

THE SLIMEBALL SPEAKS

Hi-ho, kids! Welcome back to another issue of small press' finest superhero epic! This time out I've got a tale that's a little on the light-hearted and goofy side for you, one that ought to bring to mind any bad dates you've experienced yourself lately. Enjoy this sucker and get ready for next issue's blockbuster written and drawn by Max Ink!

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Although everything from artist troubles to printing delays to school obligations kept me from maintaining a regular schedule in 1993, I'm hoping to try and get back on a semi-quarterly basis this year. 1994 marks my fourth year doing Amoeba Adventures and I feel like I'm just getting warmed up! I'm hoping to get at least four issues of Amoeba done in '94, and there's spinoff titles starring Spif and Rambunny waiting in the wings! (See the enclosed supplement for more info)

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I've worked to strengthen my inking in the interval between issues (the last issue I inked was #8). I hope it shows some... since August, I've been doing a daily cartoon strip for the local paper, and the deadline pressure has led me to figure out how to ink both fast and reasonably good. I tried to apply this learning to work on #13 some. Hopefully, it worked!

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Some of my picks for the best mainstream comics of 1993, just because I'm desperately trying to fill up some space here: The Incredible Hulk by Peter David, the only Marvel comic worth reading at all these days...how sad it is! DC Comics puts out (for the most part) much better superhero comics..the whole Superman line is great in my opinion. But asides from this, I've gotten rather tired of the unoriginal and derivative material being labeled as "superhero" stories these days... I've become fond of underground books like Peepshow, Yummy Fur, Hate, Eightball, and the far-too infrequent Miracleman. It's a dry well out there for us who enjoy intelligent, unique superheroes... thus I have to write my own! Heh.

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A look at planned material for the next few months to look forwards to: Amoeba #14-16, Rambunny #1, Amoeba Universe #1, and, at long last, Spif #1 by Troy Hickman and Max Ink! Also, I've a short story in an issue of Tony Lorenz's Futuro Tierra, and more in the wings! Thank God... I'm at the bottom of the page! It's harder to write one of these than it looks! peace.

AMOEBA ADVENTURES #13 January, 1994

"Alive"

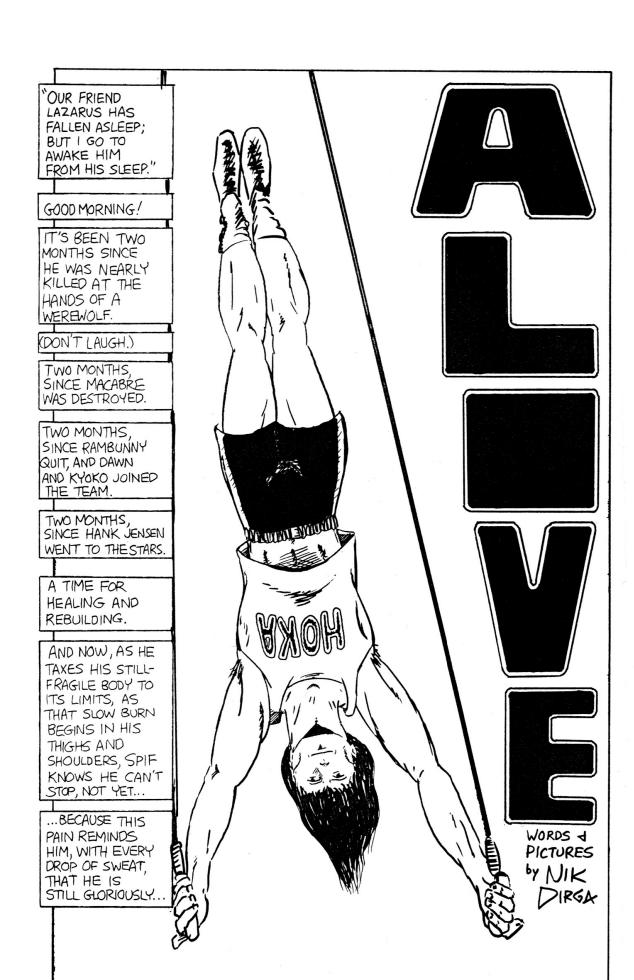
Written and drawn by Nik Dirga.

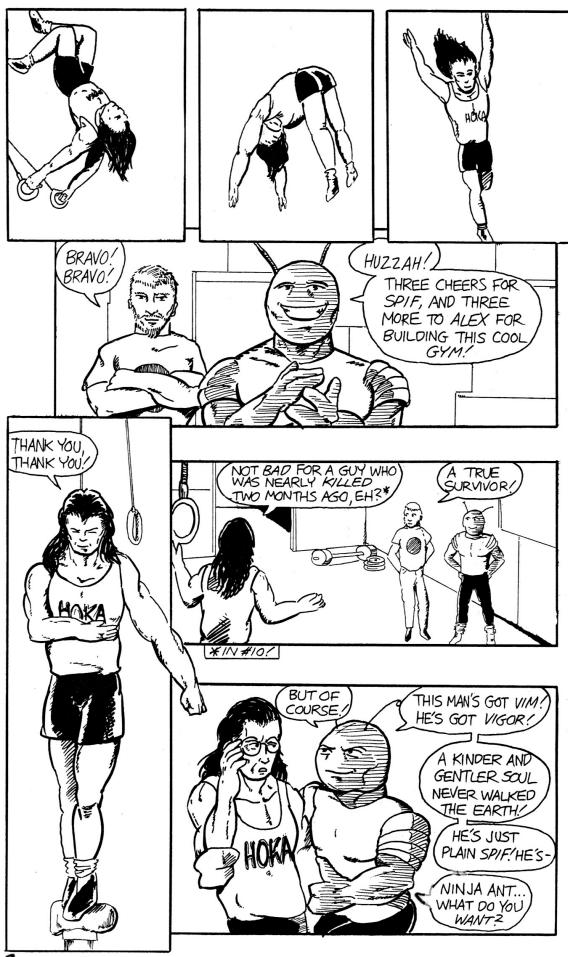
Amoeba Adventures is published quarterly in theory by Protoplasm Press, P.O. Box 2230, University, Mississippi 38677-2230. Additional copies are available for \$1.50 ppd. each. Amoeba Adventures and all characters herein are C 1994 Nik Dirga. All rights reserved.

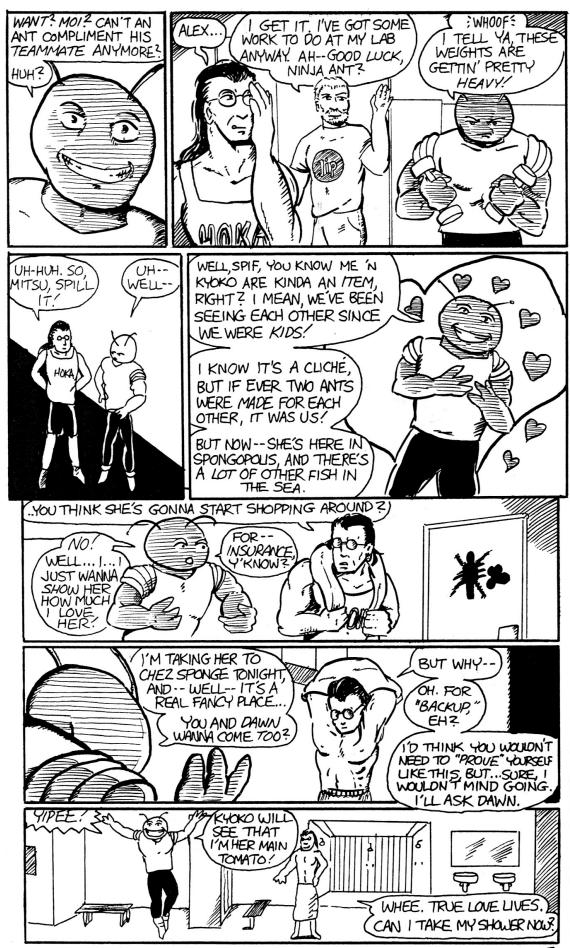
Protoplasm Press is a member of the Small Press Syndicate. Write J. Kevin Carrier at 8913 Eldora Drive, Cincinnati OH 45236 for details.

Our Story So Far: The experience with Master Macabre is over at last, and All-Spongy new moving Squadron is onwards. Prometheus is trying to come to terms with himself, while the others decide it's time for a little rest and relaxation, and a classy night on the town might just do the trick...









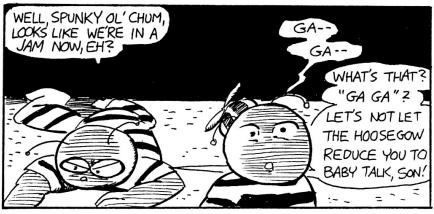














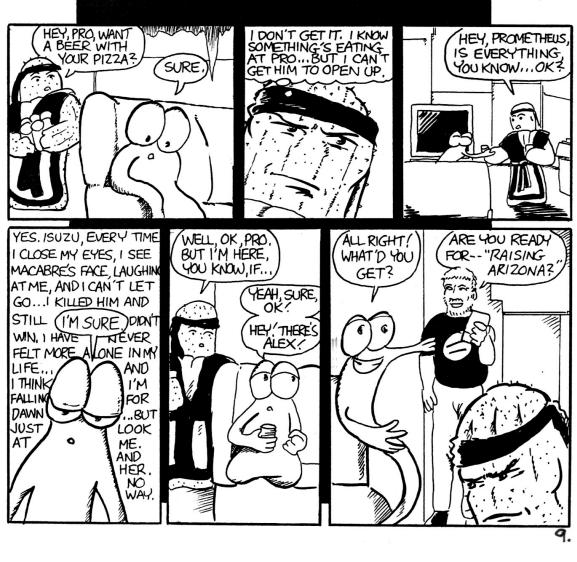




























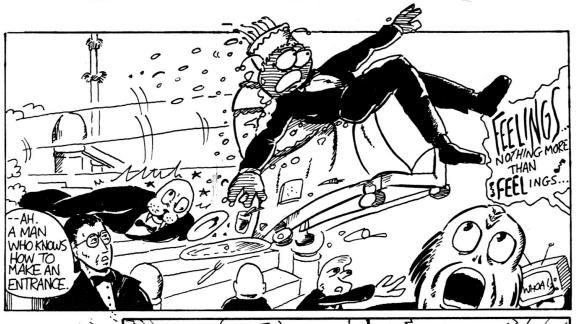
























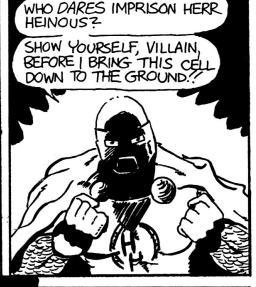


















THANKS.

NEXTS Evidence of our Confusion.

AMOEBAMAIL

And now, your comments on Amoeba Adventures #11, "Little Earthquakes." Thanks for all the kind words on it! - Nik

Thanks for the copy of Amoeba Adventures you sent me; you've obviously got something really strong going on here, for which the reader very much gets his money's worth. This is a very professional-looking, slick production, aided greatly by Max's Dave Sim-influenced lettering effects and accomplished inking style. I also really appreciated the Brontë quote overlapped with the scenes of your characters at the end; a nice touch. I'm not much into superheroes (as you'll see by the way I'm trying to "deconstruct" the genre in the books I've enclosed), but your book is obviously many notches above most being produced. Keep up the good work!

Michael Neno P.O. Box 151303 Columbus, OH 43215

Thanks Michael! Those of you who like untraditional approaches to superheroes really should check out Mr. Neno's superlative *Strong Man Meets Mr. Ferret*, one of the coolest books you'll ever see. #3's now out for \$1. Try it!

Amoeba Adventures #11 is the best issue yet. Yes, I probably say that with every issue, and yes, I mean it every time. I feel so sorry for the folks who only read mainstream stuff, because they're missing one of the best comics available today.

The art was brilliant. All three of you guys put forth a tremendous amount of effort, and it paid off in spades. Every page was a real work of art (I only wish the originals were for sale).

Even more impressive was the story. This is colossal stuff, bud. You joke about me winning the SPF Best Writer Award, but when I read books like this, I have to wonder how I lucked into winning it. You really understand how comics should be written, and even beyond that, you understand writing itself. As a writer, I have nothing but professional respect for you (of course, I have no respect for you as a human being).

Troy Hickman 3200 S. 9th St. #A Lafayette, IN 47905

Once again, another good issue. A good follow-up to "Details of Design." The story developed nicely, with some nice subplots developing. With Rambunny leaving the group, does that mean a spin-off series for Rambunny? Sounds pretty interesting, huh? Max's art throughout was pretty good, with only a few perspective problems here and there. The book had an excellent cover by you (nice stipple job) and a very good pin-up by Stern. Your book keeps getting better and better.

Tony Lorenz 8708 Friendship Ct. Tampa, FL 33634

Well, Tony, good news! A Rambunny spin-off comic will indeed begin this summer! Watch for it! Tony, of course, drew last issue's swell Dawn Star story, and publishes the stunning mega-series Futuro Tierra.



(from the pages of RAP SHEET #38): One comic I read recently had a wonderful story. I wasn't overfamiliar with the book, although I had heard of it before. The book is Amoeba Adventures by Nik Dirga and, in reading that book in the middle of a storyline I still found myself not only caught up in it, but caring for the little amoeba and all of his friends and allies. In one issue there was humor, romance, and even tragedy, and I had no problem jumping right in and knowing where I was in the story. I had even read the synopsis after the book and still knew what was going on. Why can't these New Comics characters take time out for their characters to read poetry? Or look for apartments? Or laugh and even argue (without hitting someone)?

Okay, there have to be battles sometimes. There has to be a struggle of a fight for the heroes. But in this issue of *Amoeba Adventures* not one blow was exchanged, and, to me, just as much happened to keep me glued to the story as ever happened in an all-out Marvel war. I believe characters need to have quite struggles and emotional battles occasionally to allow you to feel for who they really are.

Karen O'Donnell 3734 Brotherton Cincinnati, OH 45209

Amen, Karen. You just summed up how I write comics. By the way, lots of people mentioned how much they appreciated the synopsis in #11, so I'm making it a semi-regular feature (though not so indepth). It's important to me that this comic doesn't end up as arcane and labyrinthine as the Mutant books or something, especially now that I'm racking up a fair amount of history with it.

I enjoyed Amoeba Adventures #11 for the most part. If the text piece hadn't appeared in this issue, I would've had a difficult time figgerin' out whut the heck was goin' on. As it was, the multitude of characters was dealt with quite well.

The art was OK but it didn't really grab me. There were several panels where the panel layout was confusing enough to make me read panels out of order. Also, I'm never comfortable when characters having a cartoony look about them are rendered in a more realistic fashion. That's probably me, though. Overall, this issue intrigued me enough to want to check out the next issue. Is it available yet? I'll reserve *final judgement* until after that.

Jason Light 18 Teresa Lane Chalfont, PA 18914

So, you should have #12 now, Jason. Verdict? I gotta mention here that Jay puts out one of the finest minicomics I've seen this year, the laugh-aminute Mr. Mayhem. Check out the adventures of Cheese Boy! Send him a buck or two and ask for #1-4!

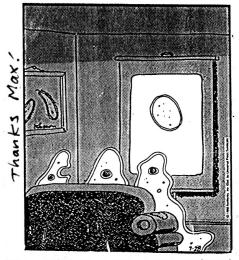
First of all, the book looks great. The packaging and presentation is top-notch, as is the design of the various text pages. I enjoyed the Marvel-style splash page with the big "I Quit!" balloon dominating things. I mean Marvel-style in the old sense, of course, since I have little clue what in the hell Marvel is doing with (or to) their books these days. Despite coming in on the middle of the story, I felt that I quickly had a pretty firm grasp on who's who and what's what. That, my friend, is what we call solid writing. This issue had a palatable feel of melancholia and inevitable change. By the end, I had a sense of closure, but that was mitigated by a distinct feeling of hope and indomitable spirit. (Whaddaya know! And I wuz just tryin' for a happy endin'! - Nik) I really was quite impressed by the depth of the characters and the obvious affection you have for them. Of particular note was the galaxy-hopping scene with Dawn and Hank... that is, until the bit at the end when she went roaring off through the sky and all. From time to time, I think it's nice for a comix character to react in a halfway sane manner to bad news. The scene was dramatic and effective; I just thought it went a bit overboard on histrionics.

The art was also solid. It was somewhat reminiscent of the stuff Bob Hall did on Jim Shooter's last stint on *The Avengers*. Not gorgeous or ground-breaking, but very effective and clear. The once criticism I would make is that I'd like to see some variance in line width in the inking. It helps keep figures from getting lost in the background and lends the art a more "organic" feel. Varying line width isn't when using pens to ink, because it takes forever, but it's worth the time and effort.

Eric Hampton

Sorry Eric, I misplaced your address here. Eric does the keen *Tales of the Slouch Hat* and is going to be inking *Rambunny* #1, this summer! You have some erudite and incisive comments on #11, thanks for them. About the inking... the whole story behind the nightmare #11 became, productionwise, was revealed in last issue's editorial. The inking suffered a bit 'cause of it all, but understandably so. Oh well.

THE FAR SIDE



"No wait! Thet's not Uncle Prometheus! Who is that?... Crimony, I think it's just an air bubble!"

Amoeba Adventures #11... I must say, is one of the best comic stories I've read in a long time. The characters are all believable, the various plots are all woven together in a very smooth style. Good mix of serious and comic relief. "Little Earthquakes" is an appropriate title, too. I saw Tori Amos here in concert about a year ago, good show.

Scott McClung 218 West Apache Norman, OK 73069

Ah, Scott, you soulmate, you! Charlton Heston will be playing Rambunny in the upcoming *Amoeba* movie. And Tori Amos is my wife.

Thanks again for all the letters, folks! Keep writing and see you in the pages of #14!



AND COMING IN AMOEBA

NUMBER 15:

BONE MACHINE

UFO Checklist

The United Fanzine Organization is a small press publishing co-op. Here are some of the latest releases from the UFO, which can be contacted through its current chairman, Sam Gafford, at 53

Anawamscutt Drive, Bristol RI 02809.

Bull dada #3 available for \$1.50 from S.E. Mills, P.O. Box 18679, Indianapolis, IN 46218.

Burp Boy #2 available for \$1 from Scott McClung, 218 West Apache, Norman OK 73069.

Crew of the Wanderlust #5 available for \$2 from Paul Quinn, 459 Fifth Concession Rd. E, Waterdown, Ontario, Canada L0R 2H2.

Futuro Tierra #19 available for 50 cents from Tony Lorenz, 8708 Friendship Ct., Tampa FL 33634.

Losin' Yer Head #1 & #2 available for 50 cents each from Joe Meyer, 306 W. 94th St. Room #235, New York NY 10025.

Mister Mid-Nite #8 available for 50 cents from Bob Elinskas, 1805 Girard St., Utica NY 13501.

Natas #1 available for 50 cents from Michael Hegg, 37167 Panton Terrace #2012, Fremont CA 94536.

Slum-Dog #7 available for 50 cents from Peter Sandmark, 4358 Beaconsfield, Montreal, Ontrario, Canada, H4A 2H6.

Small Press Report #9 available for \$2 from Avalon Publications, 830 Western Ave. #3068, Monroe, MI 48161.

Tetragrammaton Fragments (The Official UFO newsletter) \$2 for sample copy from Sam Gafford.

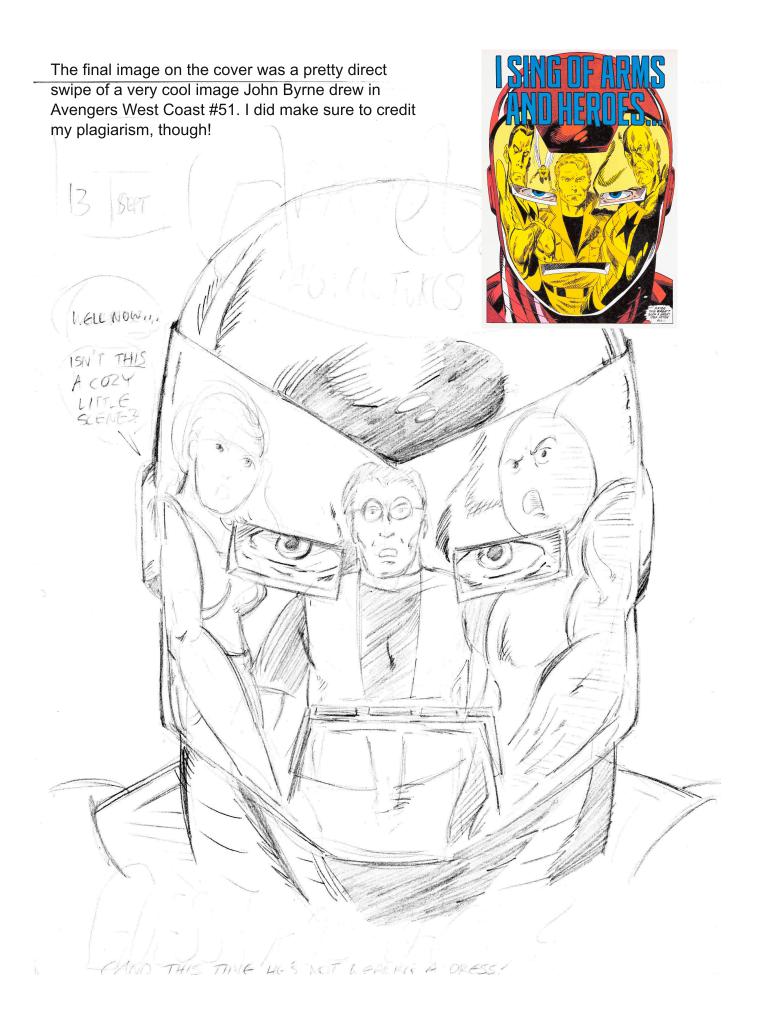
The UFO Catalog #1 FREE from Sam Gafford.



SPECIAL 2020 BONUS SECTION

This was one of the most "fun" issues of Amoeba Adventures and a joy to draw. I spent a while trying to come up with cover ideas, such as the below draft.





More of my incredibly professional plot notes.

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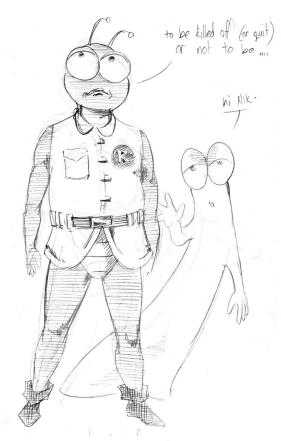
Resoul on the run.

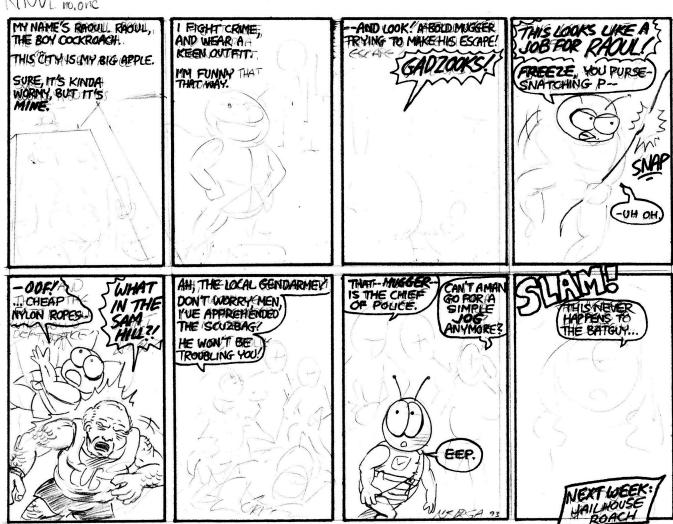
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One thing about #13 leaves me with a rather bad taste decades on. I'd gotten a bit tired of Raoul the Boy Cockroach, who was funny but not much of a character. So I wrote him (and Ninja Ant's unfunny brother Spunky Ant) out of the picture in #13. However, it didn't really hit me that I did so by leaving two CHILDREN in a PRISON with the final image of them being theatened by a HULKING NEO-NAZI. Egad. That was it for Raoul, forever. Ninja Ant never mentioned his baby brother again. Dark.

So, to be clear, Raoul and Spunky escaped prison between pages 6 and 7 and fled to Belgium where they lived happily ever after. OK? OK.

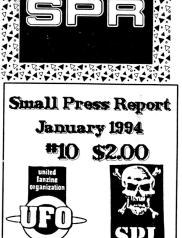
Below, a rough draft of a Raoul newspaper cartoon I never finished. At right, Max Ink draws Raoul waxing poetic over his fate.

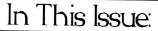




A cover I did for a short-lived reviewzine, Small Press Report.

I also need to clear the air on a certain issue. Some people thought Prometheus had a somewhat, um, phallic design. Honestly, I never really saw it and thought sometimes it was just people reading a bit much into things. However, with this cover, in retrospect the "Golden Protoplasm Award" and the way Pro is holding it is WAY too... um, suggestive. Whoops. Unintended, I swear.







Who are our new cartoonist and columnist? See Pages 5 & 7.



What does the Angel of Death have up his sleeve in this issue? Find out on Page 10.

News & Reviews

The lastest on the Small Press League as their roster swells to seventeen members with more still trying to join.

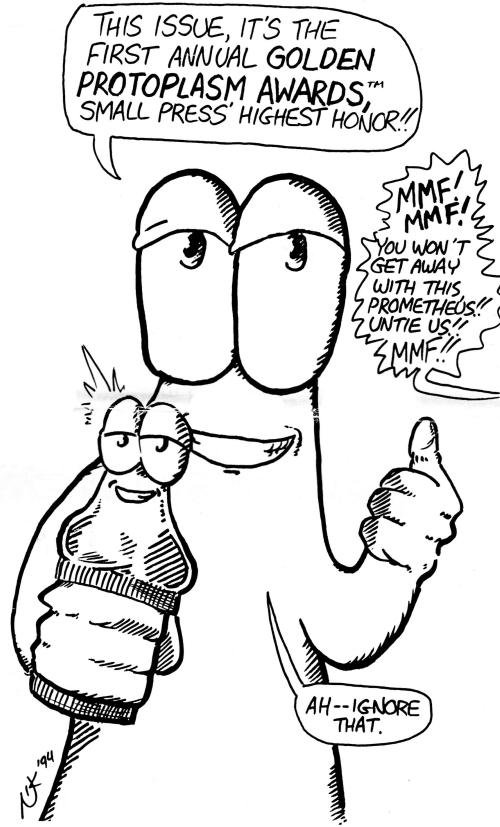
The UFO Jam Comic is out featuring the talents of past and present UFO members.

Also news from Steve Shipley,

David Cushman, Snail Pace Studios, Rick Bradford, and Firebird Press. Letters from some pressers like J. Kevin, William Dockery and more. Page

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KYOKO IN NINJA ANT DIRGH NIK DIRGH



In my best Stan Lee hypemaster fashion, I put out occasional newsletters and the like to boost Amoeba Adventures' profile. Here's one of them.

Protoplasm Propaganda

NO. 2

January 1994



It's night life Spongopolis-style in Amoeba Adventures #13

Now available from Protoplasm Press is the epic Amoeba Adventures #13, featuring the long-awaited return of Herr Heinous. Ninja Ant and Spif take Kyoko and Dawn on what turns out to be a disastrous double date at the ultra-classy Chez Sponge restaurant. The problems begin when the after-dinner entertainment is provided by one of the team's oldest and most lunatic foes. It gets worse from there. "Alive" is written and drawn by Nik Dirga (on my own for the first time since #8!), and marks a return to the somewhat goofier Amoeba tales of yore. \$1 ppd.

Jip: Book One coming in January '94

Meet a whole new cast of characters in "Jip"! Reprinted from the popular daily comic strip I began this semester for *The Daily Mississippian*, "Jip" is the ongoing saga of a group of wacky college students. Meet the underachiever Jip, his meathead roommate Terry, their hip friend Jay, and the beautful Karen, and the spaced-out Skeet in this collection of the first 75 strips. Also included is the first annual crossover between "Jip" and the equally-cool daily strip "Pumpkin Shirt" by Victor Lazlo! For fans of *Bloom County*, *Hepcats*, or *Doonesbury*! \$2 ppd.



Rambunny to go solo in 1994

The most popular character from Amoeba Adventures is getting his own solo series starting in summer Rambunny will be high-adventure series promises to present intelligent, suspenseful action each issue! I'll be writing this series for a rotating cast of small press' best artists and am currently looking for pencillers and inkers who'd like to donate their talents for an issue of what will be one of '94's

Coolest small press comics! Write for details and look for #1 in July or so!

ALSO COMING FROM PROTOPLASM PRESS:

Much more lies ahead in '94 for PP! I'm hoping to get back on track after a somewhat lackadaisacal '93 with more books than ever planned! My vow is to get at least through Amoeba #18 out by the end of the year, plus many other special projects! Also, look for the Amoeba character to make some guest appearances in other fine small press titles... I've scripted a story starring Karate Kactus to appear in Sam Gafford's Eternity #5 sometime in '94... Prometheus will make a rather odd one-page appearance in an upcoming issue of Rocco Comics' Hamster Man... Prometheus makes cover apperances on both Small Press Report #10 and Tetragrammaton Fragments #137... The famous Powerwus/Rambunny teamup will be reprinted in Jason Marcy's "Powerwus On The Road To New York" Special, coming soon... I'll provide addresses and how to get copies of these issues for those interested when they come out in AA... Oh yeah,, world-famous inker Joe Meyer will ink and letter Amoeba #15!

Thanks again to everyone for their support and good advice in '93! Hope to see you reading *Amoeba* in '94 and

the writing talents of Max Ink!
Max Ink, former artist of Dungar and a talent who

Amoeba Adventures #14 to feature

Max Ink, former artist of *Dungar* and a talent who drew raves for his work on previous Protoplasm Press books like *Dr. Phlegm* and *Amoeba Adventures* #11, will take charge of both the art and the writing of *Amoeba* #14, a very special issue. An old friend of Spif's reappears, and ends up drawing Prometheus, Karate Kactus, and Dawn deeper and deeper into her life. What is her secret, and will this

be the one time the guys find out there are some villains that just can't be fought? "Evidence of our Confusion" is a special 40-page issue coming in February.







PROTOPLASM PRESS, c/o Nik Dirga, P.O. Box 2230, University MS, 38677-2230.