



CONTACTING THE WORLDS OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS

Renowned Artist Frank Frazetta Dies at 82 (9 February 1928 – 10 May 2010)



Iconic Frazetta self-portrait (1962).

By the time of his death last month due to complications after a stroke, Frank Frazetta had earned a worldwide reputation as a unique and influential talent. It was in the 1960s that he emerged as a significant influence on popular culture, notably science fiction and fantasy, and on generations of new artists through the power of his dynamic art. Yet it was book illustrations of the work of two writers from the first half of the 20th century – Edgar Rice Burroughs and Robert E. Howard – that helped Frazetta surge in the public consciousness.

Frazetta's first major interpretations of ERB were his ink and brush illustrations for the Canaveral Press hardcover editions of *Tarzan at the Earth's Core* (1962) and *Tarzan and the Castaways* (1965) and cover paintings for the early Ace Books paperbacks, starting in 1962 with *Tarzan at the Earth's Core*. New covers for Ace Books paperbacks into the early 1970s and his covers and interiors for the Science Fiction Book Club Nelson Doubleday hardcover editions, beginning with *A Princess of Mars* in 1970, heralded a second wave of Burroughs-inspired art. This work continues to be reprinted today and was a highlight of art on display at the Frazetta art museum.

In later life, Frazetta was plagued by a variety of health problems, beginning with a thyroid condition that went untreated for many years. In the 2000s, a series of strokes impaired Frazetta's manual dexterity to such a degree that he switched to drawing and painting with his left hand. His mastery of multiple media in a style that is instantly recognizable assures that Frazetta will remain in high standing as a popular culture icon in his own right.



There have been many tributes of Frazetta since his death, but the 26 May 2010 editorial by Paul Akers in *The Free Lance-Star* (Fredericksburg, VA) best captures the views of many ERB fans. It is reprinted here with permission. This is followed by the announcement in the *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA) of a public memorial of Frank Frazetta and his wife Ellie on the first anniversary of her passing. And this is posted at the Frank Frazetta Museum website (<http://frankfrazettamuseum.com/>): "Throughout 2010, Frank Frazetta's original art work will be heading on tour, giving fans the opportunity to view them in person. Check back for updates on gallery display locations and regional exhibition dates."



Frazetta Had It Covered

by Paul Akers

You can't judge a book by its cover – but, by the gods of Amtor, you can judge a cover by its cover. And the verdict on fantasy/sci-fi illustrator Frank Frazetta's was always: zow-wee!

Llana of Gathol. Barsoom. Conan the Cimmerian. Pellucidar. Tarzan. Characters this exotic and places this unearthly demanded a special artistic talent to conjure them on the paperboard and dust jackets of the novels they animated, and Mr. Frazetta had it. Even as John Wayne could perform in Monument Valley without being swallowed by it, Mr. Frazetta could match the literary masters of wild imagination with brush-and-ink marvels of his own.



Frank Frazetta in the mid-1960s (photo from the Frazetta family).

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Edgar Rice Burroughs could describe a Martian monster, Robert E. Howard a barbarous warrior. But the mind craves the visual, and Mr. Frazetta could “hydrate” dry ink on a page with wet pigments to stunning effect. His cold-eyed monsters crouched menacingly, an eye-blink from pouncing. His warriors, with muscles rippling and swords reddened, knew no fear. And Frazetta’s women. . . . Beautiful, voluptuous, and usually wearing about enough clothing to wad a shotgun shell, they looked worth fighting all the demons of Hades for.

When Mr. Frazetta was 2, in Brooklyn, his grandmother gave him a penny for every picture he drew. Art teachers had little to teach him. At 15 he broke into comic books, then daily strips. But it was in the ’60s that he found his niche, drawing the covers of the paperback adventures of Conan, John Carter of Mars, and other fantastic heroes. His “penny per” pay scale rose marginally. [But by] 2009, Mr. Frazetta’s “Conan the Conqueror” painting fetched \$1 million.

Mr. Frazetta was a kind of supernatural creature himself – a wraith riding a circuit covering infinity, hauling his pallet from Hell to Valhalla, one day beneath the hurtling moons of Mars, the next in the fleshly courts of a dead civilization. He died this month at 82. Wonder what an angel charges to pose.



Frazetta in 1994 (photo by David W Coulter/AP).



(29 May 2010)

On July 17, the artist’s son, Bill Frazetta, will host a public tribute to his father and mother [Ellie Frazetta died on 17 July 2009 after a year-long struggle with cancer]. It’s a celebration of “dad’s art and their life,” said Bill’s sister, Heidi Grabin. The tribute will be held on the third floor of Frazetta’s Fantasy Costumes at 186 S. Courtland St. in East Stroudsburg, PA. Guests will be asked for a \$10 donation on behalf of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. [The Frank Frazetta Museum website at <http://frankfrazettamuseum.com/> notes these additional details: the tribute will be held 1-6 pm, there will be a formal dress code, and the contact phone number is (570) 421-9054.]

Dark Horse Announces a Unique Product Featuring Tarzan Art

GelaSkins® are removable vinyl covers to protect and customize portable devices such as laptop computers, iPods, and cell phones like the iPhone and BlackBerry. They are made of an easy-on, easy-off 3M adhesive with a durable anti-scratch, anti-UV coating. Since they feature photo-quality graphics, they are dubbed personalized “mobile art” by their manufacturer. Dark Horse has partnered with GelaSkins since 2009, offering images from their wide stable of properties. Dark Horse has just announced that later this year a “Tarzan: Lost Adventure” image (by Dean Williams) will be available for application to 13” and 15” laptops and iPhones, and a “Tarzan of the Apes” image (by Mark Schultz) for iPhones. Since their pre-order announcements mention the “Gridley Wave,” it seems appropriate to note these new products.



Tarzan: Lost Adventure 13” and 15” Laptop, iPhone; Tarzan of the Apes iPhone

Dark Horse is proud to collaborate with GelaSkins to bring our best designs to their line of protective and decorative skins for laptops and phones.

We’ve unfortunately overlooked the “Gridley Wave” as a device format for these colorful and useful new items, but you can sure apply Edgar Rice Burroughs’ Tarzan to your iPhone or laptop.



We have delved into the art archive and selected two images of the lord of the apes. Let the world know that you’re an aficionado of the finest in fantastic adventure and art by wearing Tarzan on your modern communication tools.

Publication Date: September 08, 2010

Price: \$29.95 for protective Gelaslins laptop cover, \$14.95 for protective iPhone skin
Pre-order at [Things From Another World, TFAW.com](http://ThingsFromAnotherWorld.com)

Dear Fellow Members,

This is my first issue as editor of *The Gridley Wave*, and I wish to thank George McWhorter, who had resurrected and edited both *The Burroughs Bulletin* and *The Gridley Wave* for more than 20 years, for his dedicated service. But do not think that George is retiring. He now serves as our Editor Emeritus, and he remains a tenured professor at the University of Louisville and the curator of not only the Edgar Rice Burroughs Memorial Collection at the university, but also their Isak Dinesen and Arthur Rackham Collections.

If any member has items of interest to submit for future issues, I encourage you to send them to me. My address and e-mail are posted on the reverse. Don’t forget our webpage at www.BurroughsBibliophiles.com, and consider becoming a fan of our new Burroughs Bibliophiles Facebook page.

Sincerely, Henry G. Franke III