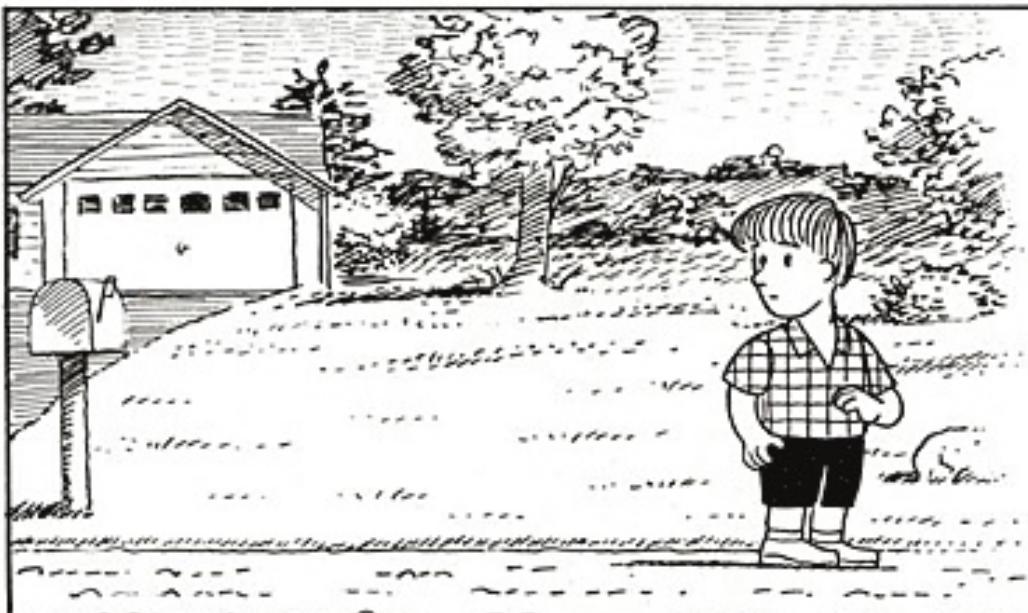
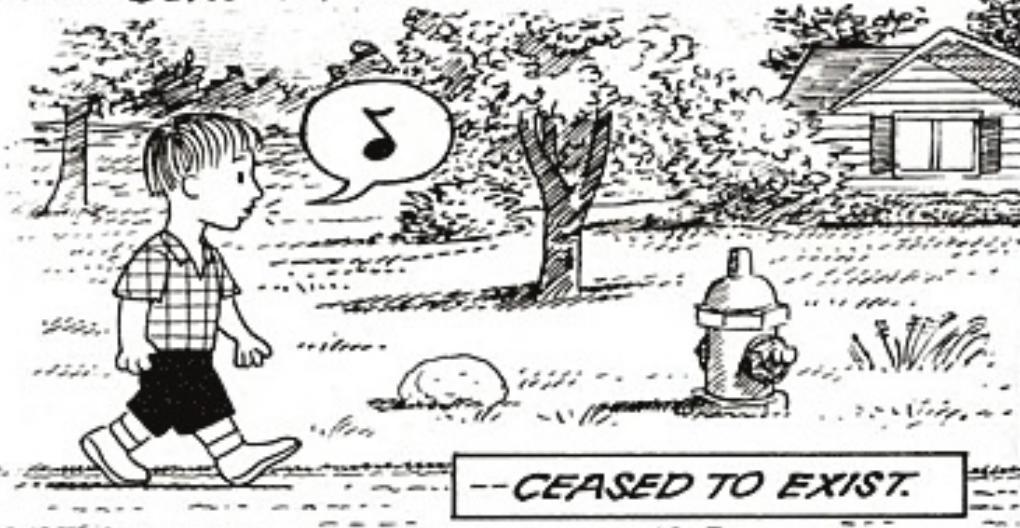


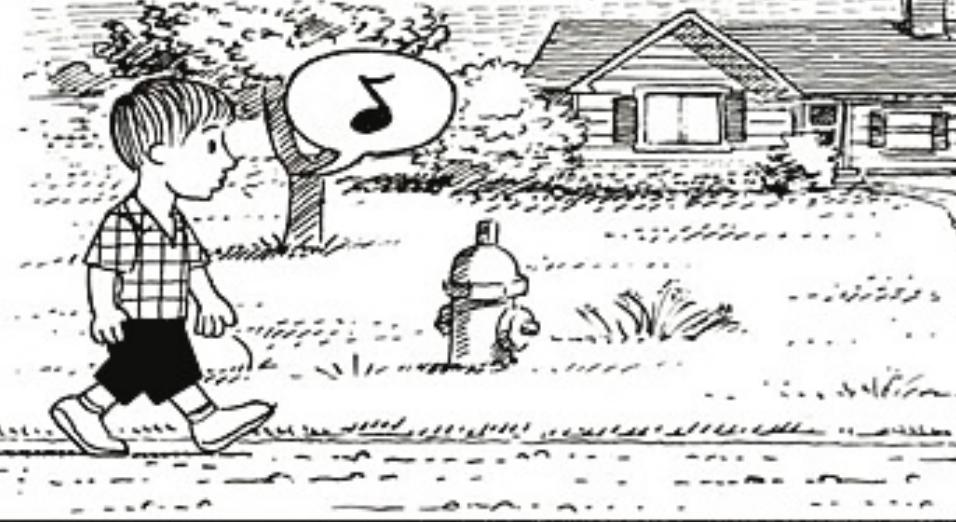
CHAPTER THREE

BLOOD IN THE GUTTER.

WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG, I HAD A RECURRENT DAYDREAM THAT THE **WHOLE WORLD** WAS JUST A **SHOW** PLIT ON FOR MY **BENEFIT**, THAT UNLESS I WAS PRESENT TO **SEE** THINGS, THEY JUST--



LATER IN LIFE, I FOUND OTHERS WHO HAD SIMILAR DAYDREAMS AS CHILDREN.
NONE OF US EVER REALLY BELIEVED THESE THEORIES, BUT WE HAD ALL BEEN
FASCINATED BY THE FACT THAT THEY COULD NOT BE DISPROVED!



EVEN TODAY, AS I WRITE AND DRAW THIS PANEL, I HAVE NO GUARANTEE THAT ANYTHING EXISTS OUTSIDE OF WHAT MY FIVE SENSES REPORT TO ME.*



I'VE NEVER BEEN TO MOROCCO, BUT I TAKE IT ON FAITH THAT THERE IS A MOROCCO!



I'VE NEVER SEEN THE EARTH FROM SPACE FIRSTHAND, YET I TRUST THAT THE EARTH IS ROUND.



I'VE NEVER BEEN IN THE HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET, YET I ASSUME IT HAS AN INTERIOR, THAT IT ISN'T JUST SOME BIG MOVIE SET!



IN THIS PANEL YOU CAN'T EVEN SEE MY LEGS, YET YOU ASSUME THAT THEY'RE THERE.



EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE NOT!



ALL OF US PERCEIVE THE WORLD AS A *WHOLE* THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR SENSES.

YET OUR SENSES CAN ONLY REVEAL A WORLD THAT IS *FRAGMENTED* AND *INCOMPLETE*.



EVEN THE MOST *WIDELY TRAVELED* MIND CAN ONLY SEE SO MUCH OF THE WORLD IN THE COURSE OF A LIFE.

OUR PERCEPTION OF "REALITY" IS AN ACT OF **FAITH**, BASED ON MERE *FRAGMENTS*.



AS INFANTS, WE'RE UNABLE TO COMMIT THAT ACT OF FAITH. IF WE CAN'T SEE IT, HEAR IT, SMELL IT, TASTE IT OR TOUCH IT, IT ISN'T THERE!

THE GAME "**PEEK-A-BOO**" PLAYS ON THIS IDEA. GRADUALLY, WE ALL LEARN THAT EVEN THOUGH THE **SIGHT** OF MOMMY COMES AND GOES, MOMMY **REMAINS**.



THIS PHENOMENON OF
OBSERVING THE PARTS BUT
PERCEIVING THE WHOLE
HAS A NAME.

IT'S
CALLED
CLOSURE.



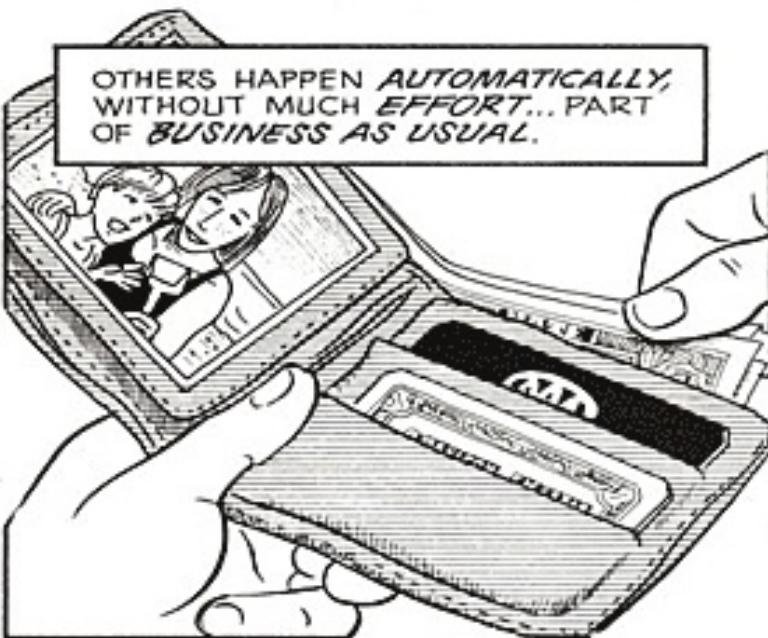
IN OUR DAILY LIVES, WE OFTEN
COMMIT CLOSURE, MENTALLY
COMPLETING THAT WHICH IS
INCOMPLETE BASED ON PAST
EXPERIENCE.



SOME FORMS OF CLOSURE ARE
DELIBERATE INVENTIONS OF
STORYTELLERS TO PRODUCE
SUSPENSE OR TO CHALLENGE
AUDIENCES.



OTHERS HAPPEN AUTOMATICALLY,
WITHOUT MUCH EFFORT... PART
OF BUSINESS AS USUAL.



IN RECOGNIZING AND RELATING
TO OTHER PEOPLE, WE ALL
DEPEND HEAVILY ON OUR LEARNED
ABILITY OF CLOSURE.



IN AN
INCOMPLETE
WORLD, WE
MUST DEPEND
ON CLOSURE
FOR OUR VERY
SURVIVAL.



CLOSURE CAN TAKE
MANY FORMS. SOME
SIMPLE, SOME COMPLEX.



CLOSURE

CLOSURE

CL S RE

CLOSURE

SOMETIMES, A MERE **SHAPE** OR
OUTLINE IS ENOUGH TO
TRIGGER CLOSURE.



THE MENTAL PROCESS DESCRIBED
IN **CHAPTER TWO** WHEREBY
THESE LINES BECOME A **FACE**
COULD BE CONSIDERED CLOSURE.



EVERY TIME WE SEE
A **PHOTOGRAPH**
REPRODUCED IN A
NEWSPAPER OR
MAGAZINE, WE
COMMIT CLOSURE.

OUR **EYES** TAKE IN
THE **FRAGMENTED,**
BLACK-AND-WHITE
IMAGE OF THE
“**HALF-TONE**”
PATTERNS—



--AND
OUR MINDS
TRANSFORM IT
INTO THE
“**REALITY**”—

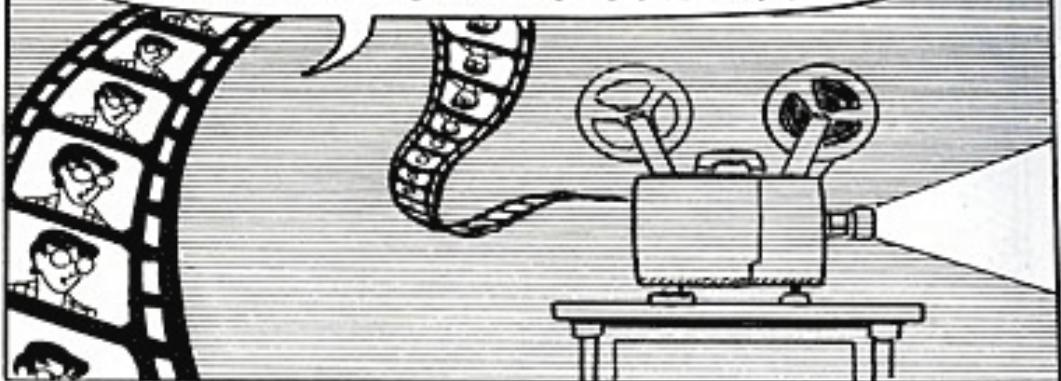


--OF THE
“**PHOTOGRAPH**!”

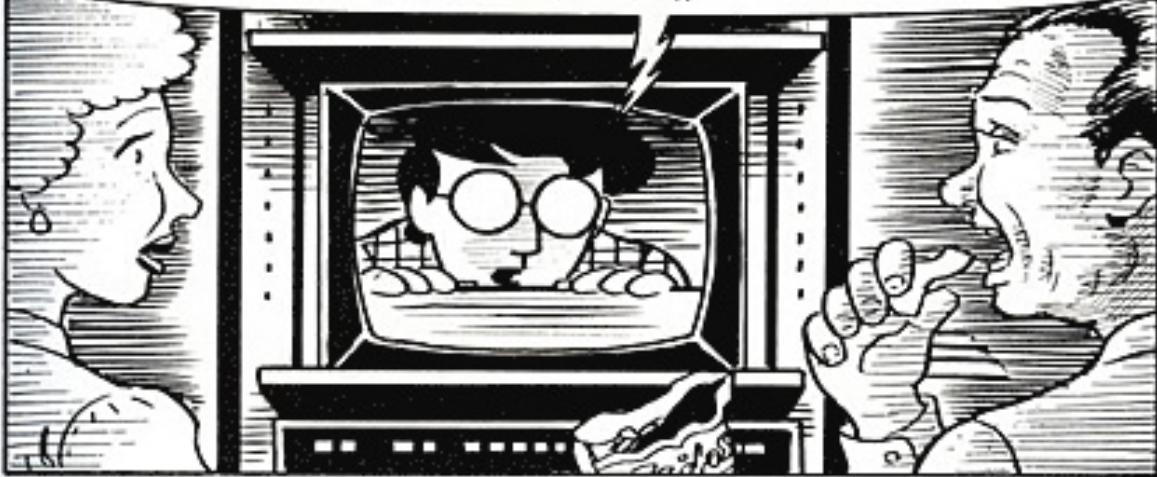


IN
ELECTRONIC
MEDIA, CLOSURE
IS CONSTANT,
EVEN OVER-
POWERING!

IN FILM, CLOSURE TAKES PLACE CONTINUOUSLY--
TWENTY-FOUR TIMES PER SECOND, IN FACT-- AS OUR
MINDS, AIDED BY THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION,
TRANSFORM A SERIES OF STILL PICTURES INTO
A STORY OF CONTINUOUS MOTION.



A MEDIUM REQUIRING EVEN MORE CLOSURE IS TELEVISION,
WHICH, IN REALITY, IS JUST A SINGLE POINT OF LIGHT,
RACING ACROSS THE SCREEN SO FAST THAT IT'S DESCRIBED
MY FACE HUNDREDS OF TIMES BEFORE YOU CAN EVEN SWALLOW
THAT CORN CHIP!!



BETWEEN SUCH
AUTOMATIC
ELECTRONIC
CLOSURE AND THE
SIMPLER CLOSURE
OF EVERYDAY
LIFE--



--THERE LIES
A MEDIUM OF
COMMUNICATION
AND EXPRESSION
WHICH USES CLOSURE
LIKE NO OTHER...

...A MEDIUM WHERE THE AUDIENCE IS
A WILLING AND CONSCIOUS COLLABORATOR
AND CLOSURE IS THE AGENT OF CHANGE,
TIME AND MOTION.





NOTHING
IS SEEN BETWEEN
THE TWO PANELS,
BUT EXPERIENCE
TELLS YOU SOMETHING
MUST BE THERE!



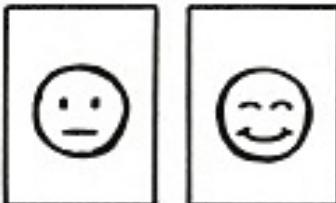
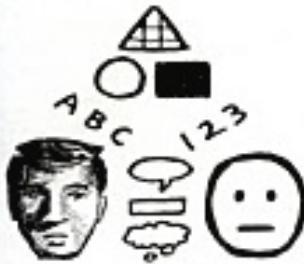
COMICS PANELS **FRACTURE** BOTH **TIME** AND **SPACE**, OFFERING A **JAGGED, STACCATO RHYTHM** OF UNCONNECTED MOMENTS.



BUT CLOSURE ALLOWS US TO **CONNECT** THESE MOMENTS
AND **MENTALLY CONSTRUCT** A **CONTINUOUS, UNIFIED REALITY**.

IF VISUAL
ICONOGRAPHY IS
THE VOCABULARY OF
COMICS, CLOSURE IS
ITS GRAMMAR.

AND SINCE OUR
DEFINITION OF
COMICS HINGES ON
THE ARRANGEMENT
OF ELEMENTS--



CLOSURE

-- THEN, IN A
VERY REAL SENSE,
**COMICS IS
CLOSURE!**



THE CLOSURE OF
ELECTRONIC MEDIA
IS CONTINUOUS, LARGELY
INVOLUNTARY AND
VIRTUALLY
IMPERCEPTIBLE.

BUT CLOSURE IN *COMICS* IS
FAR FROM CONTINUOUS AND
ANYTHING BUT INVOLUNTARY!



NOW YOU DIE!!

NO!
NO!



EEYAA!!



EVERY
ACT COMMITTED
TO PAPER BY THE
COMICS ARTIST IS
AIDED AND ABETTED
BY A SILENT
ACCOMPlice.

AN EQUAL
PARTNER
IN CRIME
KNOWN AS
THE
READER.

I MAY HAVE DRAWN AN AXE BEING
RAISED IN THIS EXAMPLE, BUT I'M
NOT THE ONE WHO LET IT DROP
OR DECIDED HOW HARD THE BLOW,
OR WHO SCREAMED, OR WHY.

NOW YOU DIE!!

NO!
NO!



ALL OF YOU
PARTICIPATED
IN THE MURDER.
ALL OF YOU HELD
THE AXE AND
CHOSE YOUR SPOT.



THAT, DEAR READER, WAS YOUR
SPECIAL CRIME, EACH OF YOU
COMMITTING IT IN YOUR OWN STYLE.

TO KILL A MAN
BETWEEN PANELS
IS TO CONDEMN
HIM TO A
THOUSAND
DEATHS.



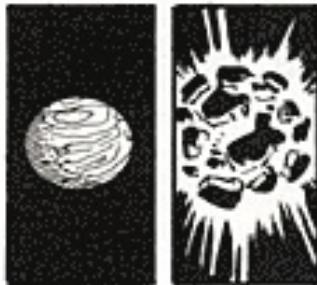
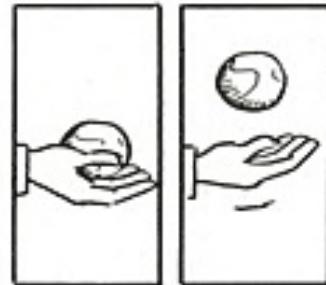
PARTICIPATION
IS A POWERFUL FORCE
IN ANY MEDIUM.
FILMMAKERS LONG AGO
REALIZED THE IMPORTANCE
OF ALLOWING VIEWERS
TO USE THEIR
IMAGINATIONS.



BUT WHILE FILM MAKES
USE OF AUDIENCES' IMAGINATIONS
FOR OCCASIONAL EFFECTS,
COMICS MUST USE IT
FAR MORE OFTEN!



FROM THE TOSSING OF A BASEBALL
TO THE DEATH OF A PLANET, THE
READER'S DELIBERATE, VOLUNTARY
CLOSURE IS COMICS' PRIMARY MEANS
OF SIMULATING TIME AND MOTION.



CLOSURE
IN COMICS FOSTERS
AN INTIMACY SURPASSED
ONLY BY THE WRITTEN
WORD, A SILENT, SECRET
CONTRACT BETWEEN
CREATOR AND
AUDIENCE.

HOW THE CREATOR
HONORS THAT CONTRACT
IS A MATTER OF BOTH
ART AND CRAFT.



LET'S
TAKE A LOOK
AT THE
CRAFT.



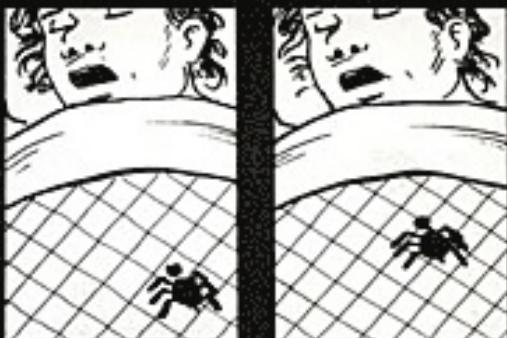
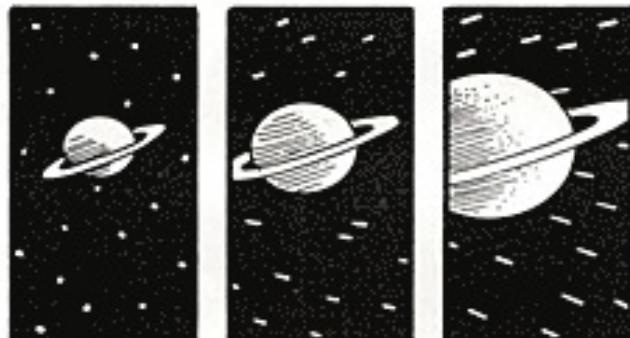
MOST
PANEL-TO-PANEL
TRANSITIONS IN COMICS
CAN BE PLACED IN ONE
OF SEVERAL DISTINCT
CATEGORIES. THE FIRST
CATEGORY -- WHICH WE'LL
CALL **MOMENT-TO-
MOMENT**-- REQUIRES
VERY LITTLE
CLOSURE.



1.



2.



THE NEXT TYPE TAKES US FROM **SUBJECT-TO-SUBJECT** WHILE STAYING WITHIN A SCENE OR IDEA. NOTE THE DEGREE OF **READER INVOLVEMENT** NECESSARY TO RENDER THESE TRANSITIONS **MEANINGFUL**.



3.



DEDUCTIVE REASONING IS OFTEN REQUIRED IN READING COMICS SUCH AS IN THESE **SCENE-TO-SCENE** TRANSITIONS, WHICH TRANSPORT US ACROSS SIGNIFICANT DISTANCES OF TIME AND SPACE.



4.



A FIFTH TYPE OF TRANSITION, WHICH WE'LL CALL **ASPECT-TO-ASPECT**, BYPASSES TIME FOR THE MOST PART AND SETS A WANDERING EYE ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF A PLACE, IDEA OR MOOD.



5.



THIS LAST CATEGORY SUGGESTS AN INTERESTING QUESTION. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ANY SEQUENCE OF PANELS TO BE **TOTALLY UNRELATED** TO EACH OTHER?

PERSONALLY, I DON'T THINK SO.

NO MATTER HOW **DISSIMILAR** ONE IMAGE MAY BE TO ANOTHER, THERE IS A KIND OF--



--**ALCHEMY** AT WORK IN THE SPACE BETWEEN PANELS WHICH CAN HELP US FIND MEANING OR RESONANCE IN EVEN THE MOST JARRING OF COMBINATIONS.

SUCH TRANSITIONS MAY NOT MAKE "SENSE" IN ANY TRADITIONAL WAY, BUT STILL A RELATIONSHIP OF **SOME** SORT WILL INEVITABLY DEVELOP.

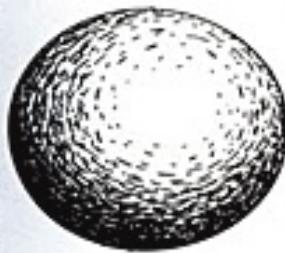
BANG!



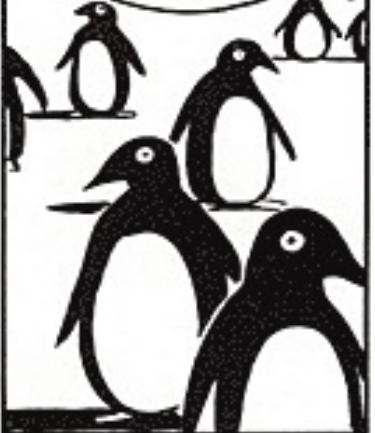
BY CREATING A SEQUENCE WITH TWO OR MORE IMAGES, WE ARE ENDOWING THEM WITH A **SINGLE**--

--**OVERRIDING IDENTITY**, AND FORCING THE VIEWER TO CONSIDER THEM AS A **WHOLE**.

HOWEVER **DIFFERENT** THEY HAD BEEN, THEY NOW BELONG TO A **SINGLE** ORGANISM.



CLOSURE FOR BLOOD, GUTTERS FOR VEINS...





1.
MOMENT-
TO-
MOMENT



2.
ACTION-
TO-
ACTION



3.
SUBJECT-
TO-
SUBJECT



4.
SCENE-
TO-
SCENE



5.
ASPECT-
TO-
ASPECT



6.
NON-
SEQUITUR



THIS SORT OF
CATEGORIZATION
IS AN *INEXACT SCIENCE*
AT *BEST*, BUT BY USING
OUR TRANSITION SCALE
AS A *TOOL*--

--WE
CAN BEGIN
TO UNRAVEL SOME
OF THE MYSTERIES
SURROUNDING THE
INVISBLE ART
OF COMICS
STORYTELLING!

MOST *MAINSTREAM*
COMICS IN AMERICA
EMPLOY STORYTELLING
TECHNIQUES FIRST
INTRODUCED BY
JACK KIRBY, SO
LET'S START BY
EXAMINING THIS
LEE-KIRBY COMIC
FROM 1966.



ALTOGETHER, I COUNT
NINETY-FIVE
PANEL-TO-PANEL
TRANSITIONS.
LET'S SEE HOW
THEY BREAK DOWN
PROPORTIONATELY.



MO
COM

BY FAR, THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF
TRANSITION IN KIRBY'S ART IS **ACTION-**
TO-ACTION. I COUNT SIXTY-TWO OF
THEM IN THIS STORY-- ABOUT **SIXTY-**
FIVE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER.



SUBJECT-TO-SUBJECT TRANSITIONS
ACCOUNT FOR AN ADDITIONAL **NINETEEN-**
ABOUT **TWENTY PERCENT** OF THE TOTAL NUMBER.

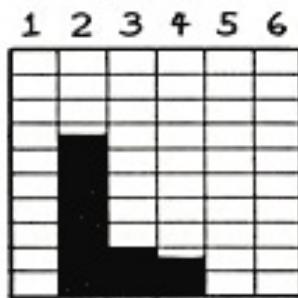


[TRACED AND SIMPLIFIED FOR CLARITY'S SAKE.]

AND SINCE ALL OF THE REMAINING TRANSITIONS ARE FROM SCENE-TO-SCENE, WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING BREAKDOWN.

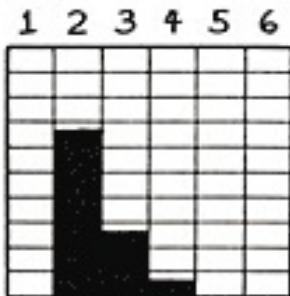
1	—
2	65%
3	20%
4	15%
5	—
6	—

AS A BAR GRAPH IT WOULD LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

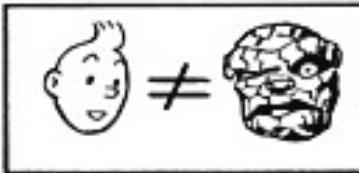


THIS EMPHASIS ON ACTION-TO-ACTION STORYTELLING SUITS MOST PEOPLE'S IDEAS ABOUT KIRBY, BUT IS HE UNIQUE IN THIS RESPECT?

APPARENTLY NOT! HERE'S A GRAPH OF PANEL TRANSITIONS IN HERGÉ'S TINTIN AND THE PROPORTION ARE VERY SIMILAR TO KIRBY'S



NOW, HERGÉ'S AND KIRBY'S STYLES ARE NOT SIMILAR! IN FACT, THEY'RE RADICALLY DIFFERENT!!

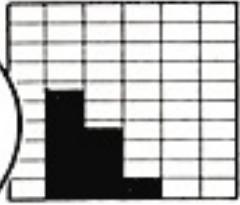


IS THERE SOME KIND OF UNIVERSAL PROPORTION AT WORK HERE, OR IS THERE ANOTHER COMMON LINK? MAYBE A SIMILARITY OF GENRES?



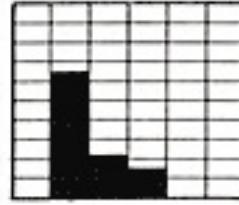
A RANDOM SAMPLING OF VARIOUS AMERICAN COMICS SHOWS THIS SAME PROPORTION PRETTY CONSISTENTLY.

X-MEN #1



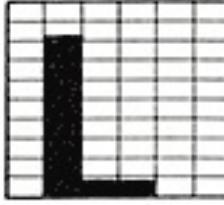
CLAREMONT & LEE

"HEARTBREAK SOUP"



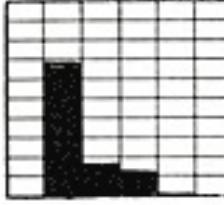
G. HERNANDEZ

BETTY & VERONICA



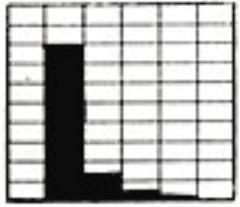
DOYLE & DECARLO

NAUGHTY BITS



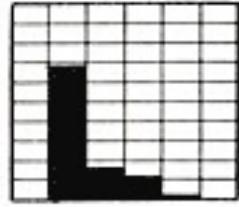
GREGORY

FRANK IN THE RIVER



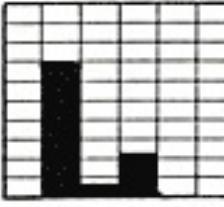
WOODRING

A CONTRACT WITH GOD



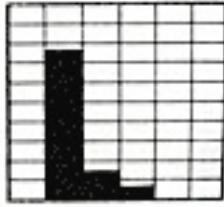
EISNER

MAUS



SPIEGELMAN

DONALD DUCK

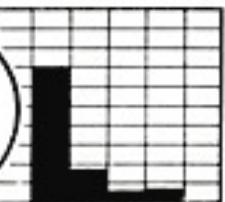


BARKS

A SURVEY OF WELL-KNOWN EUROPEAN ARTISTS YIELDS SIMILAR, IF NOT QUITE AS UNIFORM, RESULTS.

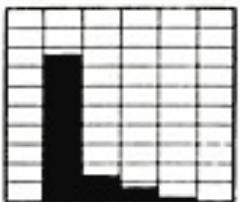
WHAT CAN WE DEDUCE FROM THIS?

SQUEAK THE MOUSE



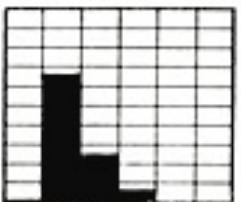
MATTOLI

ASTERIX



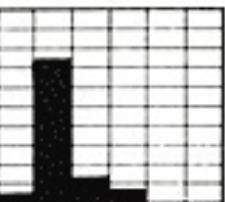
GOSCINNY & UDERZO

WELCOME TO AFLOLOL



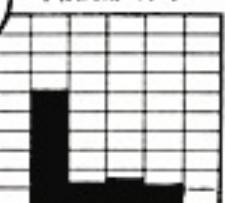
CROSTIN & MEZIERES

THE LONG TOMORROW



O'BANNON & MOEBIUS

"MANHATTAN"



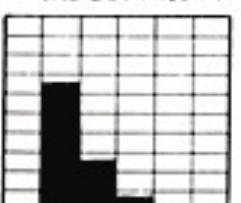
TARUDI

CLIK!



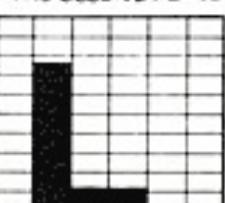
MANARA

THE BLACK ISLAND



HERGÉ

"THE CLOCK STRIKES"



JOOST SWARFEE



2



ARE THESE THREE TYPES OF TRANSITIONS ALL ANYONE SHOULD EVER NEED TO TELL A STORY IN COMICS?

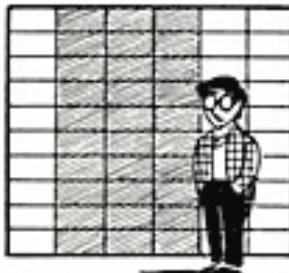
3

4

IF WE CHOOSE TO SEE STORIES AS CONNECTED SERIES OF EVENTS, THEN THE PREDOMINANCE OF TYPES 2-4 ARE EASILY EXPLAINED.

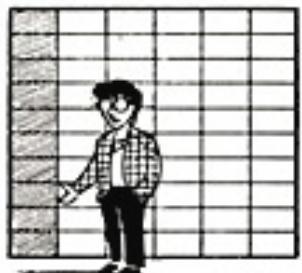
TYPES 2-4 SHOW THINGS HAPPENING IN CONCISE, EFFICIENT WAYS.

1 2 3 4 5 6



TYPE 1 SHOWS ACTIONS LIKE TYPE 2, BUT IT TENDS TO REQUIRE SEVERAL PANELS TO DO WHAT TYPE 2 DOES IN TWO--

1 2 3 4 5 6



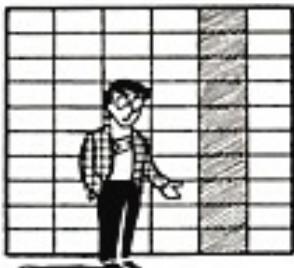
1.



2.

-- WHILE IN THE FIFTH TYPE, BY DEFINITION, NOTHING "HAPPENS" AT ALL!

1 2 3 4 5 6



AND, OF COURSE, NON-SEQUITURS ARE UNCONCERNED WITH EVENTS OR ANY NARRATIVE PURPOSES OF ANY SORT.

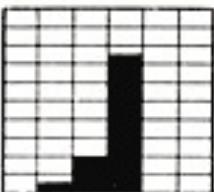
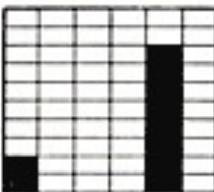
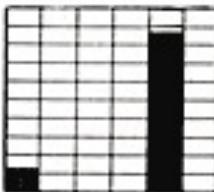
1 2 3 4 5 6



SOME EXPERIMENTAL COMICS, LIKE THOSE OF ART SPIEGELMAN'S EARLY PERIOD, EXPLORE A FULL RANGE OF TRANSITIONS --

-- THOUGH GENERALLY IN THE SERVICE OF EQUALLY RADICAL STORIES AND SUBJECTS.

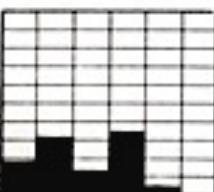
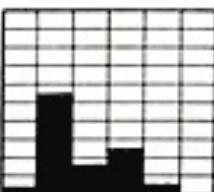
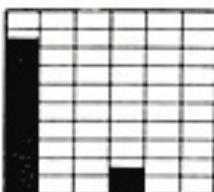
STORIES FROM SPIEGELMAN'S ANTHOLOGY BREAKDOWNS:



"DON'T GET AROUND MUCH ANYMORE"

INTRODUCTION

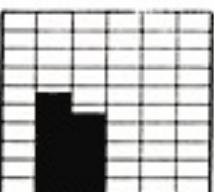
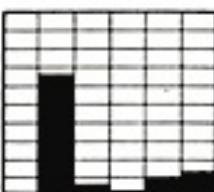
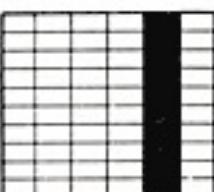
"MAVS" (ORIGINAL)



"SKINLESS PERKINS"

"PRISONER ON THE HELL PLANET"

"CRACKING JOKES"



FRONT AND BACK COVERS

"ACE-HOLE, MIDGET DETECTIVE"

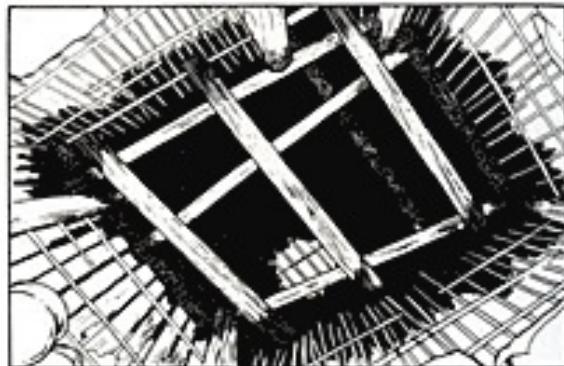
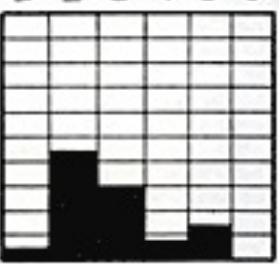
"REAL DREAM" 1975

BUT BEFORE WE CONCLUDE THAT TYPES 2-4 HAVE A MONOPOLY ON STRAIGHTFORWARD STORYTELLING, LET'S TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT OSAMU TEZUKA FROM JAPAN.



TEZUKA IS A FAR CRY FROM THE EARLY SPIEGELMAN. HIS STORYTELLING IS CLEAR AND STRAIGHTFORWARD. BUT LOOK AT HOW HE CHARTS!

1 2 3 4 5 6



JUST WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?

ACTION-
TO-ACTION
TRANSITIONS
STILL DOMINATE
IN TEZUKA'S
WORK, BUT TO
A LESSER
DEGREE.



3



IN FACT, SUBJECT-TO-SUBJECT TRANSITIONS ACCOUNT FOR NEARLY AS MANY AS ACTION.



1



HERE ALSO WE SEE OUR FIRST EXAMPLES OF MOMENT-TO-MOMENT TRANSITIONS.



THOUGH THE LATTER TYPE ONLY ACCOUNTS FOR FOUR PERCENT OF THE TOTAL, SUCH SEQUENCES CONTRAST STRIKINGLY WITH THE WESTERN TRADITIONS EXEMPLIFIED BY KIRBY AND HERGÉ.



5

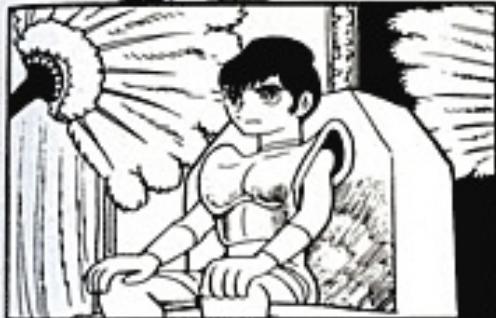
BUT, MOST STRIKING OF ALL IS THE SUBSTANTIAL PRESENCE OF THE FIFTH TYPE OF TRANSITION, A TYPE RARELY SEEN IN THE WEST.



ASPECT-TO-ASPECT TRANSITIONS HAVE BEEN AN INTEGRAL PART OF JAPANESE MAINSTREAM COMICS ALMOST FROM THE VERY BEGINNING.



MOST OFTEN USED TO ESTABLISH A MOOD OR A SENSE OF PLACE, TIME SEEMS TO STAND STILL IN THESE QUIET, CONTEMPLATIVE COMBINATIONS.



EVEN SEQUENCE WHILE STILL AN ISSUE, SEEMS FAR LESS IMPORTANT HERE THAN IN OTHER TRANSITIONS.



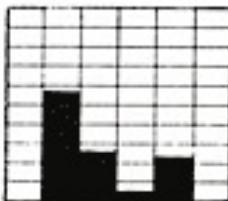
RATHER THAN ACTING AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN SEPARATE MOMENTS, THE READER HERE MUST ASSEMBLE A SINGLE MOMENT USING SCATTERED FRAGMENTS.



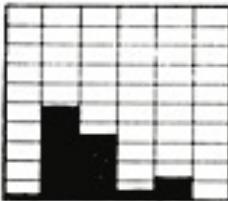
IN EXAMINING
SEVERAL JAPANESE ARTISTS,
WE FIND SIMILAR
PROPORTIONS TO TEZUKA'S,
INCLUDING A HIGH INCIDENCE
OF THE FIFTH TYPE.



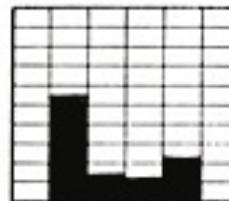
WHY?



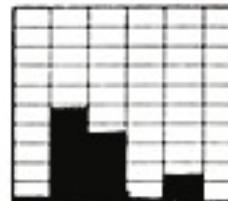
750 RIDER
(石井義洋)



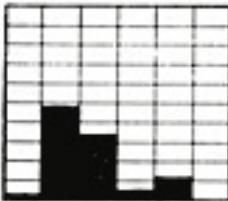
AKIRA
KATSUHIRO OTOMO



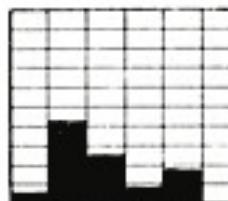
FATHER & SON
HAYASI & OSIMA



WOLF & CUB
KOIKE & KOJIMA



CYBORG 009
SHOTARO ISHINORI

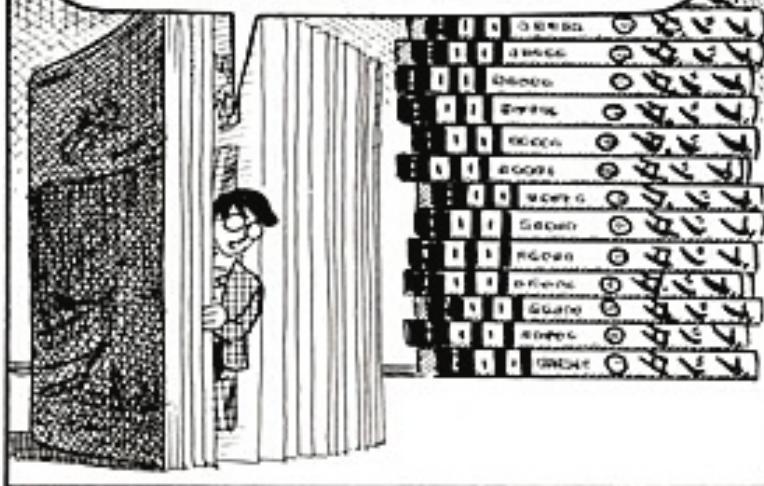


PHOENIX
OSAMU TEZUKA

LENGTH MAY BE ONE OF
THE FACTORS AT WORK HERE. MOST
JAPANESE COMICS FIRST APPEAR IN
ENORMOUS ANTHOLOGY TITLES WHERE
THE PRESSURE ISN'T AS GREAT ON
ANY ONE INSTALLMENT TO SHOW
A LOT "HAPPENING."



WHEN INDIVIDUAL FEATURES ARE
COLLECTED, THEY MAY RUN FOR
THOUSANDS OF PAGES.

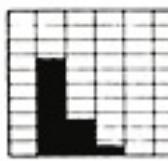


AS SUCH,
DOZENS OF PANELS
CAN BE DEVOTED
TO PORTRAYING
SLOW CINEMATIC
MOVEMENT OR TO
SETTING A MOOD.

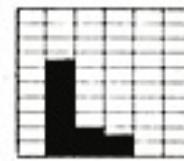
BUT I DON'T THINK
LONGER STORIES ARE
THE ONLY FACTOR,
OR EVEN THE MOST
IMPORTANT ONE.



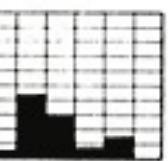
I BELIEVE THERE'S SOMETHING A
BIT MORE FUNDAMENTAL TO THIS
PARTICULAR EAST/WEST SPLIT.



HERGÉ

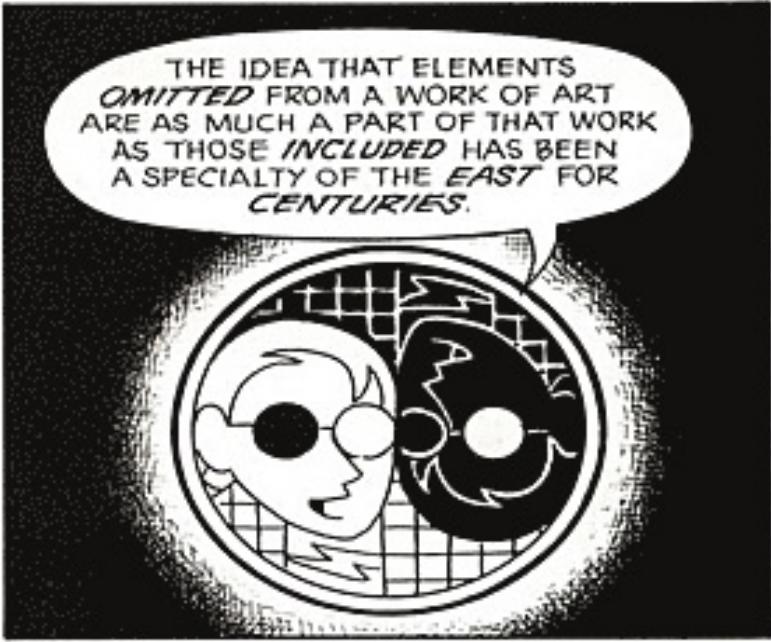


KIRBY



TEZUKA





IN THE GRAPHIC ARTS THIS HAS MEANT A GREATER FOCUS ON *FIGURE/GROUND* RELATIONSHIPS AND "NEGATIVE SPACE."



"THE GREAT WAVE OFF KANAGAWA" BY HOKUSAI (c.1829)
(TURN THIS PICTURE UPSIDE DOWN TO SEE THE OTHER WAVE OF NEGATIVE SPACE...NATURE'S YIN AND YANG.)

IN MUSIC TOO, WHILE THE WESTERN CLASSICAL TRADITION WAS EMPHASIZING THE *CONTINUOUS, CONNECTED* WORLDS OF MELODY AND HARMONY, EASTERN CLASSICAL MUSIC WAS EQUALY CONCERNED WITH THE ROLE OF *SILENCE!*



WEST



EAST

IN THE LAST *CENTURY* OR TWO, AS WESTERN CULTURAL INFLUENCES SWEPT THE EAST, SO TOO HAVE EASTERN AND AFRICAN IDEAS OF *FRAGMENTATION* AND *RHYTHM* SWEPT THE WEST.



FROM DEBUSSY TO STRAVINSKY TO COUNT BASIE, WESTERN MUSIC HAS GRADUALLY INCORPORATED A STRONG AWARENESS OF THE POWER OF *FRAGMENTATION* AND *INTERVALS*.





THE TRADITIONAL EMPHASIS IN WESTERN ART UPON THE PRIMACY OF FOREGROUND SUBJECTS AND CONTINUOUSNESS OF TONES GAVE WAY TO FRAGMENTATION AND A NEW AWARENESS OF THE PICTURE PLANE.



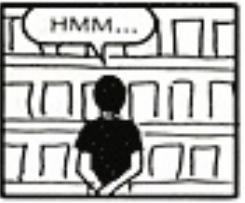
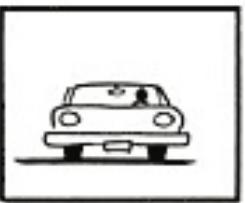
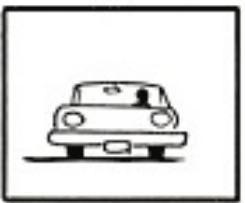
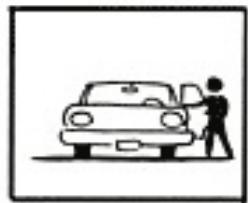
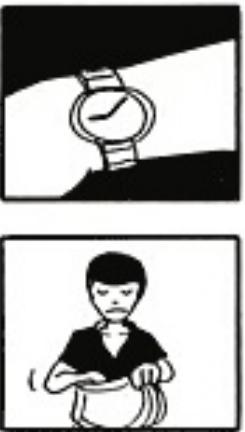
FACSIMILE
OF "FIGURE"
BY PABLO PICASSO
1948



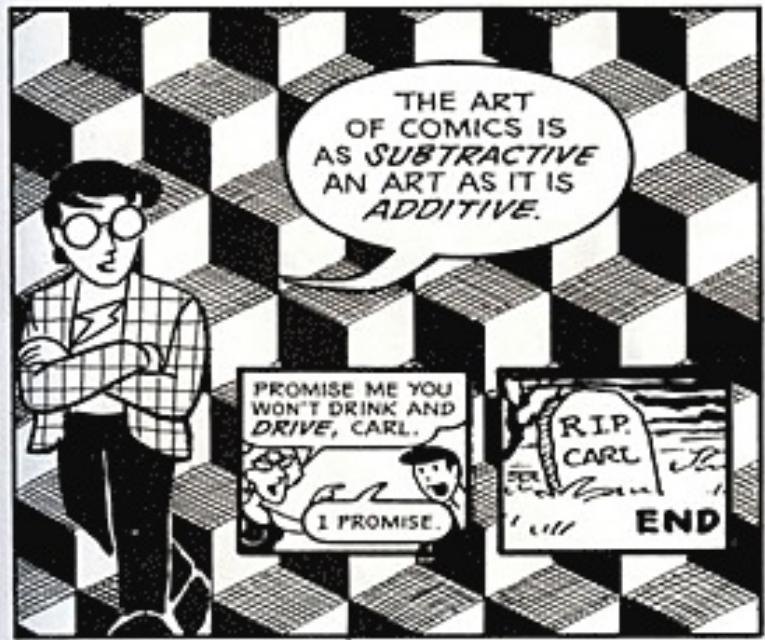
"ANSWER: 'THE BIG N'
[SEE PAGE 216]



THE MASTERY OF ANY MEDIUM USING MINIMAL ELEMENTS HAS LONG BEEN CONSIDERED A NOBLE ASPIRATION.

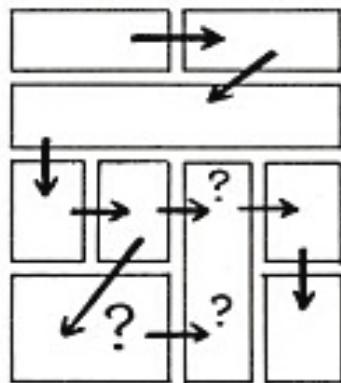


* "BRUM" APPEARS COURTESY OF M. FEAZELL



WE ASSUME AS READERS THAT WE WILL KNOW WHAT ORDER TO READ PANELS IN, BUT THE BUSINESS OF ARRANGING THOSE PANELS IS ACTUALLY QUITE COMPLEX.

SO COMPLEX, IN FACT, THAT EVEN SEASONED PROS WILL SOMETIMES BLOW IT.



AS CLOSURE **BETWEEN** PANELS BECOMES MORE INTENSE, READER INTERPRETATION BECOMES FAR MORE **ELASTIC**.



AND **MANAGING** IT BECOMES MORE COMPLICATED FOR THE **CREATOR**.

SOME ARTISTS CAN BE **DELIBERATELY AMBIGUOUS**, OF COURSE, AND OFFER US NO STRICT INTERPRETATION TO GO ON.



CLOSURE CAN BE A POWERFUL FORCE **WITHIN** PANELS AS WELL AS **BETWEEN** THEM, WHEN ARTISTS CHOOSE TO SHOW ONLY A SMALL **PIECE** OF THE PICTURE.



COMICS CAN BE **MADDENINGLY VAGUE** ABOUT WHAT IT SHOWS US.



BY SHOWING LITTLE OR NOTHING OF A GIVEN SCENE--



--AND OFFERING ONLY **CLUES** TO THE READER--



--THE ARTIST CAN TRIGGER ANY NUMBER OF IMAGES IN THE READER'S IMAGINATION.



READERS FACED
WITH PANELS LIKE THESE
WILL HAVE SUBSTANTIALLY
DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS.

CLAK! CLAK! CLAK!

BY CONSTRUCTING WHOLE
IMAGES BASED ON THESE
FRAGMENTS, READERS ARE
PERFORMING CLOSURE,
JUST AS--

WHOOSH!

⇒ Slip Slip ⇐

?

Ding! Ding!

UH-- JUST AS
READERS COMPLETE
AN ACTION OR
IDEA **BETWEEN**--

OW!

OW!

Ding! Ding!

⇒ AHEM! -- I SAY,
JUST AS READERS
COMPLETE --

-- AN
ACTION OR--
OW! OW!

STOP THAT!

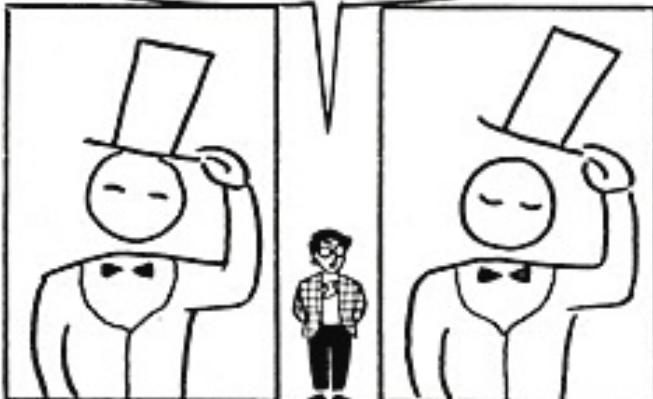
Ding! Ding!

OW!

Ding! Ding!

OW!

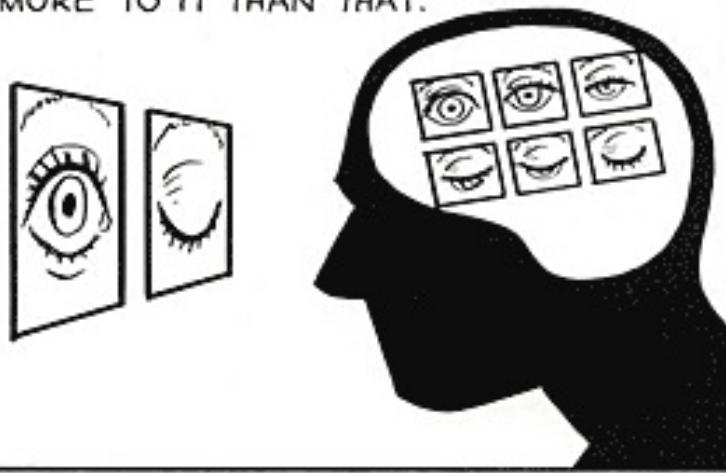
WHATEVER THE MYSTERIES
WITHIN EACH PANEL, IT'S THE
POWER OF CLOSURE **BETWEEN**
PANELS THAT I FIND THE MOST
INTERESTING.



THERE'S SOMETHING
STRANGE AND WONDERFUL
THAT HAPPENS IN THIS
BLANK RIBBON OF
PAPER.

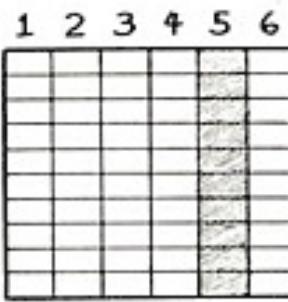


WE ALREADY KNOW THAT COMICS ASKS
THE MIND TO WORK AS A SORT OF
IN-BETWEENER-- FILLING IN THE GAPS
BETWEEN PANELS AS AN *ANIMATOR*
MIGHT-- BUT I BELIEVE THERE'S STILL
MORE TO IT THAN THAT.



LET'S TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT
THE *FIFTH* TYPE OF TRANSITION,
THE ONE SO POPULAR
IN JAPAN.

HERE'S
A FOUR-PANEL
ESTABLISHING
SHOT OF AN
OLD-FASHIONED
KITCHEN SCENE.



NOW, MOST OF YOU SHOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE **PERCEIVING** THAT YOU'RE IN A KITCHEN FROM THOSE FOUR PANELS ALONE.



WITH A **HIGH DEGREE OF CLOSURE**, YOUR MIND IS TAKING FOUR PICTURE FRAGMENTS AND CONSTRUCTING AN ENTIRE SCENE **OUT OF THOSE FRAGMENTS**.



BUT THE SCENE YOUR MIND CONSTRUCTS FROM THOSE **FOUR PANELS** IS A VERY **DIFFERENT PLACE** FROM THE SCENE CONSTRUCTED FROM OUR TRADITIONAL **ONE-PANEL ESTABLISHING SHOT**!



LOOK AGAIN.

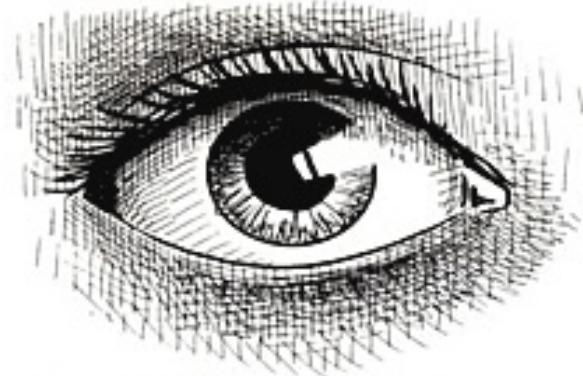
YOU'VE BEEN IN KITCHENS BEFORE, YOU KNOW WHAT A POT ON THE BOIL SOUNDS LIKE; DO YOU ONLY HEAR IT IN THAT **FIRST PANEL**?



AND WHAT ABOUT THE **CHOPPING** SOUND? DOES THAT ONLY LAST A **PANEL** OR DOES IT **PERSIST**? CAN YOU **SMELL** THIS KITCHEN? **FEEL** IT? **TASTE** IT?



COMICS IS A **MONO-SENSORY** MEDIUM. IT RELIES ON ONLY ONE OF THE SENSES TO CONVEY A **WORLD OF EXPERIENCE**.



BUT WHAT OF THE OTHER **FOUR?**

WE REPRESENT **SOUND** THROUGH DEVICES SUCH AS **WORD BALLOONS**.



WE REPRESENT **SMELL** THROUGH DEVICES SUCH AS **WORD BALLOONS**. BUT ALL IN ALL, IT IS AN EXCLUSIVELY **VISUAL** REPRESENTATION.



WITHIN THESE PANELS, WE CAN ONLY CONVEY INFORMATION **VISUALLY**.



BUT **BETWEEN** PANELS, NONE OF OUR SENSES ARE REQUIRED AT ALL.



WHICH IS WHY **ALL** OF OUR SENSES ARE ENGAGED!



SEVERAL TIMES
ON EVERY PAGE
THE READER IS
RELEASED--LIKE A
TRAPEZE ARTIST--
INTO THE OPEN AIR
OF IMAGINATION...

...THEN CAUGHT
BY THE OUTSTRETCHED
ARMS OF THE EVER-
PRESENT NEXT
PANEL!

CAUGHT QUICKLY
SO AS NOT TO LET
THE READER FALL
INTO CONFUSION
OR BOREDOM.

BUT IS IT POSSIBLE
THAT CLOSURE CAN
BE SO MANAGED IN
SOME CASES--



--THAT
THE READER
MIGHT LEARN
TO FLY?

IN CHAPTER TWO, WE DISCUSSED
VARIOUS TYPES OF ICONIC AND NON-ICONIC
DRAWING STYLES.

DO THESE
AFFECT
CLOSURE?

I THINK
THE ANSWER
IS YES.

SINCE CARTOONS ALREADY EXIST AS CONCEPTS FOR THE READER, THEY TEND TO FLOW EASILY THROUGH THE CONCEPTUAL TERRITORY *BETWEEN PANELS*.



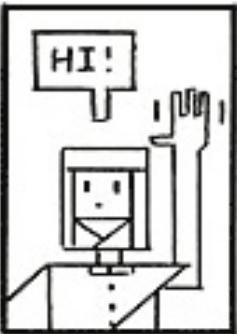
IDEAS FLOWING INTO ONE ANOTHER *SEAMLESSLY*.

BUT *REALISTIC* IMAGES HAVE A BUMPIER RIDE. THEIR IS A PRIMARY VISUAL EXISTENCE WHICH DOESN'T PASS EASILY INTO THE REALM OF IDEAS.



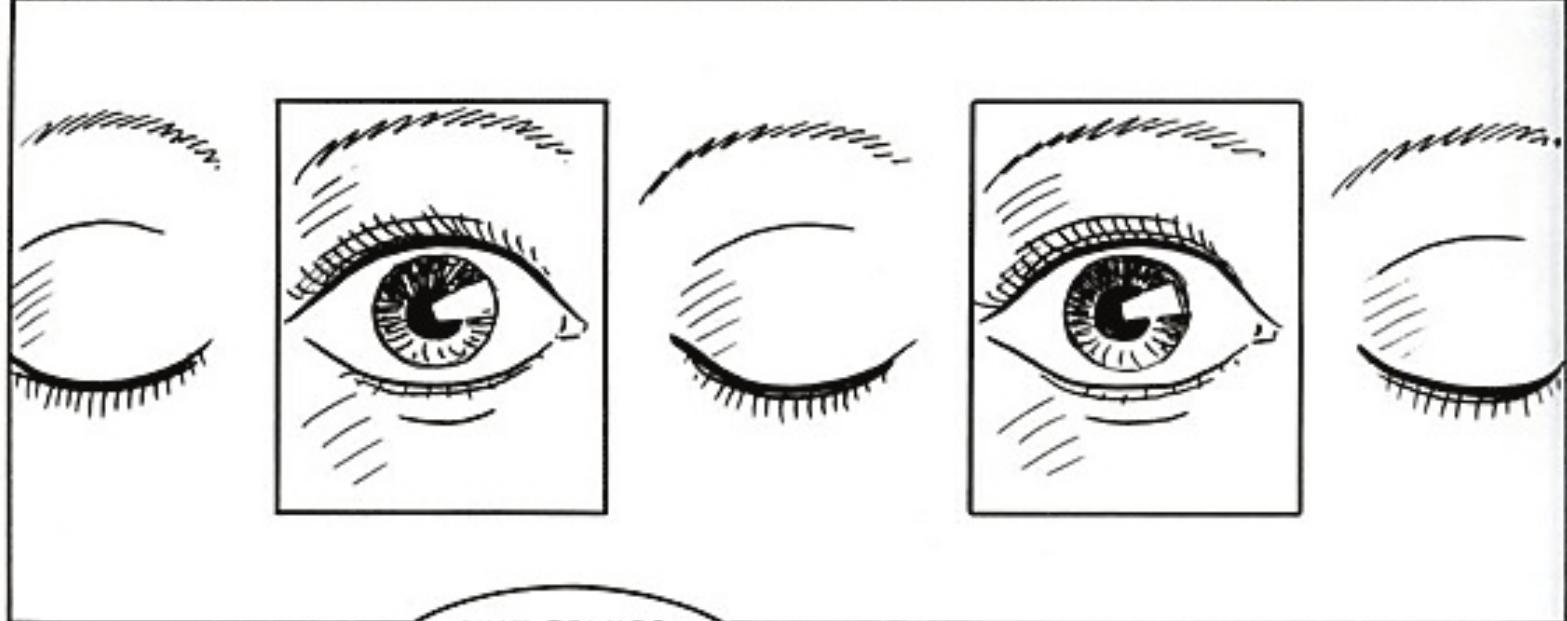
AND SO, WHAT SEEMED LIKE A CONTINUOUS SERIES OF MOMENTS IN THE LAST EXAMPLE, HERE LOOKS A LITTLE MORE LIKE A SERIES OF *STILL PICTURES*...

SIMILARLY, I THINK WHEN COMICS ART VEERS CLOSER TO CONCERN'S OF THE *PICTURE PLANE*, CLOSURE CAN BE MORE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE, THOUGH FOR DIFFERENT REASONS.



NOW IT'S THE *UNIFYING PROPERTIES OF DESIGN* THAT MAKE US MORE AWARE OF THE PAGE AS A *WHOLE*, RATHER THAN ITS INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS, THE *PANELS*.





THE COMICS
CREATOR ASKS US
TO JOIN IN A SILENT
DANCE OF THE
SEEN AND THE
UNSEEN.

THE
VISIBLE
AND THE
INVISIBLE.

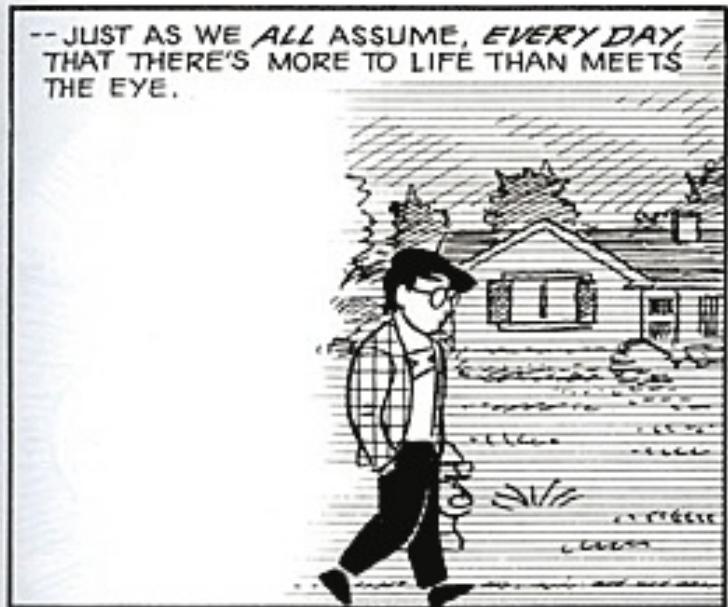
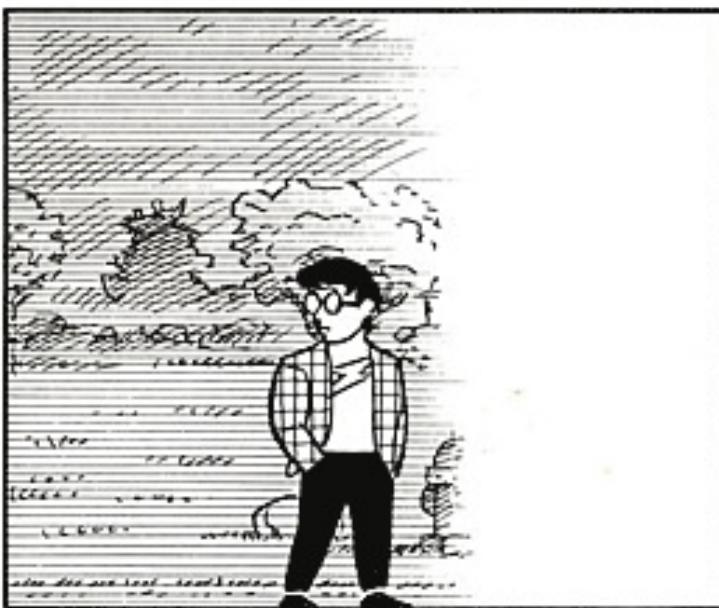
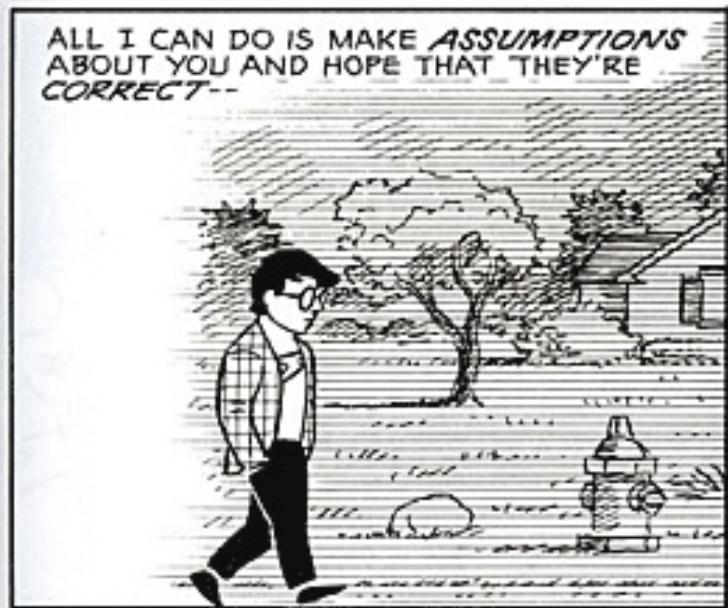


THIS DANCE IS **UNIQUE**
TO COMICS. NO OTHER ARTFORM
GIVES SO MUCH TO ITS AUDIENCE
WHILE ASKING SO MUCH
FROM THEM AS WELL.

THIS IS WHY I THINK IT'S
A MISTAKE TO SEE COMICS AS
A MERE HYBRID OF THE
GRAPHIC ARTS AND PROSE
FICTION.



WHAT
HAPPENS
BETWEEN THESE
PANELS IS A
KIND OF MAGIC
ONLY COMICS
CAN CREATE.



CHAPTER FOUR

TIME FRAMES.

SO! LET'S SEE:
EACH PANEL OF A
COMIC SHOWS A
SINGLE MOMENT
IN TIME.

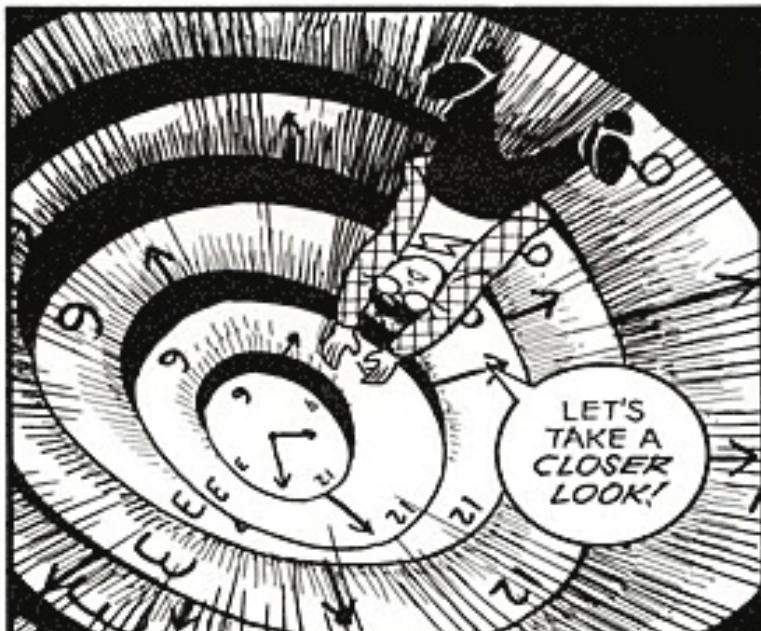
AND *BETWEEN*
THOSE FROZEN
MOMENTS -- BETWEEN
THE PANELS -- OUR
MINDS FILL IN THE
INTERVENING MOMENTS,
CREATING THE ILLUSION
OF TIME AND MOTION.

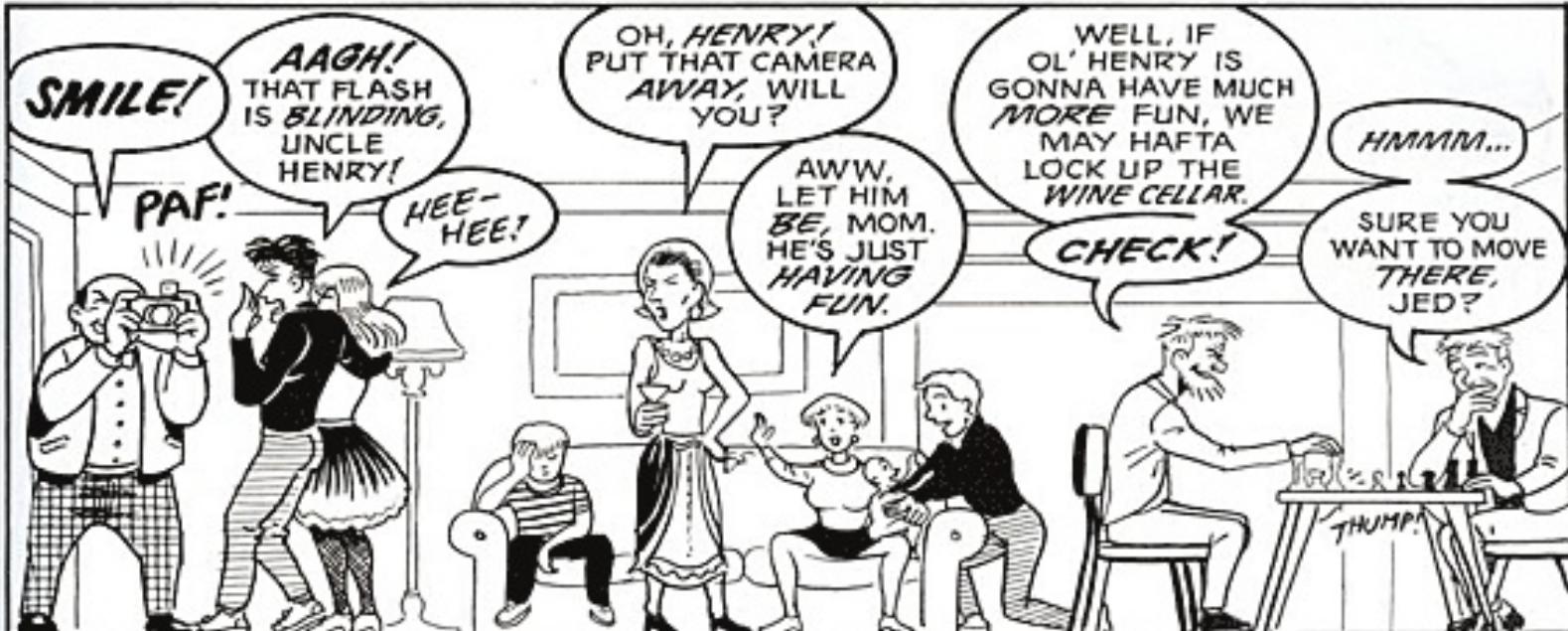


LIKE A LINE DRAWN
BETWEEN TWO POINTS.

NAAH!
OF COURSE
NOT!

TIME IN COMICS
IS *INFINITELY*
WEIRDER THAN
THAT!





JUST AS PICTURES AND THE INTERVALS *BETWEEN* THEM CREATE THE ILLUSION OF TIME THROUGH *CLOSURE*, **WORDS** INTRODUCE TIME BY REPRESENTING THAT WHICH CAN ONLY EXIST *IN* TIME -- **SOUND**.





BUT HOW COULD THIS BE ANYTHING BUT A SINGLE MOMENT?
OUR EYES HAVE BEEN WELL-TRAINED BY THE PHOTOGRAPH
AND BY REPRESENTATIONAL ART TO SEE ANY SINGLE
CONTINUOUS IMAGE AS A SINGLE INSTANT IN TIME.



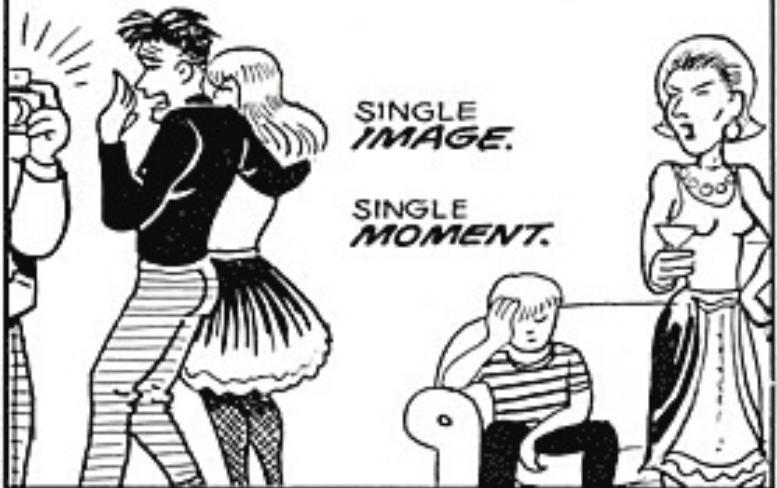
BUT THE ACTIONS THAT WE SEE
OCCURRING SEEMINGLY AT THE SAME
TIME OBVIOUSLY CAN'T BE!



-- THOSE FIGURES,
FACES AND WORDS
ARE MATCHED IN
TIME AS WELL.



THE PROPERTIES OF THE SINGLE
CONTINUOUS **IMAGE**, MEANWHILE, TEND
TO MATCH EACH FIGURE WITH EVERY
OTHER FIGURE.



PORTRAYING TIME
ON A LINE MOVING
LEFT TO RIGHT,
THIS PUTS ALL THE
IMAGES ON THE
SAME VERTICAL AXIS.



AND **TANGLES UP TIME**
BEYOND ALL RECOGNITION!



PERHAPS WE'VE BEEN TOO
CONDITIONED BY PHOTOGRAPHY TO
PERCEIVE SINGLE IMAGES AS **SINGLE
MOMENTS**. AFTER ALL, IT DOES
TAKE AN EYE *TIME* TO MOVE ACROSS
SCENES IN *REAL LIFE*!



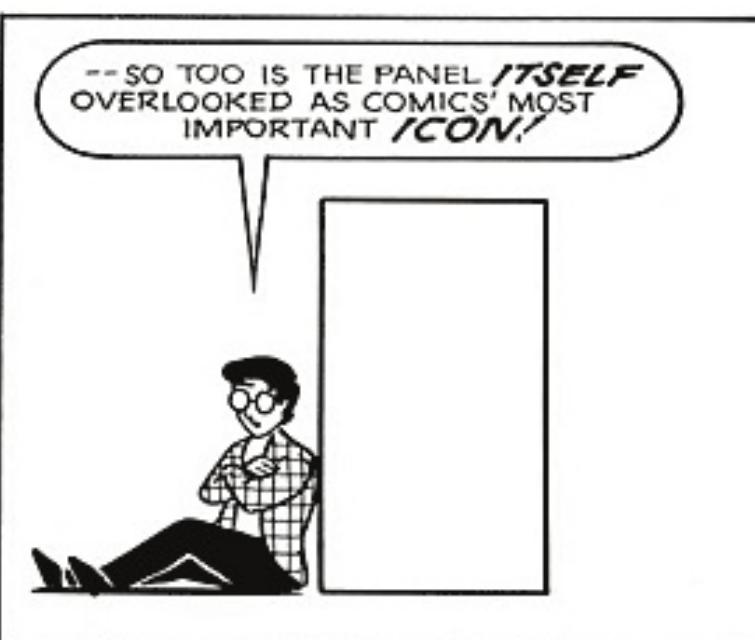
EACH FIGURE IS
ARRANGED FROM
LEFT TO RIGHT IN
THE SEQUENCE WE
WILL "READ" THEM,
EACH OCCUPYING A
DISTINCT TIME
SLOT.



IN SOME RESPECTS THIS PANEL BY ITSELF ACTUALLY **FITS** OUR
DEFINITION OF COMICS! ALL IT NEEDS IS A FEW **GUTTERS**
THROWN IN TO CLARIFY THE SEQUENCE.



ONE PANEL, OPERATING AS **SEVERAL** PANELS.



THESE ICONS WE CALL PANELS OR "FRAMES" HAVE NO **FIXED** OR **ABSOLUTE MEANING**, LIKE THE ICONS OF **LANGUAGE, SCIENCE AND COMMUNICATION**.



NOR IS THEIR MEANING AS **FLUID** AND **MALLEABLE** AS THE SORTS OF ICONS WE CALL **PICTURES**.



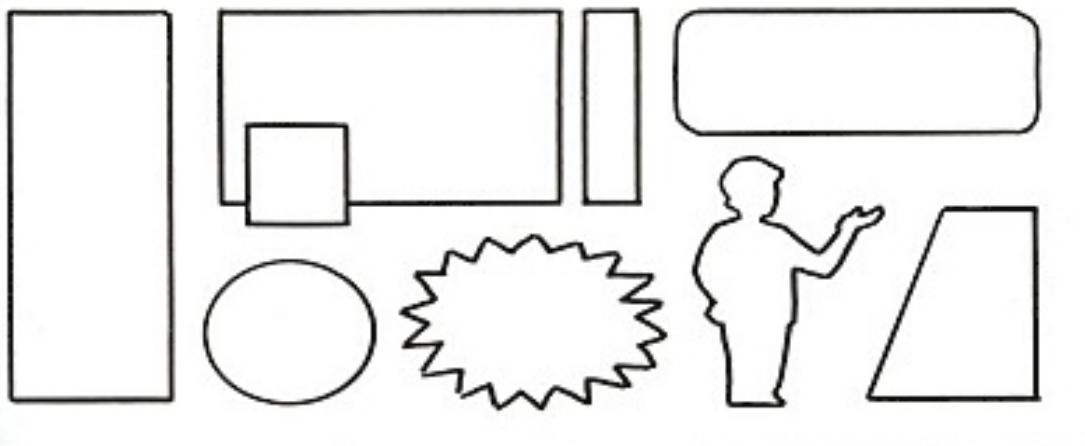
THE PANEL ACTS AS A SORT OF **GENERAL INDICATOR** THAT TIME OR SPACE IS BEING DIVIDED.



THE **DURATIONS** OF THAT TIME AND THE **DIMENSIONS** OF THAT SPACE ARE DEFINED MORE BY THE **CONTENTS** OF THE PANEL THAN BY THE PANEL ITSELF.*



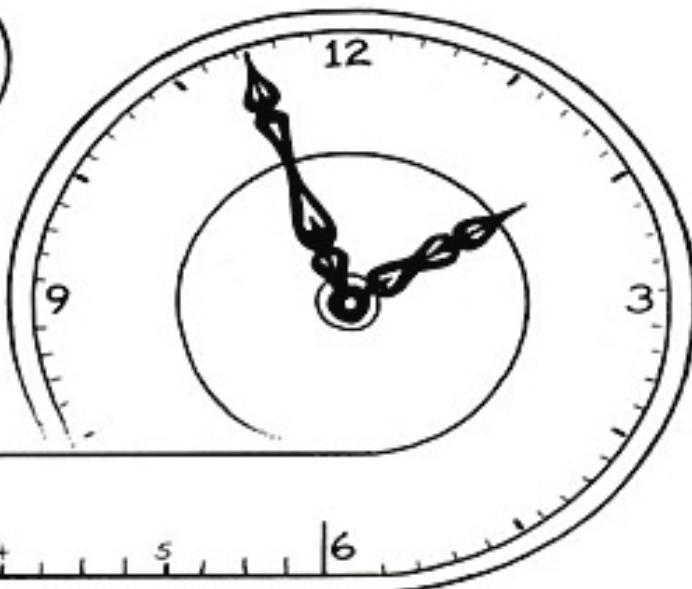
PANEL SHAPES VARY CONSIDERABLY THOUGH, AND WHILE DIFFERENCES OF SHAPE DON'T AFFECT THE SPECIFIC "MEANINGS" OF THOSE PANELS VIS-A-VIS TIME, THEY CAN AFFECT THE READING **EXPERIENCE**.



WHICH BRINGS US TO THE STRANGE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TIME AS **DEPICTED** IN COMICS AND TIME AS **PERCEIVED** BY THE READER.

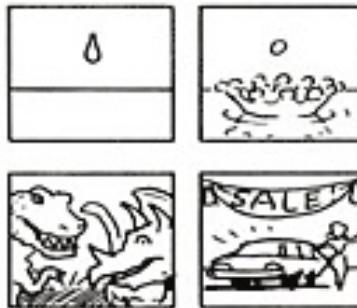


IN LEARNING TO READ COMICS WE ALL LEARNED TO PERCEIVE TIME SPATIALLY, FOR IN THE WORLD OF COMICS, TIME AND SPACE ARE ONE AND THE SAME.



THE PROBLEM IS THERE'S NO CONVERSION CHART!

THE FEW CENTIMETERS WHICH TRANSPORT US FROM SECOND TO SECOND IN ONE SEQUENCE COULD TAKE US A HUNDRED MILLION YEARS IN ANOTHER.



SO, AS READERS, WE'RE LEFT WITH ONLY A VAGUE SENSE THAT AS OUR EYES ARE MOVING THROUGH SPACE, THEY'RE ALSO MOVING THROUGH TIME--WE JUST DON'T KNOW BY HOW MUCH!

IN MOST CASES IT'S NOT HARD TO MAKE AN EDUCATED GUESS AS TO THE DURATION OF A GIVEN SEQUENCE, SO LONG AS THE ELEMENTS OF THAT SEQUENCE ARE FAMILIAR TO US.



FROM A LIFETIME OF CONVERSATIONS, WE CAN BE SURE THAT A "PAUSE" PANEL LIKE THIS LASTS FOR NO MORE THAN SEVERAL SECONDS.



BUT IF THE CREATOR OF THIS SCENE WANTED TO LENGTHEN THAT PAUSE, HOW COULD HE OR SHE DO SO? ONE OBVIOUS SOLUTION WOULD BE TO ADD MORE PANELS, BUT IS THAT THE ONLY WAY?



IS THERE ANY WAY TO MAKE A SINGLE SILENT PANEL LIKE THIS ONE SEEM LONGER? HOW ABOUT WIDENING THE SPACE BETWEEN PANELS? ANY DIFFERENCE?



WE'VE SEEN HOW TIME CAN BE CONTROLLED THROUGH THE CONTENT OF PANELS, THE NUMBER OF PANELS AND CLOSURE BETWEEN PANELS, BUT THERE'S STILL ONE MORE.



AS UNLIKELY AS IT SOUNDS, THE PANEL SHAPE CAN ACTUALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR PERCEPTION OF TIME. EVEN THOUGH THIS LONG PANEL HAS THE SAME BASIC "MEANING" AS ITS SHORTER VERSIONS, STILL IT HAS THE FEELING OF GREATER LENGTH!





EVER NOTICED HOW THE WORDS "SHORT" OR "LONG" CAN REFER EITHER TO THE **FIRST** DIMENSION OR TO THE **FOURTH?**

IN A MEDIUM WHERE TIME AND SPACE MERGE SO COMPLETELY, THE DISTINCTION OFTEN VANISHES!



THE PANEL BORDER IS OUR GUIDE THROUGH TIME AND SPACE, BUT IT WILL ONLY GUIDE US SO FAR.



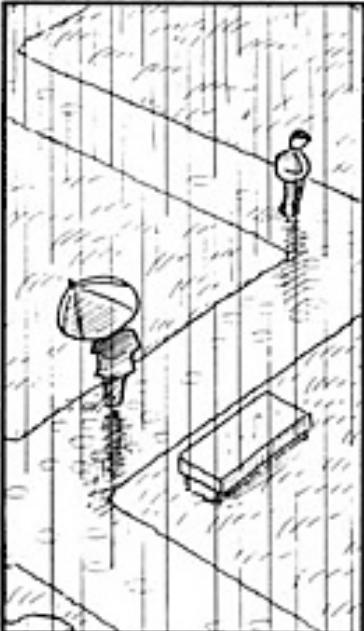
AS MENTIONED, PANELS COME IN MANY SHAPES AND SIZES, THOUGH THE CLASSIC RECTANGLE IS USED MOST OFTEN.



MOST OF US ARE SO USED TO THE STANDARD *RECTANGULAR* FORMAT THAT A "*BORDERLESS*" PANEL SUCH AS THIS CAN TAKE ON A *TIMELESS QUALITY*.



WHEN THE **CONTENT** OF A SILENT PANEL OFFERS NO CLUES AS TO ITS **DURATION**, IT CAN ALSO PRODUCE A SENSE OF **TIMELESSNESS**.

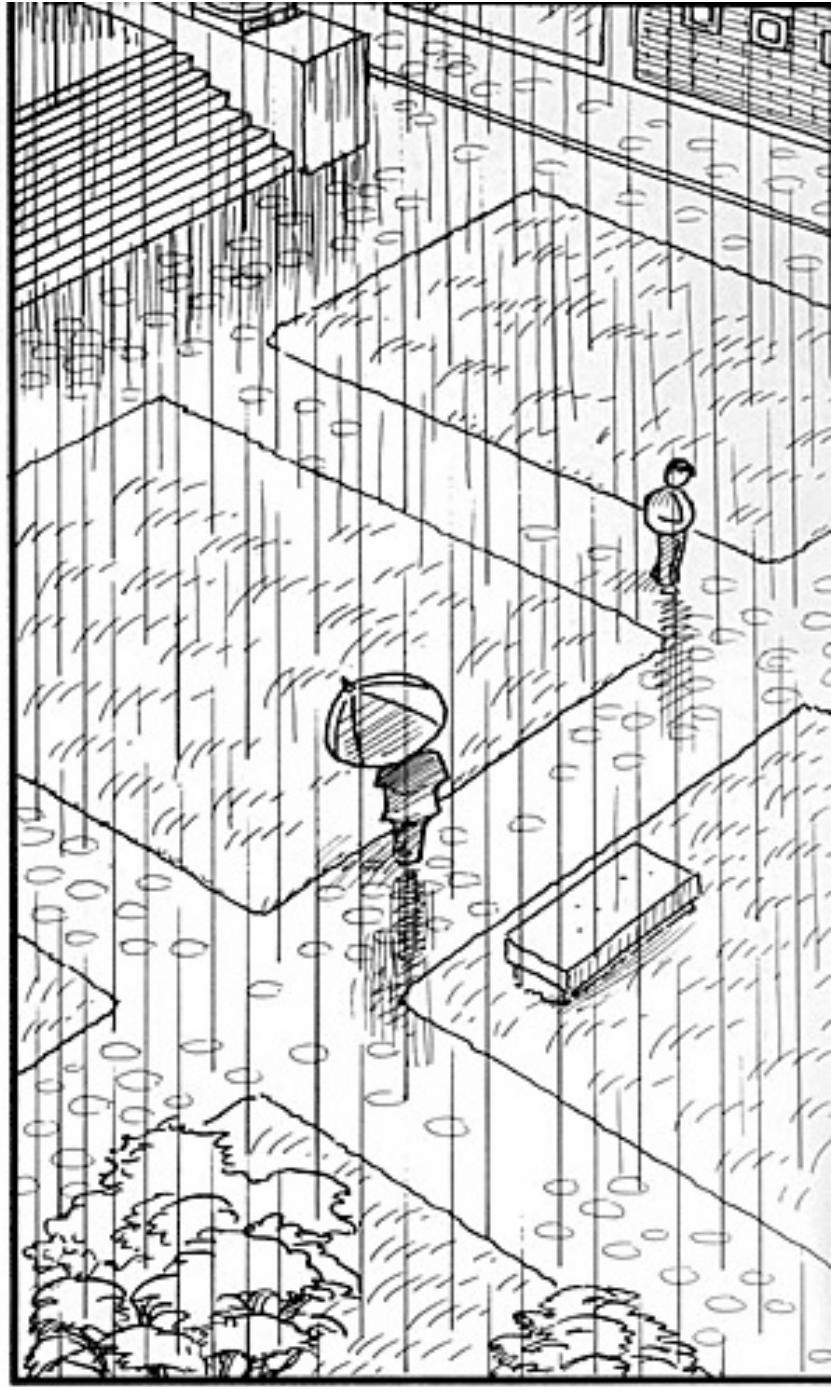


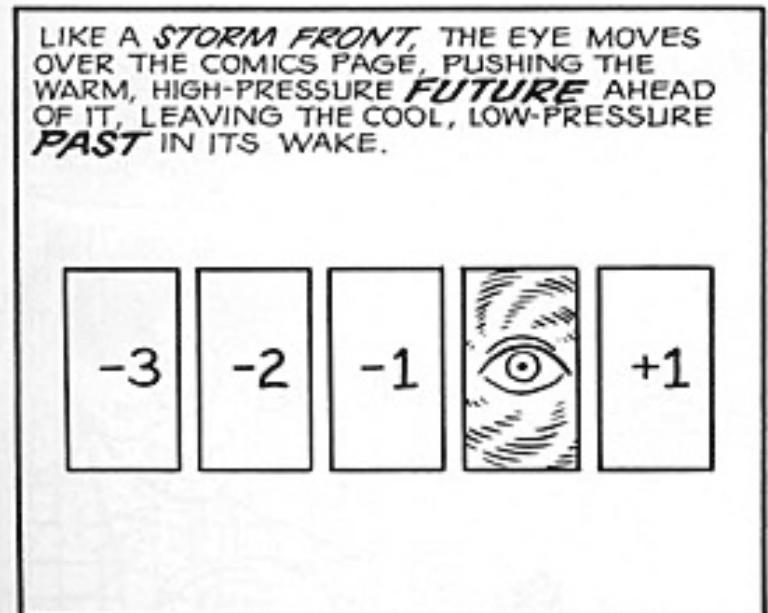
BECAUSE OF ITS **UNRESOLVED NATURE**, SUCH A PANEL MAY **LINGER** IN THE READER'S MIND.



AND ITS PRESENCE MAY BE FELT IN THE PANELS WHICH FOLLOW IT.









YET WE SELDOM DO CHANGE DIRECTION, EXCEPT TO RE-READ OR REVIEW PASSAGES. IT'S LEFT-TO-RIGHT, UP-TO-DOWN, PAGE AFTER PAGE.



COMICS READERS
ARE ALSO CONDITIONED
BY OTHER MEDIA AND THE
"REAL TIME" OF EVERYDAY
LIFE TO EXPECT A VERY
LINEAR PROGRESSION. JUST
A STRAIGHT LINE FROM
POINT A TO POINT B.
BUT IS THAT
NECESSARY?

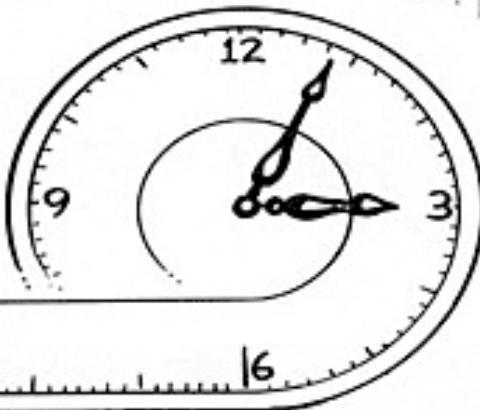
FOR NOW, THESE
QUESTIONS ARE THE
TERRITORY OF
GAMES AND
STRANGE LITTLE
EXPERIMENTS.

BUT VIEWER
PARTICIPATION
IS ON THE VERGE
OF BECOMING AN
ENORMOUS ISSUE
IN OTHER MEDIA.

HOW COMICS
ADDRESSES THIS
ISSUE -- OR FAILS
TO -- COULD PLAY A
CRUCIAL PART IN
DEFINING THE ROLE
OF COMICS IN THE
NEW CENTURY.

TIME
WILL
TELL.

AS MENTIONED EARLIER,
TIME AND SPACE IN THE WORLD OF
COMICS ARE CLOSELY LINKED.



AS A RESULT,
SO TOO ARE THE
ISSUES OF TIME
AND MOTION.



AS DISCUSSED IN CHAPTER
THREE, MOTION IN COMICS
IS PRODUCED *BETWEEN*
PANELS BY THE MENTAL
PROCESS CALLED CLOSURE--



--USUALLY
BY TRANSITION
TYPES ONE
TWO... BUT LET'S
NOT GET INTO
THAT AGAIN!



DESPITE COMICS' THREE THOUSAND
YEAR HISTORY, IT WASN'T UNTIL
TÖPFFER'S MID-1800'S DOODLINGS
THAT SPECIFIC MOTIONS WERE
PORTRAYED IN COMICS IN THE NOW-
FAMILIAR PANEL-TO-PANEL FORM.

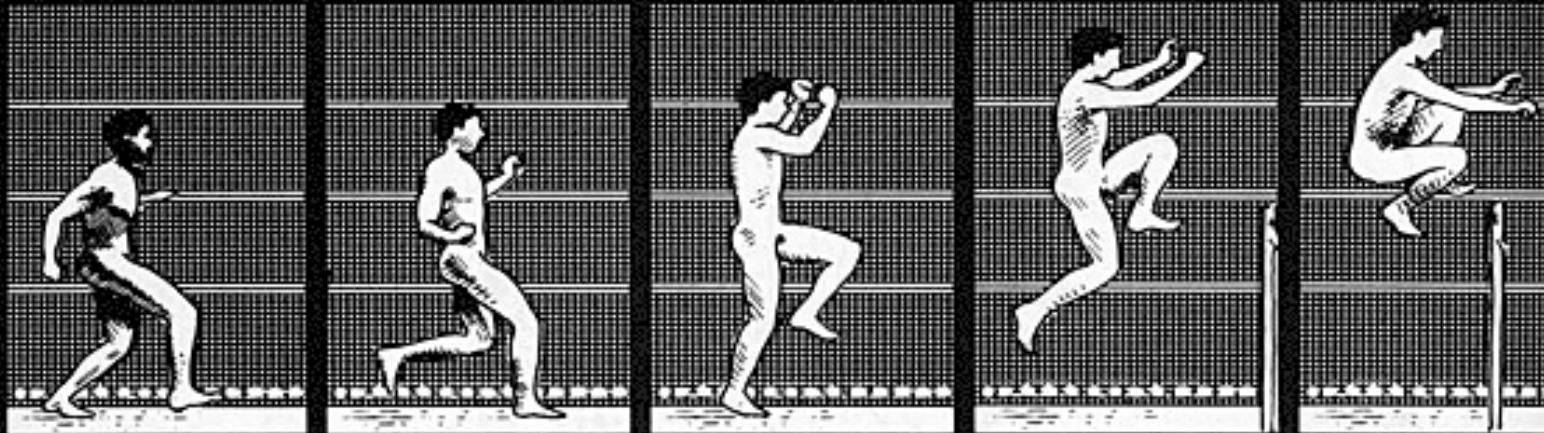


HOW, IN BRIGHT AND WITHIN
SOCIETY, ONE SHOULD BE
SEATED IN ORDER TO
TALK THEATRES, CASINOS,
AND THE LATEST NOU-
SENSE, IN GENERAL.

HOW, IF A SUPERIOR MAKEJA
JOKE, ONE JUMPS UP WITH
A ROAR OF LAUGHTER.

WITHIN
A FEW YEARS,
HOWEVER,
MOTION WAS A
HOT TOPIC
INDEED!





IN THE LAST QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY IT SEEMED LIKE EVERYONE WAS TRYING TO CAPTURE MOTION THROUGH SCIENCE!

BY 1880, INVENTORS THE WORLD OVER KNEW THAT "MOVING PICTURES" WERE JUST AROUND THE CORNER. EVERYONE WANTED TO BE FIRST!



EVENTUALLY THOMAS EDISON, THAT OLD SCALLYWAG, FILED THE FIRST PATENT ON A PROCESS USING STRIPS OF CLEAR PLASTIC PHOTOS AND FILM WAS OFF AND RUNNING!



AS THE MOVING PICTURE BEGAN ITS SPECTACULAR RISE, A FEW OF THE MORE RADICAL PAINTERS OF THE DAY EXPLORED THE IDEA THAT MOTION COULD BE DEPICTED BY A SINGLE IMAGE ON CANVAS.

THE FUTURISTS IN ITALY AND MARCEL DUCHAMP IN FRANCE BEGAN THE SYSTEMATIC DECOMPOSITION OF MOVING IMAGES IN A STATIC MEDIUM.



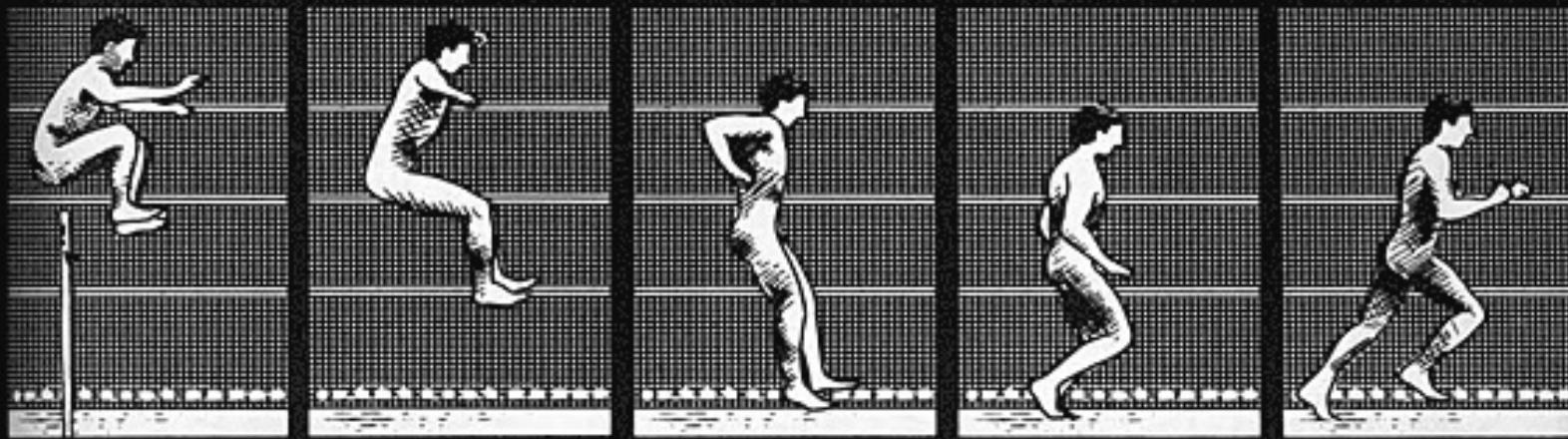
Girl Running on a Balcony
by Balla



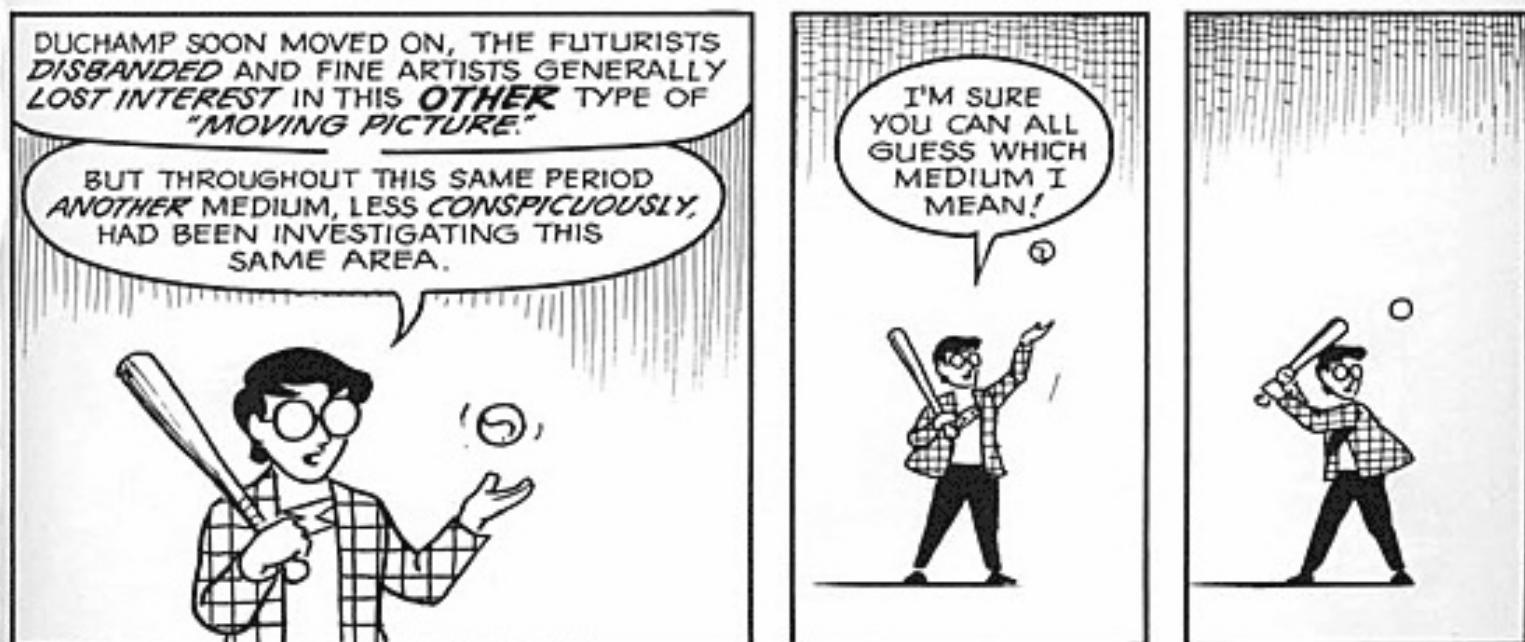
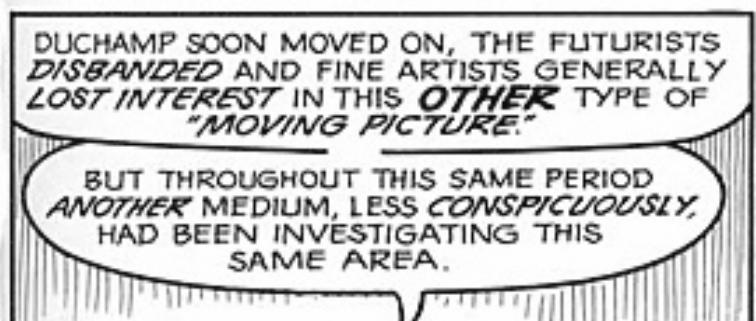
Nude Descending a Staircase #2 by Duchamp

IT WASN'T A BAD IDEA!





COPIED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY EADWEARD MUYBRIDGE





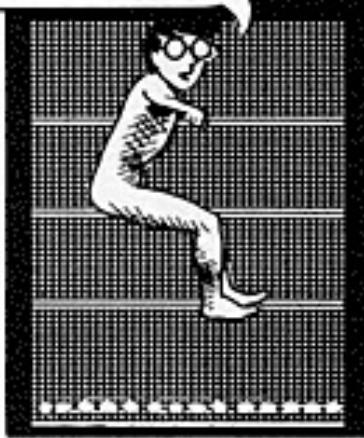
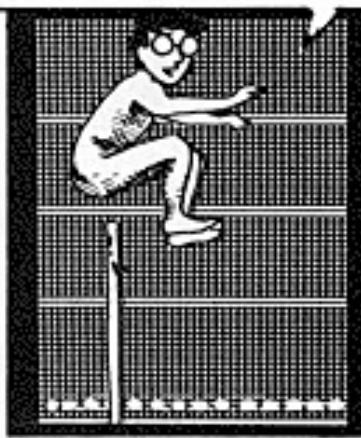
FROM ITS *EARLIEST DAYS*, THE MODERN COMIC HAS GRAPPLED WITH THE PROBLEM OF SHOWING MOTION IN A STATIC MEDIUM.



HOW DO YOU SHOW THIS ASPECT OF TIME IN AN ART WHERE *TIME STANDS STILL?*



THOUGH SEQUENTIAL ART SURVIVED FOR MANY CENTURIES *WITHOUT* DEPICTING MOTION, ONCE THE GENIE WAS OUT OF THE BOTTLE IT WAS PERHAPS *INEVITABLE* THAT MORE AND MORE EFFICIENT MEANS WOULD BE SOUGHT. AT FIRST, THIS SEARCH CENTERED ON *MULTIPLE IMAGES* IN SEQUENCE.



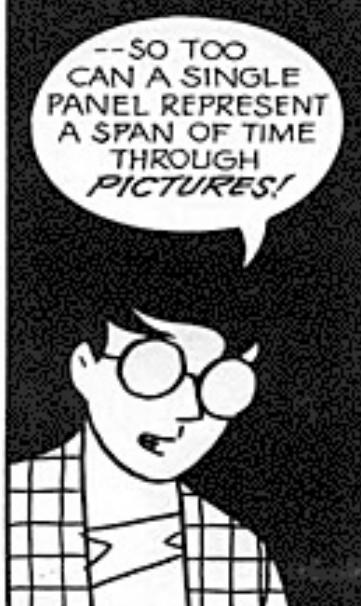
BUT JUST AS A SINGLE PANEL CAN REPRESENT A *SPAN* OF TIME THROUGH *SOUND*--

SMILE!

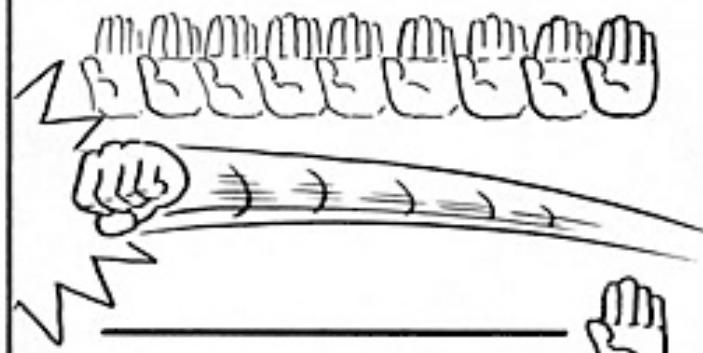
PAF!



--SO TOO CAN A SINGLE PANEL REPRESENT A SPAN OF TIME THROUGH PICTURES!



SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE FUTURISTS' *DYNAMIC MOVEMENT* AND DUCHAMP'S DIAGRAMMATIC CONCEPT OF MOVEMENT LIES COMICS' *"MOTION LINE."*



IN THE BEGINNING, MOTION LINES--OR "ZIP-RIBBONS" AS SOME CALL THEM--WERE WILD, MESSY, ALMOST **DESPERATE** ATTEMPTS TO REPRESENT THE PATHS OF MOVING OBJECTS THROUGH SPACE.



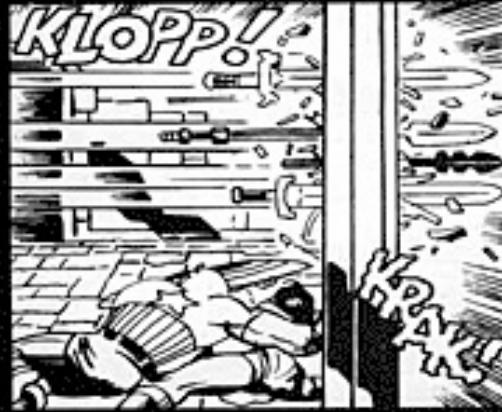
OVER THE YEARS, THESE LINES BECAME MORE REFINED AND STYLIZED, EVEN DIAGRAMMATIC.

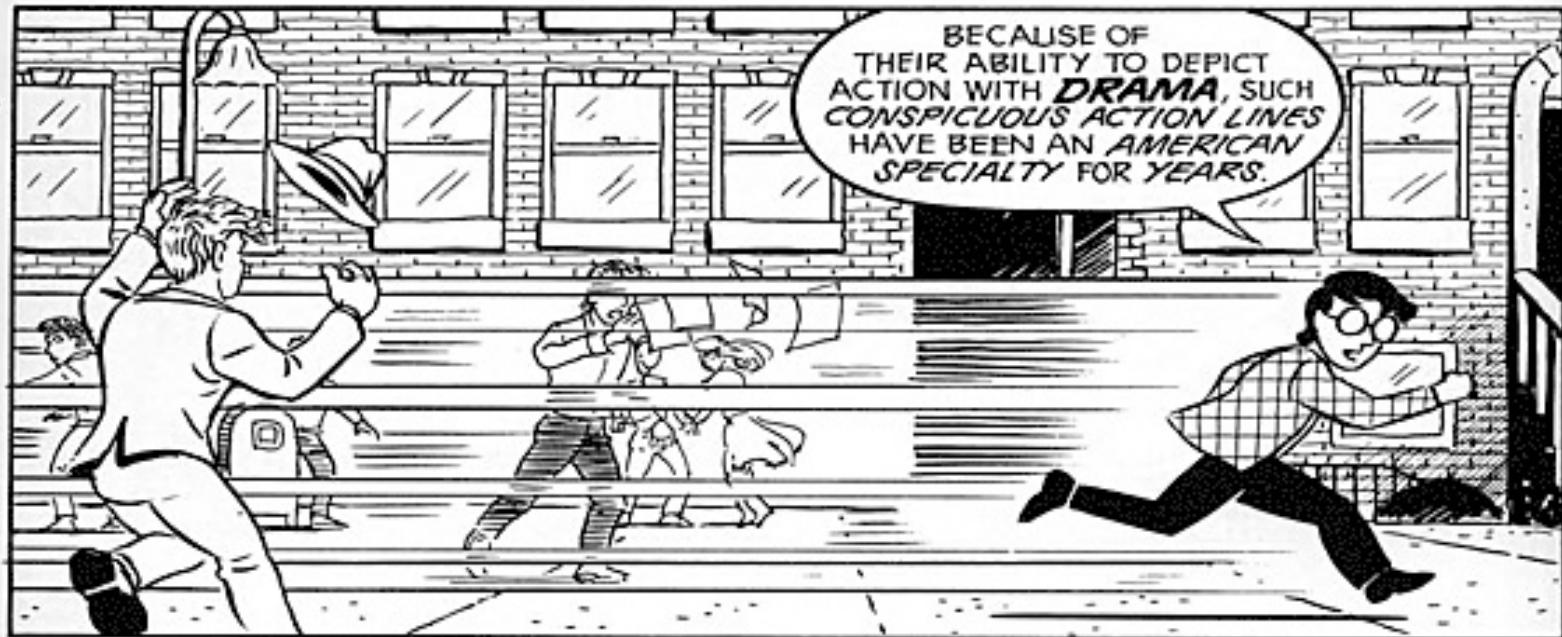


EVENTUALLY, IN THE HANDS OF HEROIC FANTASY ARTISTS LIKE **BILL EVERETT** AND **JACK KIRBY**--

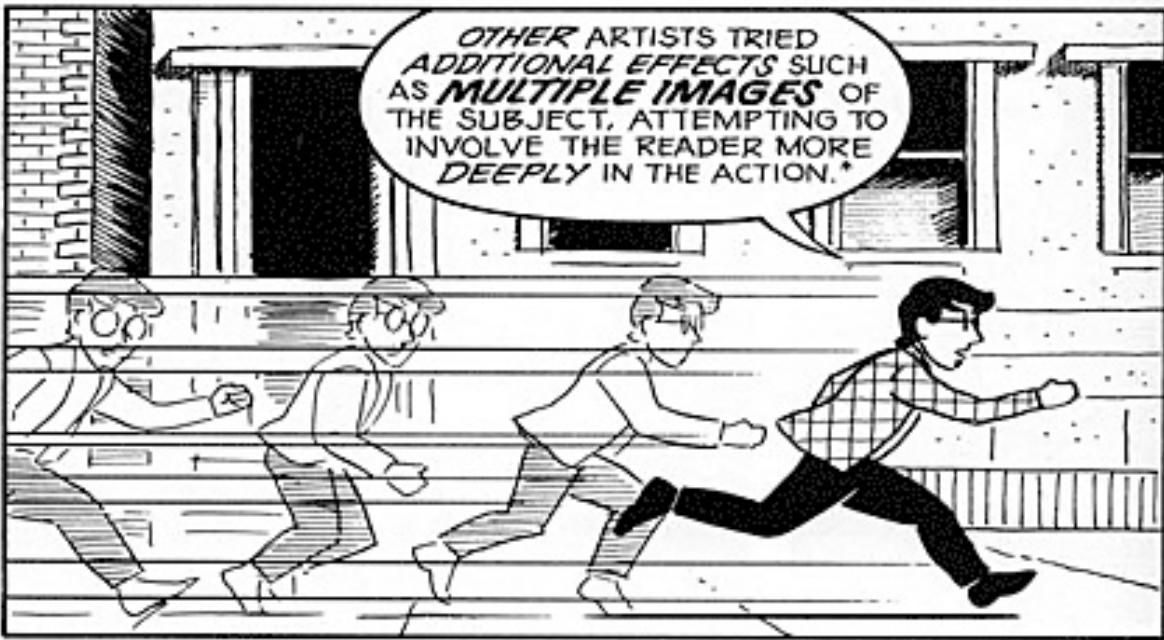


--THOSE SAME LINES BECAME **SO** STYLIZED AS TO ALMOST HAVE A **LIFE** AND PHYSICAL PRESENCE **ALL THEIR OWN!**



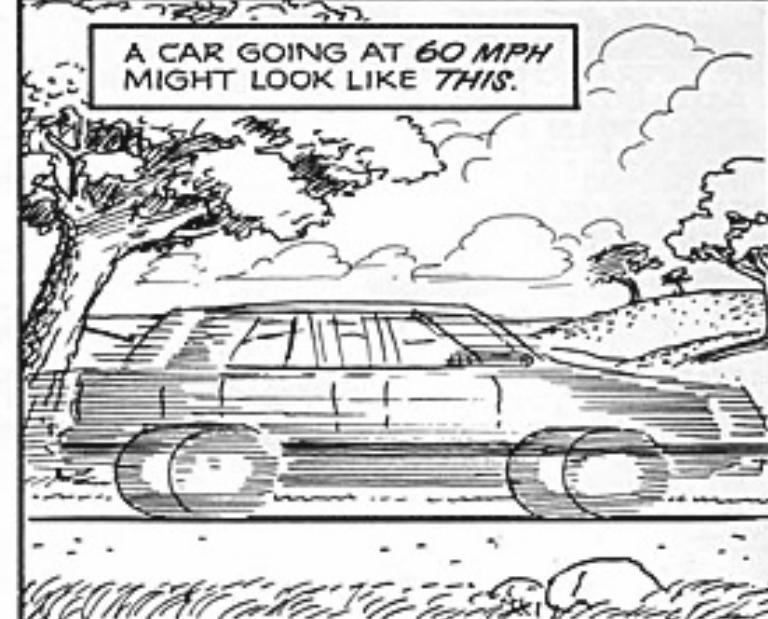


IN THIS APPROACH, BOTH THE MOVING OBJECT AND THE BACKGROUNDS ARE DRAWN IN A CLEAR, ARTICULATED STYLE, AND THE PATH OF MOTION IS IMPOSED OVER THE SCENE.

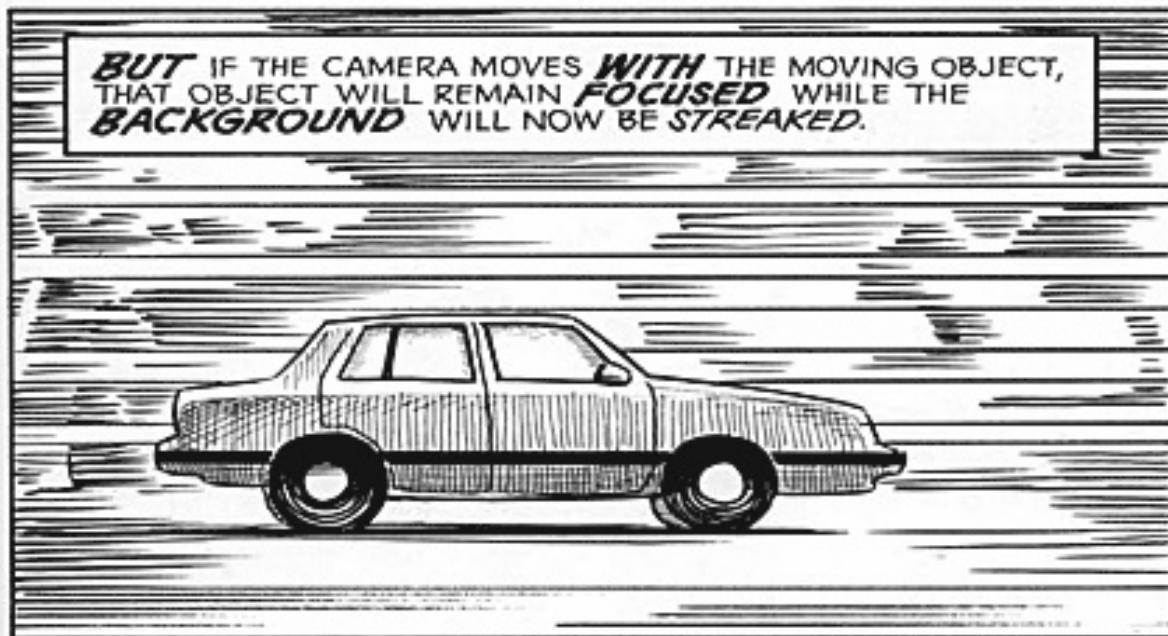


* MULTIPLE IMAGES CAN BE FOUND IN THE WORK OF KRIGSTEIN, INFANTINO AND OTHERS.

COLAN, WHO WAS ALSO A *FILM-BUFF*,
WAS OF COURSE AWARE THAT WHEN A
CAMERA'S SHUTTER SPEED IS TOO SLOW TO
FULLY FREEZE A MOVING OBJECT'S IMAGE,
AN INTERESTING *BLURRING* EFFECT OCCURS.



BUT IF THE CAMERA MOVES **WITH** THE MOVING OBJECT,
THAT OBJECT WILL REMAIN **FOCUSED** WHILE THE
BACKGROUND WILL NOW BE STREAKED.



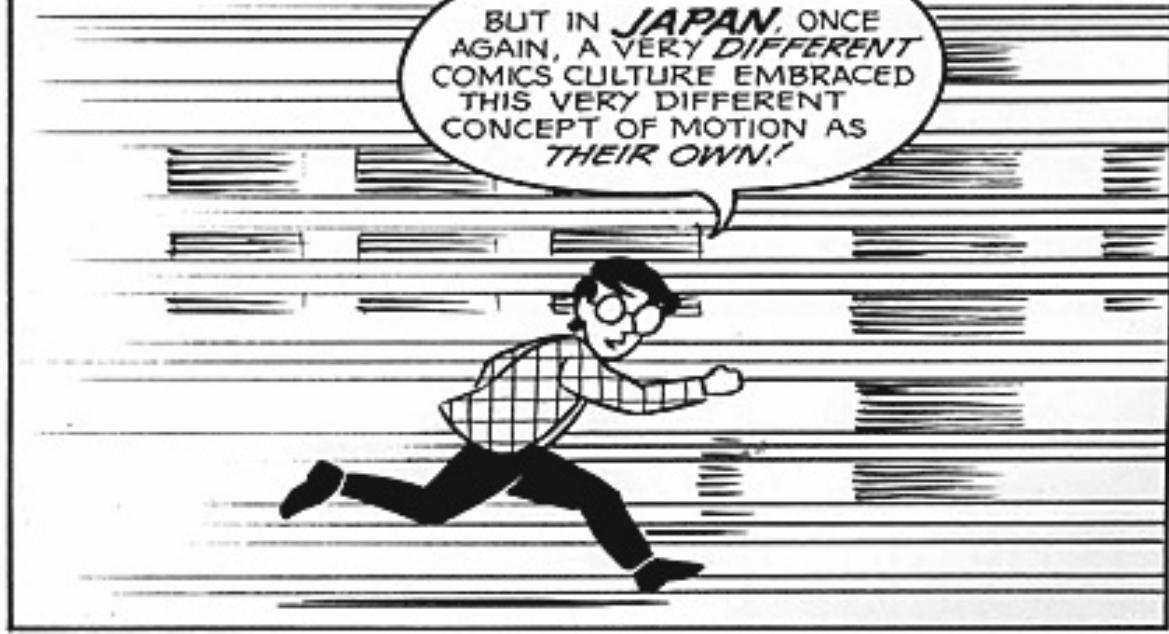
AMERICAN COMICS
ARTISTS TOOK
LITTLE OR NO INTEREST
IN THIS KIND OF
PHOTOGRAPHIC
TRICKERY.



AND IN **EUROPE**
WHERE MOTION
LINES WERE USED
ONLY SPARINGLY,
IT WAS LIKEWISE
IGNORED.



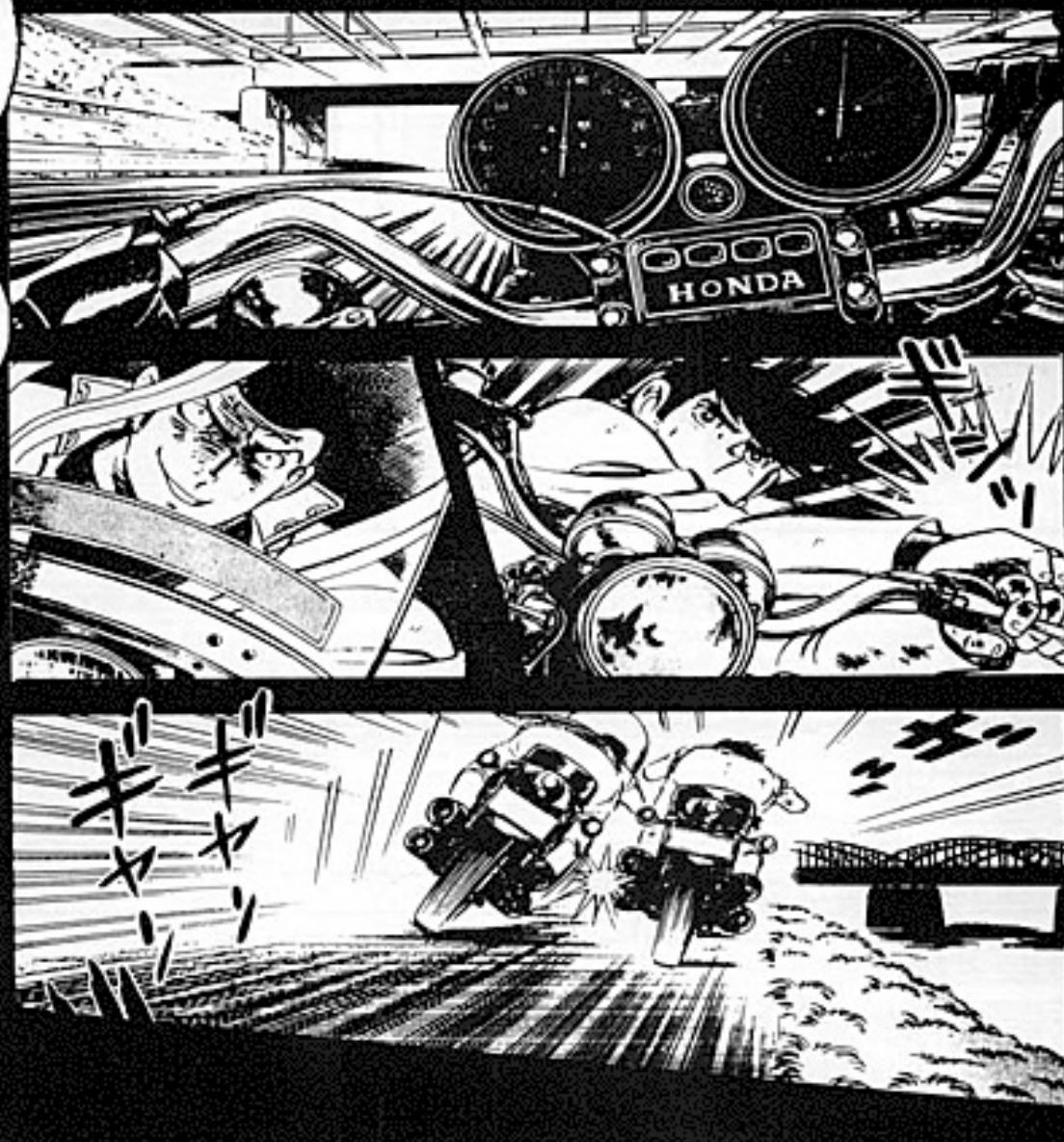
BUT IN **JAPAN**, ONCE
AGAIN, A VERY DIFFERENT
COMICS CULTURE EMBRACED
THIS VERY DIFFERENT
CONCEPT OF MOTION AS
THEIR OWN!



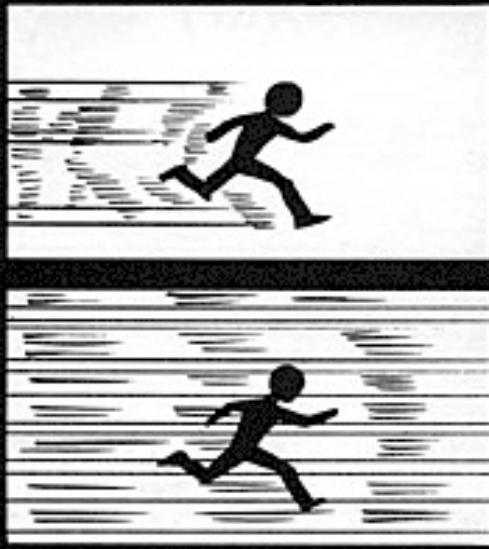
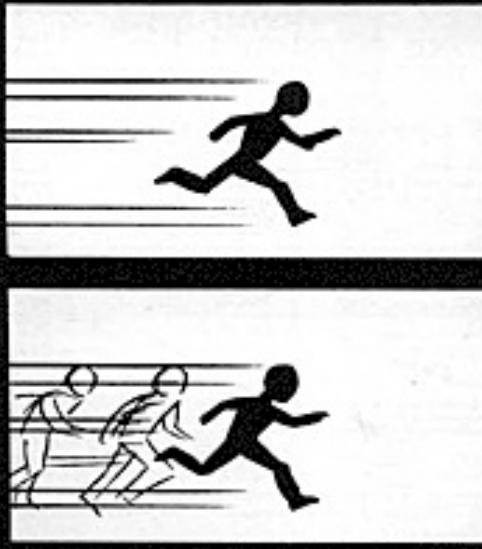
"SUBJECTIVE MOTION," AS I CALL IT, OPERATES ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT IF OBSERVING A MOVING OBJECT CAN BE INVOLVING, **BEING** THAT OBJECT SHOULD BE **MORE** SO.

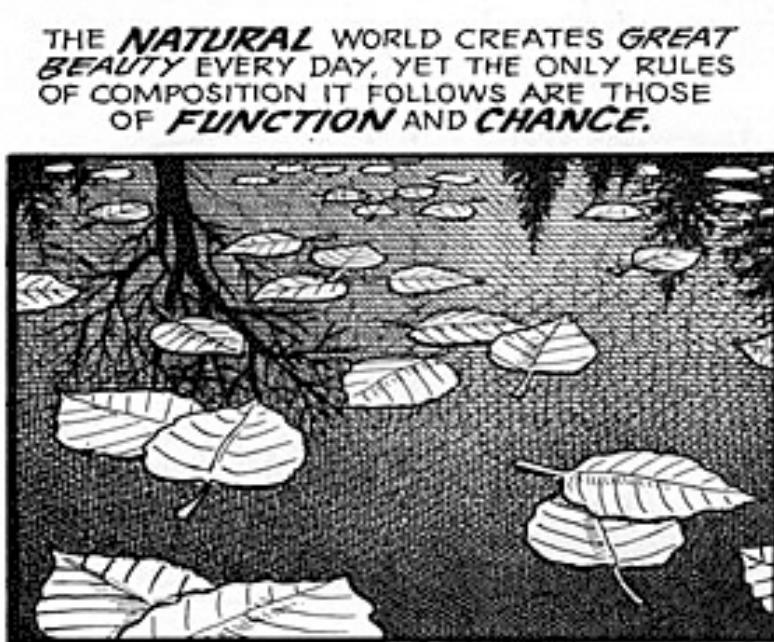
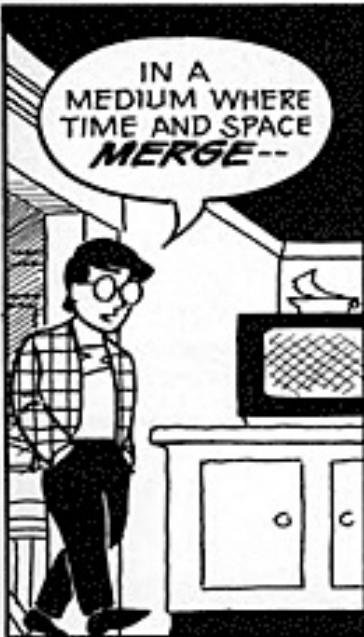
JAPANESE ARTISTS, STARTING IN THE LATE 60's, BEGAN PUTTING THEIR READERS "IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT" WITH PANELS LIKE THESE.

AND STARTING IN THE MID-EIGHTIES, A FEW AMERICAN ARTISTS BEGAN TO ADOPT THE EFFECT IN THEIR OWN WORK, UNTIL BY THE EARLY NINETIES IT HAS BECOME FAIRLY COMMON.

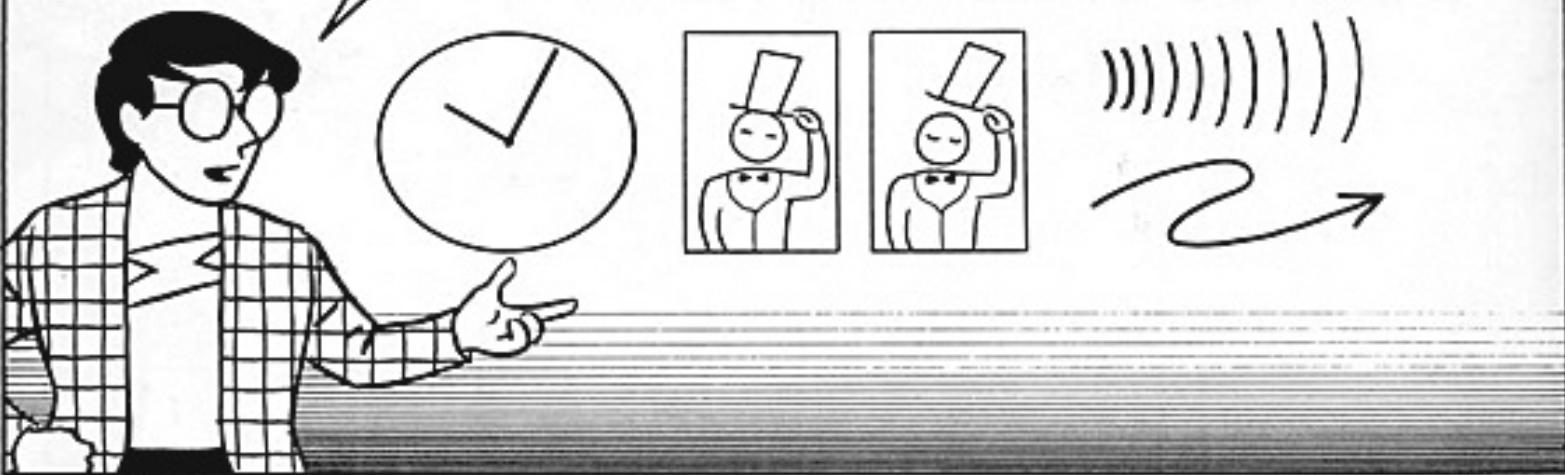


ARE THESE THE **ONLY** WAYS WE CAN PORTRAY MOTION IN A SINGLE PANEL? THINK ABOUT IT.





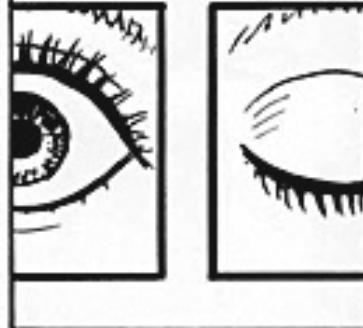
AS WE'VE SEEN, THE INTERACTION OF **TIME** AND COMICS GENERALLY LEADS US TO ONE OF TWO SUBJECTS:
SOUND OR **MOTION**.



SOUND BREAKS DOWN INTO TWO SUBSETS: **WORD BALLOONS** AND **SOUND EFFECTS**.

BOTH TYPES ADD TO THE **DURATION** OF A PANEL, PARTIALLY THROUGH THE NATURE OF SOUND ITSELF AND BY INTRODUCING ISSUES OF **ACTION** AND **REACTION**.

MOTION ALSO BREAKS DOWN INTO TWO SUBSETS. THE FIRST TYPE--
PANEL-TO-PANEL CLOSURE-- WAS IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO MERIT ITS OWN CHAPTER.



THE OTHER TYPE -- MOTION **WITHIN** PANELS -- CAN BE FURTHER DIVIDED INTO SEVERAL DISTINCT STYLES. I'VE COVERED THE ONES I KNOW, BUT THERE MAY BE MANY OTHERS. TIME WILL TELL.



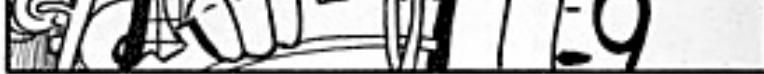
THE WORKINGS OF TIME IN COMICS SHOULD BE AS SIMPLE AS--



I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT
WHAT MAKES COMICS "TICK" FOR
YEARS AND I'M STILL AMAZED
BY THE STRANGENESS OF IT ALL.



BUT
NO MATTER HOW
BIZARRE THE
WORKINGS OF TIME
IN COMICS IS--



--THE FACE
IT PRESENTS TO
THE READER--



--IS ONE
OF SIMPLE
NORMALITY.



OR THE
ILLUSION OF IT,
ANYWAY.



ALL
DEPENDS ON
YOUR *FRAME*
OF MIND.

