

UNDERSTANDING COMICS

R E V I S I T E D

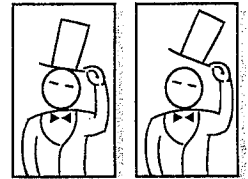
A RECAP IN 3 PAGES



The medium we call *comics* is based on a simple *idea*:



The idea of placing *one picture after another* to show the *passage of time*.



The *potential* of that idea is *limitless*, but perpetually *obscured* by its *limited application* in *popular culture*.



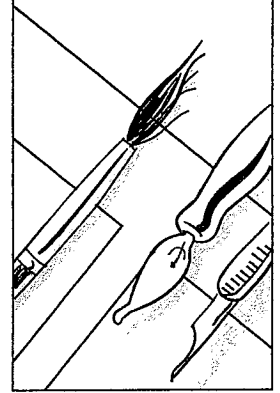
To *understand* comics, we need to separate *form* from *content* --



-- and see with clear eyes how *other eras* have used this same idea to *beautiful ends* --



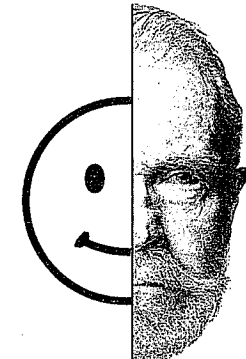
-- and what a limited palette of *tools* and *ideas* our own era has used.



Comics is a *language*. Its *vocabulary* is the full range of *visual symbols* --



-- including the power of *cartooning* and *realism*, both *apart* and in *startling combinations*.



The *heart* of comics lies in the space *between* the panels --



-- where the reader's *imagination* makes *still pictures* come *alive!*



for flying it to safety respectively.

f views.

ce.

for the better, though he hasn't seen
d I'm out of time!

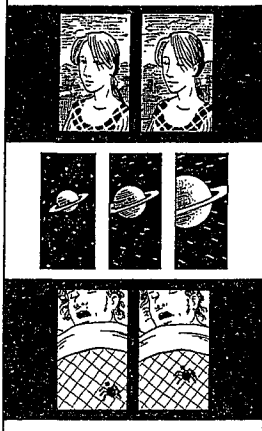
chers who have relentlessly hunted

sation (check all that apply):

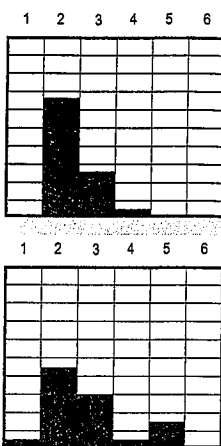
. Brownstein, Doug Church, Chris
ier, Cayetano Garza, Matt Gorbet and
.an, Janet Murray and everyone at the
olz, Jerry Michalski, Frank Miller,
a Rao, Howard Rheingold,
1 Salicrup, Jesse Scanlon at *Wired*,
k Wolfe, Will Wright and Bernard Yee.

e — who I stupidly left off this list and
obably never live it down.

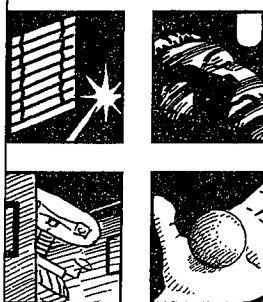
It's a process that can be *quantified*, *classified* --



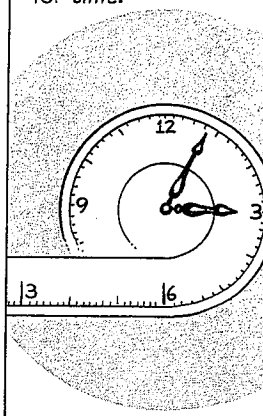
-- and even *measured* --



-- yet remain utterly *mysterious* in the way it paints its *mental pictures*.



In relying on *visual sequence*, comics substitutes *space* for *time*.



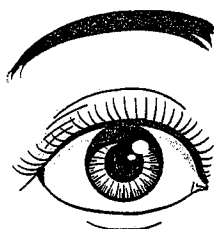
Yet there is no *conversion chart* and *time* flows through comics --



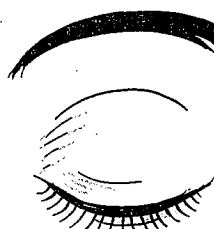
-- in a staggering *variety* of ways.



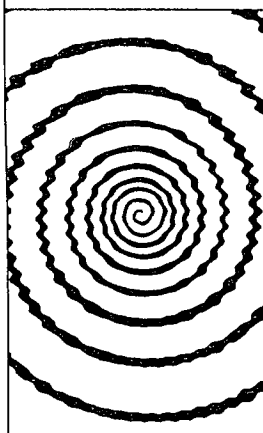
Through their *still images* using only *one sense* --



-- comics represents *all* the senses --



-- and through the character of the *lines* themselves --



-- comics represents the invisible world of *emotion*.



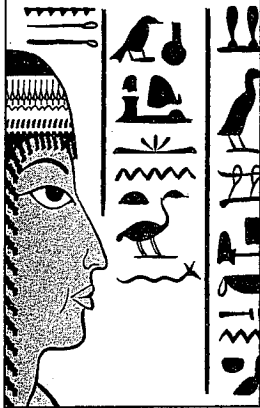
Lines evolving to become *symbols* in their own right --



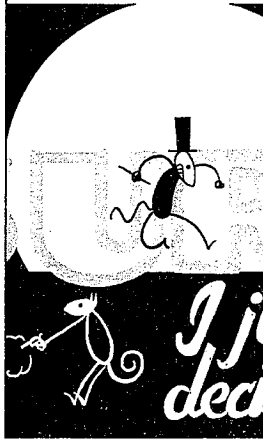
-- as they *dance* with the much *younger* symbols called:



Reunited after thousands of years apart --



-- in a relationship far closer than in any other form.



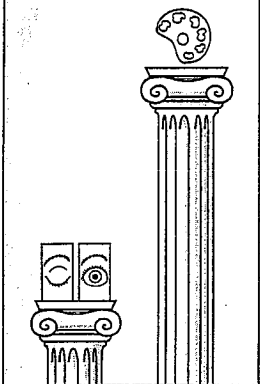
Like other media, comics is merely a simple idea --



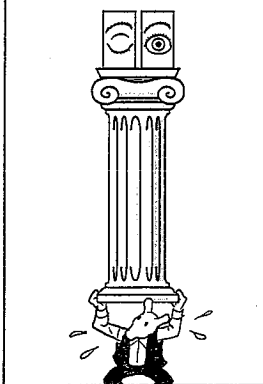
-- in search of complex applications --



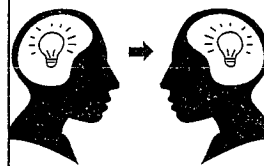
-- yet comics remains relegated to non-art status by conventional wisdom.



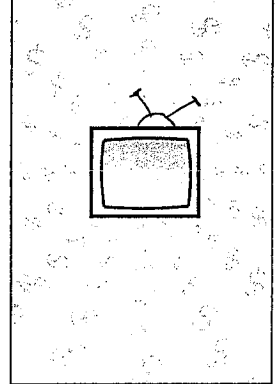
A status some try to combat, (though some in the community relish it).



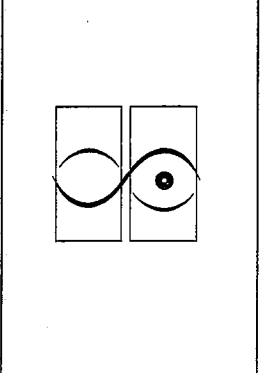
Comics' place in society is vital, though, as one of the few forms of personal communication --



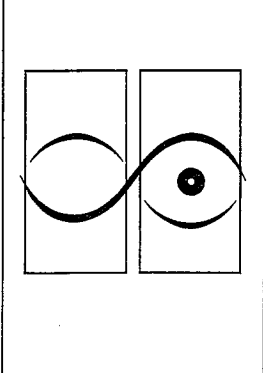
-- in a world of committee-built automatons and corporate mass-marketing.



Comics offers a medium of enormous breadth and control for the author --



-- a unique, intimate relationship with its audience --



-- and a potential so great, so inspiring, yet so brutally squandered, it could bring a tear to the eye.

