empty-Headed Family with Our Version of "Dallas," 1981
Cover illustration for MAD #223, June 1981

Acrylic on board
Collection of Sam Viviano

Who Shot J.R.? was the advertising phrase promoting *Dallas*, a television series that aired on CBS from 1978 to 1991. Larry Hagman played J.R. Ewing, the show's star, and the question went unsolved until the fourth episode of the fourth season. With a viewing audience of 83 million, it was one of the most watched broadcasts in television history.

Sam Viviano was working for *Scholastic Magazines* when his colleagues encouraged him to bring his portfolio to MAD. New artists were not being hired at the time, but in 1980, following Norman Mingo's death, Al Feldstein invited him to submit a cover

concept. Viviano's illustration portrays a grinning Hagman being shot through the ear with an Alfred E. Neuman flag. He did not contribute another cover until four years later, when his art began to appear regularly; Viviano served as MAD's art director from 1999 to 2018.

Will Elder
(American, 1921–2008)
and **Harvey Kurtzman**
(American, 1924–1993)

[Miami Vice and Alfred E. Neuman], 1986
Cover illustration for MAD #261,
March 1986

Gouache and watercolor on board
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

In the television crime drama, *Miami Vice*, Don
Johnson as James "Sonny" Crockett and Philip
Michael Thomas as Ricardo "Rico" Tubbs are
undercover police detectives working the beat
in Miami. Pop rock music, along with striking
visuals, contributed to the program's popularity,
which ran for five seasons from 1984 to 1989.
Here, the exasperated detectives interrogate
Alfred E. Neuman, who is unperturbed about
being in the spotlight.

Will Elder and Harvey Kurtzman sometimes
collaborated on MAD artworks, signing them with

the initials WEHK. According to editor Nick Meglin, "Harvey and Will figure out between them who'll do what, and they do it and turn it in to us."

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

Beverly Hills Slop, Too, 1987

Story illustration for "Beverly Hills Slop, Too!" by Dick DeBartolo, MAD #275, December 1987

Ink on Bristol board
Collection of Nell and David

"Mort Drucker was such a humble, gentle soul," wrote illustration historian David Apatoff. "I could never quite figure out where he found the drive and ambition to stay at his drawing board, creating hundreds of stories, decade after decade. He was the opposite of competitive, as generous, and open-minded an artist as I've ever known. Yet he held himself to excruciatingly exacting standards as he crafted his marvelous drawings, working out likenesses for his caricatures and populating his pictures with details and humor that reflected his abundance of spirit."

The artist's mastery is clear in this multi-panel parody of *Beverly Hills Cop II*, the 1987 sequel

starring Eddie Murphy as the streetwise Detroit detective, Axel Foley.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

Top Gunk, 1986
Story illustration for "Top Gunk" by Stan Hart, MAD #267, December 1986

Ink and Rubylith on Bristol board
Collection of Nell and David

Top Gunk is an ingenious parody of *Top Gun*, the 1986 action film starring Tom Cruise and Val Kilmer that was the highest-grossing commercial movie of the year. Despite mixed reviews from critics, it was acclaimed for its visual effects and soundtrack. This sweeping double-page spread focuses on theatergoers who, immersed in the action, have a great deal to say about their experience.

Red acetate, known as Rubylith, is layered over specific areas of the drawing, allowing select parts to appear in shadow when photographed for printing.

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

Fearless Buller's Day Off, 1987
Story illustration for "Fearless Buller's Day Off" by Dennis Snee, MAD #268, January 1987

Ink on Bristol board
Collection of Nell and David

This parody of *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* was described in lively terms by writer Dennis Snee:

The Hooky Monster Dept.

"Because of one of this summer's teen movies, there's a new reason to call Chicago the "Windy City": A high school con man who's full of hot air! This glib and nervy kid is full of malarkey, baloney, bull, and more bull! Which is why when he plays hooky, we call it a...."

Filled with visual and literary puns, Mort Drucker's richly detailed drawing captures the film's main characters as well as some unlikely suspects.

James Warhola (American, b. 1955)

MAD's Celebrity Cause of Death Betting Odds: Jerry Seinfeld, 1997
Illustration for MAD #364, December 1997

watercolor on paper
Collection of James Warhola

A wide-eyed Jerry Seinfeld is flanked by angels with the faces of Jason Alexander (George Costanza) and Michael Richards (Cosmo Kramer), surrounded by the words "yada, yada, yada," made famous in season eight, episode 19 of *Seinfeld*.

Celebrity Cause of Death Betting Odds was a long-running recurring feature in MAD, often featuring a tombstone carved with a caricature of the celebrity. In James Warhola's drawing, mementos from the show have been left at the grave, including a discarded Soup Nazi container and a cordless phone.

Sam Viviano (American, b.1953)

Air Farce One, 1997
Story illustrations for "Air Farce One" by
Stan Hart, MAD #364, December 1997

Ink on Bristol board
Collection of Sam Viviano

Cinematic in effect, Sam Viviano's parody of *Air Force One* brings readers into the action when a group of terrorists hijacks the President's plane. The film, starring Harrison Ford, Gary Oldman, and Glenn Close, was a box office success and received positive critical reviews.

"My experience with MAD began when I was a very little boy, and I discovered a copy of MAD in my friend Linda's basement," Viviano said. "Linda lived down the block from me in Detroit, and I was just fascinated by it. I didn't understand it, but the visual exuberance of the magazine impressed me. So, I guess my initial relationship with MAD was as a fan and as a kid."

Mort Drucker (American, 1929–2020)

That's all, Folks! (MAD About the Movies), 1998
Illustration for MAD Magazine Tribute to Warner Bros. 75th Anniversary, MAD Books, 1998

Pencil, ink, and gouache on board
James Halperin Collection, Courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com)

Mort Drucker honored the 75th anniversary of Warner Bros. with this energetic mix of cartoon characters, superheroes, and MAD's illustrious mascot, who has stolen Porky Pig's famous line—"That's All, Folks!" Batman and Robin, Superman, Yosemite Sam, Pepe Le Pew, Daffy Duck, Tweety Pie, and many more are part of the celebration.

Hermann Mejia
(Venezuelan-American, b. 1973)

Bored of the Rings—The Feebleschtick of Ka-Ching! 2002
Illustration for "Bored of the Rings—The Feebleschtick of Ka-Ching!" by Desmond Devlin, MAD #416, April 2002

Ink and watercolor on paper
Collection of Hermann Mejia

Hermann Mejia's colorful, complex illustrations, which parody *The Lord of the Rings* epic fantasy film trilogy, were inspired by *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001) and *The Two Towers* (2002), directed by Peter Jackson. Based upon the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien, these two movies, and a third—*The Return of the King* (2003)—are set in Middle-earth and follow hobbit Frodo Baggins as he and the fellowship embark upon a quest to destroy the One Ring, which Sauron forged on Mount Doom. Shot simultaneously in Jackson's native New Zealand, the films won seventeen Academy Awards and are among the highest-grossing of all time, prompting

the *Ka-Ching* in Desmond Devlin's title.

"Being a visual artist is very challenging, from showing artwork to adapting to technological changes," Mejia said. "The only way to succeed is to keep moving forward and not give up. Hard work is the secret to overcoming obstacles."

Dale Stephanos (American, b. 1965)

**Bored of the Rings—
The Two + Hours, 2003**
Cover illustration for MAD #428, April 2003

Oil and acrylic on board
Collection of Dale Stephanos

Alfred E. Neuman appears in this parody of *The Lord of the Rings—The Two Towers*, the 2002 fantasy adventure film based on *The Two Towers*, the second volume of *The Lord of the Rings* by author J.R.R. Tolkien.

Dale Stephanos (American, b. 1965)

**Bored of the Rings—
The Two + Hours, 2003**
Cover study for MAD #428, April 2003

Pencil on paper
Collection of Dale Stephanos

Dale Stephanos (American, b. 1965)

**Bored of the Rings—
The Two + Hours, 2003**
Cover study for MAD #428, April 2003

Tearsheet
Collection of the Artist

Hermann Mejia
(Venezuelan-American, b. 1973)

**Bored of the Rings—
The Two + Hours, 2003**
Illustration for "Bored of the Rings—The
Two + Hours" by Desmond Devlin,
MAD #428, April 2003

Ink and watercolor on paper
Collection of Hermann Mejia

Hermann Mejia
(Venezuelan-American, b. 1973)

King Korn! 2006
Illustration for "King Korn" by
Dick DeBartolo, MAD #464, April 2006

Ink and watercolor on paper
Collection of Hermann Mejia

Sporting a Band-Aid™ and a quizzical expression, King Kong is perplexed by the arrival of Carl Denham (Jack Black) and his crew on the remote Skull Island, which they consider the perfect location to complete his movie. The second remake of the 1933 film of the same title, the story follows the cast as they meet prehistoric creatures and a giant gorilla, whom they capture and transport to New York City. Exaggeration has been a key element in satirical art for centuries, as seen with the artist's treatment of native islanders who promise a view of the Statue of Liberty for "two coconuts."

Don Martin (American, 1930–2000)

One Fine Day with King Kong, 1986
Illustration for MAD #262, April 1986

Ink on paper
Collection of Dr. Lewis Kaminester

Tom Richmond (American, b. 1966)

**Harry Plodder and the
Torture of the Fanbase, 2007**
Story illustration for "Harry Plodder
and the Torture of the Fan Base" by
Desmond Devlin, MAD Magazine,
MAD #480, August 2007

Ink on Bristol board
Collection of Sam Viviano

James Warhola (American, b. 1955)

**Harry Plodder and the Kidney Stone
by J.K. Growling, 2000**
Story illustration for "Harry Plodder and
the Kidney Stone by J.K. Growling" by
Desmond Devlin, MAD #391, March 2000

watercolor and pencil on paper
Collection of James Warhola

MAD Legacy of Art & Humor

"MAD was ever ready to pounce on the illogical, hypocritical, self-serious, and ludicrous. Nowadays, it's part of the oxygen we breathe."

—Graydon Carter, Co-Editor, Air Mail Since 1961,

More than a stream of humorous features designed by its "Usual Gang of Idiots" and by later generations of artists, writers, and editors, MAD has been a consciousness-raising vehicle for readers who have carried its ideology forward for our times and nurtured a generation of questioners with great self-effacing good humor.

MAD's readers became artists, reporters, composers, novelists, screenwriters, and filmmakers who took that ethos and "held it somewhere in the front of our minds," writes co-curator Steve Brodner. Aesthetically, artists had much to learn from MAD. "I never wrote or drew for MAD," writes author and cartoonist Tim Kreider, "but my own cartooning was deeply influenced by its artists."

MAD's influence is now everywhere; the satire and comedy that we meet today is created by

those who grew up on the magazine's outrageous, subversive humor. Stalwarts like *Saturday Night Live*, *The Simpsons*, *South Park*, *The Onion*, and late-night programming like *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, and *Late Night with Seth Meyers* were created by youth raised within its orbit. Even the language of politics, advertising, and public relations has appropriated MAD's pointed irony and messaging. MAD's radical assault on hypocrisy, bigotry, and deception has been an appeal for old-fashioned common sense, decency, and integrity, presented through the lens of uproarious humor.

Sam Viviano (American, b.1953)

Hijinks on the High Seas, 2022
Illustration for "Hijinks on
the High Seas!" by John Ficarra,
MAD #28, December 2022

Ink and Dr. Martin's Dyes on Bristol board
Collection of Sam Viviano

Sam Viviano's animated drawing commemorates
the 30th anniversary of the last MAD trip, the
infamous "eating, drinking, sight-seeing gag-fests
engineered by MAD's founding publisher, Bill
Gaines." The piece appeared in the magazine's
70th anniversary issue with a gag set up by writer
Dick DeBartolo—a recreation of the state room
scene in the Marx Brothers' 1935 *Night at the
Opera*. In 1960, the first MAD trip took the *Usual
Gang of Idiots* and their significant others to Haiti,
to convince the country's lone subscriber to renew
his subscription. The final trip took the group to
Monte Carlo in 1993, unfortunately without Gaines,
who passed away on June 3, 1992, at the age of 70.

"This gave me the opportunity to draw a full page depicting a couple dozen of MAD's artists, writers, editors and business associates, along with many of their spouses, all crammed into Bill's cabin," Viviano said. "The illustration was a ton of work, but it brought back a lot of fond memories of friends and colleagues, many of whom are now gone. It remains one of my favorite pieces from a fairly long career."

Key to the Crowd in Bill's Cabin:

1. William M. Gaines, Publisher
2. Bill's wife, Annie Gaines,
   Assistant to the Publisher
3. Andrew J. Schwartzberg, Editorial Assistant
4. Rick Tulka, artist
5. Rick's wife, Brenda Torney
6. Sergio Aragonés, writer/artist
7. Sergio's wife, Charlene Ryan
8. George Woodbridge, artist
9. George's wife, Debbie Woodbridge
10. Dick DeBartolo, writer/Creative Consultant
11. Nick Meglin, Co-Editor
12. Leonard Brenner, Art Director
13. A random passenger who had
    no idea who Bill Gaines was
14. Dorothy Crouch, Foreign Correspondent
15. Jack Davis, artist
16. Jack's wife, Dena Davis
17. Don "Duck" Edwing, writer/artist
18. Duck's wife, Clare "Cluck" Edwing
19. John Ficarra, Co-Editor
20. Maria Reidelbach, author
    of "Completely MAD"
21. Sam Viviano, artist
22. Sam's wife, Diane Bloomfield

23. Angelo Torres, artist
24. Rey Cruz, MAD's accountant
25. Mike Snider, writer
26. Bob Clarke, artist
27. Bob's wife, Ruth Clarke
28. John Caldwell, writer/artist
29. John's wife, Diane Caldwell
30. Charlie Kadau, Associate Editor
31. Al Jaffee, writer/artist
32. Al's wife, Joyce Jaffee
33. Horizon crew member with a vacuum cleaner
34. Jack Albert, MAD's attorney
35. Paul Coker, Jr., artist
36. Paul's wife, Rosemary Smithson
37. Paul Peter Porges, writer/artist
38. Paul Peter's wife, Lucie Porges
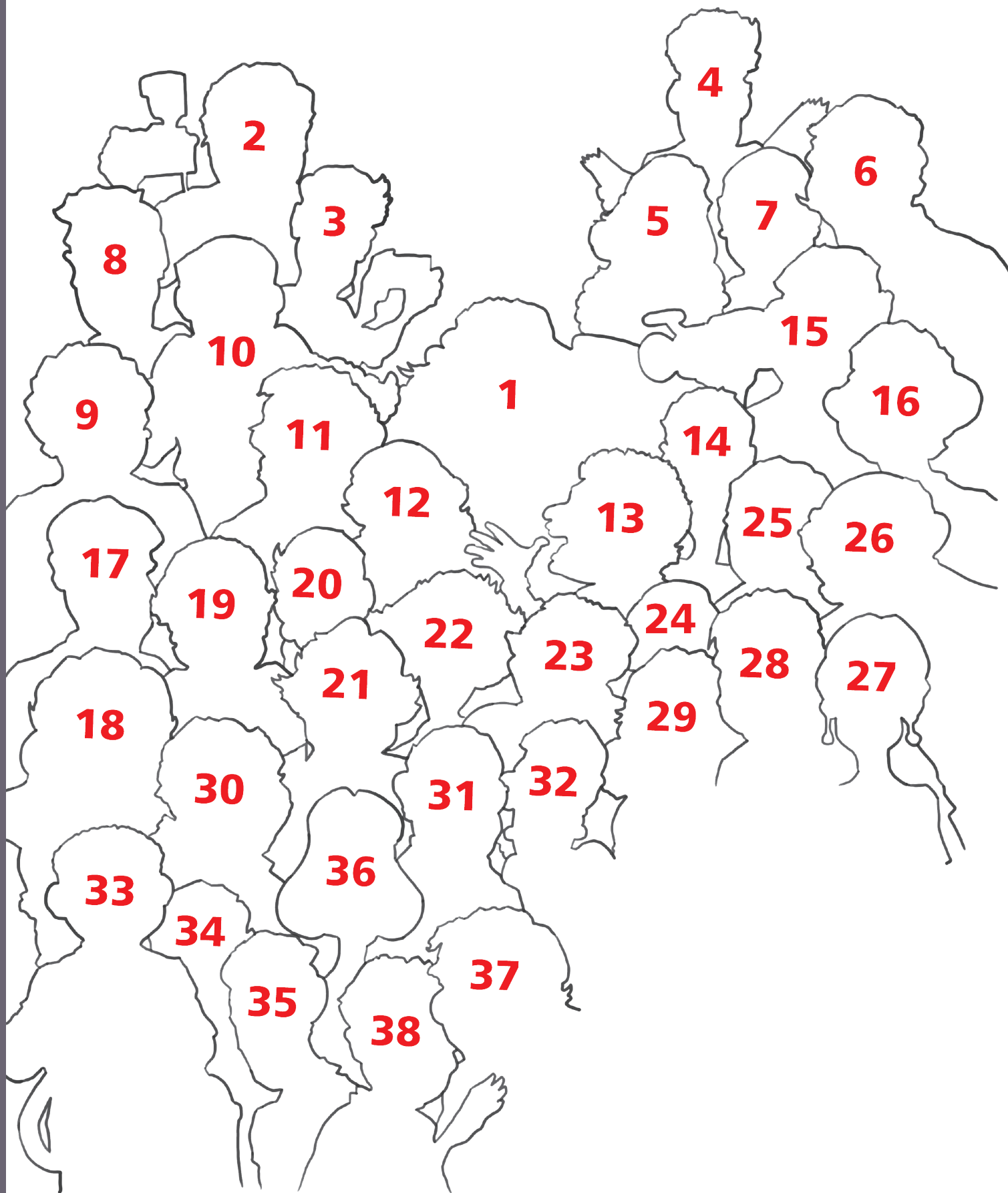
When We Went Mad! Documentary
2025

1 hour, 47 minutes

For generations, *MAD* Magazine shaped and warped its readers' sense of humor and their very outlook on the world around them. From the McCarthy hearings and the Cold War to Taylor Swift and social media, *MAD* Magazine was there to poke fun at it all.

When We Went Mad! presents the (unauthorized) history of America's oldest and most influential humor magazine. From *MAD*'s landmark court case that ensured satire as free speech to its maverick publisher who kept the water cooler filled with white wine, *MAD* lived its very ethos. With celebrity interviews from Judd Apatow, Quentin Tarantino, Howie Mandel, Gilbert Gottfried, David Zucker, Bryan Cranston, "Weird Al" Yankovic, and a plethora of the talents who created *MAD, When We Went Mad!* is a celebration of *MAD*, the nutty geniuses behind it, and the indelible impression they left on American culture.

Director:
Alan Bernstein

Writers:
Nate Adams, Alan Bernstein

Production Company:
Chassy Media, Potrzebie Pictures

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