



CONTACTING THE WORLDS OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS

Dave Stevens, Russ Manning Assistant, Passes

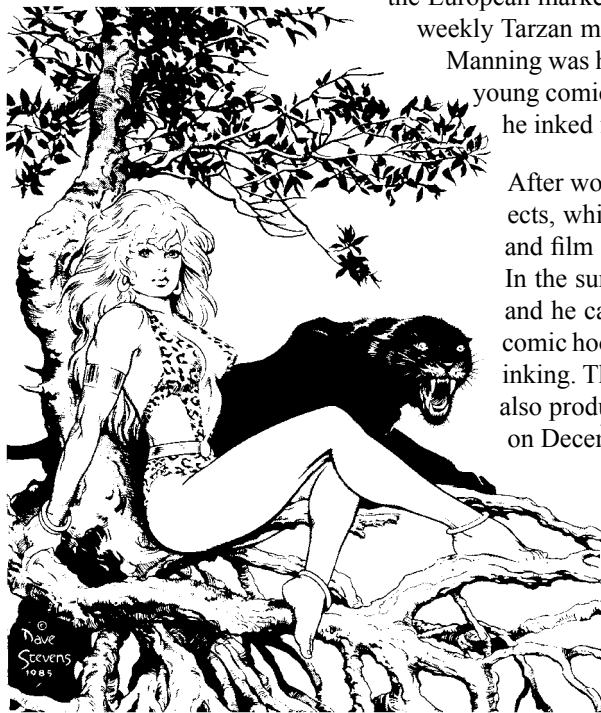
Dave Stevens passed away on March 10, 2008 after a long struggle with cancer. Stevens was born on July 29, 1955 in Lynwood, California. Later, as Dave put it, "I grew up in the wilds of Idaho and Oregon." He graduated from high school in Portland, Oregon, after which he attended San Diego City College for two years and took miscellaneous art classes. In 1971 he discovered the art of Reed Crandall, thinking: "Man, this guy must be my surrogate father!"

He met Russ Manning in 1974 when he and a few other fans visited Russ at home. He showed Russ his portfolio, which Russ liked but felt that Dave's work was more suited for the super-hero field. A year later Russ told an acquaintance that he needed an assistant and Dave Stevens was recommended. Russ remembered Dave but still thought he was unsuited for Tarzan. Upon hearing of his recommendation and Russ' comments, Dave wrote Russ a letter, enclosing drawings of Tarzan and an ape. Russ liked the drawings and called Dave's home to ask him to come to work for him. At twenty years of age Dave Stevens began working for Russ on the Sunday Tarzan page. Dave continued to work as Russ Manning's assistant for about a year and a half: 1975 - 1976, and part of 1977.

According to Dave, he did "inking and partial penciling. Anything that (Russ) didn't have time to do. Everything but Tarzan. I didn't really do Tarzan until he trusted me, because I was not real solid at penciling."

At about the same time, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc. decided that they would create their own comic book studio to produce Tarzan and Korak comic stories for

the European market with David Kaye's Byblos Productions of London producing England's first weekly Tarzan magazine featuring original stories rather than American newspaper strips. Russ Manning was hired to edit, write and draw some of these new comics and he also hired several young comic book artists to pencil and ink stories. Dave Stevens was among this group and he inked four of these and, with others, assisted on inking two.



After working with Russ Manning, Dave Stevens floated around taking on various projects, which included drawing storyboards for *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, animation work, and film art. By this time Russ Manning had been drawing *Star Wars* since early 1979. In the summer of 1981, Russ' own struggle with cancer caused him to leave *Star Wars* and he called in Rick Hoberg, another artist who had worked on the ERB, Inc. foreign comic hooks, and Dave Stevens to work on *Star Wars*, with Hoberg penciling and Stevens inking. They drew two weeks of the daily strip from July 14 through July 26, 1980. They also produced one *Star Wars* Sunday page: August 3, 1980. Russ Manning passed away on December 1, 1981.

By this time Stevens became enamored of the 1930s, as well as the action movie serials of that decade. Using that era as a springboard, in 1982 Dave Stevens created his only memorable comic book character: *The Rocketeer*; which was purchased by Walt Disney as a live action film, released in 1991. After this, Stevens began making a name for himself producing numerous pinup comic book covers and illustrations, achieving fame for his fantastically beautiful illustrations of the feminine form. Stevens single-handedly revived interest in

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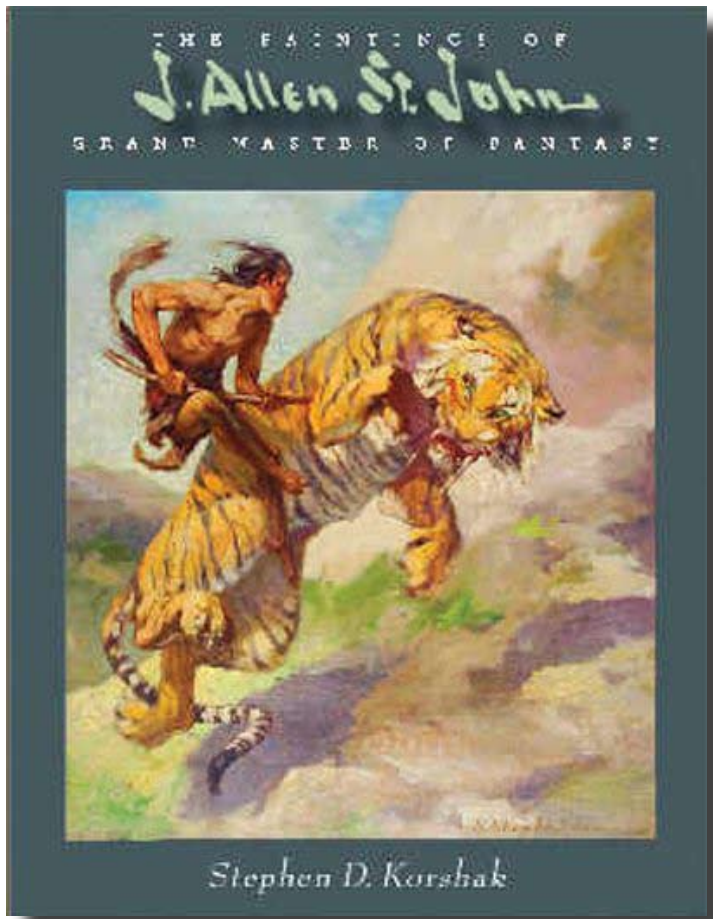
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The Paintings of J. Allen St. John Grand Master of Fantasy

by Stephen D. Korshak & J. David Spurlock

This, Vanguard's second volume devoted to the work of J. Allen St. John concentrates on the artist's full-color fantasy, science-fiction and adventure paintings for novels and pulp magazines for famous authors, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Jack Williamson, Robert E. Howard and more. St. John is the original grand master illustrator of Tarzan, John Carter of Mars (now in major motion picture development by Pixar), and others. His illustrations inspired generations of later fantastic artists including Roy G. Krenkel, Jeffrey Jones and Frank Frazetta. St. John will always be recognized as the first, and most important illustrator of Burroughs' writings and this book is produced with the full endorsement and cooperation of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc. Also featured are essays by renowned science-fiction author Jack Williamson, Danton Burroughs, Lin Carter, and illustrators Vincent Di Fate, and Frank Frazetta.

St. John began his career by studying the old masters in the museums of Paris around 1880. Returning to America, his notoriety among Fine Art enthusiasts developed with recognition from the Society of American Artists and Metropolitan magazine in 1889. The artist went on to become a professor of drawing and painting at both the American Academy of Art and the Chicago Art Institute, but his greatest notoriety came as he ventured into the colorful world of pulp magazine and adventure book illustration. For the readers of fantasy, science fiction and adventure, St. John surpassed the work of his famous contemporaries Frank Schoonover, James Montgomery Flagg, and N. C. Wyeth, and led the way for future masters, including Roy G. Krenkel, the Brothers Hildebrandt, and Frank Frazetta.



Introduction By Lin Carter, Afterword By Frank Frazetta
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(continued from front)

1950s erotic model Bettie Page, using her likeness in many of his illustrations as well as basing his heroine in *The Racketeer* on her.

In the 1980s, Dave shared a studio with Bill Stout and Richard Hescoc, both Edgar Rice Burroughs enthusiasts: Bill Stout worked as Russ Manning's assistant on the Tarzan newspaper strip 1970- 1973, as well as producing numerous Burroughs inspired illustrations for his yearly series of sketch-books, and Richard Hescoc painted the covers for the Venus series in 1991.

It is a sad coincidence that Dave Stevens and Russ Manning both succumbed to cancer at the age of 52.

I never had the pleasure of meeting Dave Stevens, but I followed his career and picked up magazines containing his work whenever I found them. His work will be missed by his fans — although he never worried about whether or not his fans liked what he produced: it was only important if he, himself, liked it and was satisfied with it. His many friends will find that his absence has left a hole in their world, one that will be hard to fill. -- **Robert R. Barrett**