

“The Jones God”

It was at a New York Convention back in the early '90s that I met the one and only Jeffrey Jones. The APA had done an issue dedicated to The Studio and I centered my article on Jones. It was an attempt to explain my love of his artwork that I feverishly collected back when finding a copy of *witzend* #6 was the most important thing in my funny-book world. One time, believe it or not, a friend I knew tried to sell me a set of xeroxes of the story Jeff did called “Alien” from that *witzend* issue. It was going to be about 60 cents to get this bootleg but I decided against it and ordered my own copy for a buck and a half.

I hunted down everything I could find that Jeff did. Those two cool Skywald *Psycho* issues; *Abyss* was a must with that amazing spaceman story. And I purchased a ton of paperbacks just for the cover; never read a one of those damn things but if it had a Jones cover, well it was mine. Having all these book books around made everyone think I was a deep thinker, a heavy reader, but it was all because of Jeff and Frank Frazetta. *Heavy Metal* was a magazine I purchased just for the Jones art. *National Lampoon* was another purchase, not just for the Jones but also for all the other mind-bending stuff. And those brilliant stories for Warren that totally challenged me at every turn.

How could this guy do so much with a thin line and huge monster blacks? How can a guy that draws like this be in the same book as Wally Wood and Al Williamson? But I knew he was an original and a very solid storyteller. And when he began to paint, he knocked everyone out. I think Jeff is the finest painter of his generation. He is a great student and his work showed me the way to Pyle and Wyeth.

Anyway back to New York, as I walked down an aisle, there was the Legend, Jeff Jones sitting at a table talking to some fan. I walked up and introduced myself and the coolest thing happened. Jeff recognized my name from the APA article I wrote about his work and he thanked me for the kind words!

Get this, *the* Jeff Jones thanked me!

He liked the phrasing when I said his drawings were like “sculpting paper.” Jeff said he never thought of it like that and he thought I was right. My mind was racing thinking that Jeff Jones talked to me. Maybe people do read this stuff after all.

(Hey Jeff, if you want to hear a bunch of stuff you never thought of, hang around and I promise you will hear a lot of goofy stuff if you are near me).

Many other times I ran into Jeff at other shows (in fact he was a guest at two of mine!). At another New York con Jeff had set up with a bunch of paintings and drawings. I just stood there slack-jawed looking at all this brilliant art. Right behind Jeff was a comic story page that I recognized immediately that was “The Spirit Of 76” from *Spasm!*. It was beautiful. Much better than when it was published.

As I looked at this Bret Blevins walked up and said, “If you pass on that, I am buying it.”

That kind of made up my mind but four minutes later Al Williamson walked up behind me and said, “If you pass on that one, I am buying it.”

So I asked how much was the whole story. Jeff said it was \$400 dollars (\$100 a page)! And on the following pages, you folks can see the original scans in full color for the first time!

There are a lot of great Jones stories I could pass on but one I need to tell:

At the Philly con back about 1991 or '92, I was sitting at a table with George Pratt. About an hour later *the* Jeff Jones comes walking by. George and I could not resist and we began to bow with our hands over our heads in worship and began to chant, “Jones God, the Jones God.”

Jeff began laughing so hard it looked like he was caving into himself. Then Jeff came around the table and sat down and talked with us for about an hour.

So now you know where “the Jones God” came from.

The sex change floored me. I wonder how his family feels about turning a grand*father* to a grand*mother*? But what I think about that is really not very important. The point is, it is Jeff's life not mine. And if this makes him feel happy and productive as a person, well, that is fine with me.

So all the best to JC.

Next time: Parts Unknown Convention #4

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SPIRIT OF '76



I CANNOT MOVE. I FEEL THAT I SHOULD, AND THERE ARE THESE VINES AND THINGS GROWING OVER ME.

WHAT AM I ?



I DO REMEMBER SOMETHING... I REMEMBER REMEMBERING.

AND THE WIND WHISPERED TO HIM THE ANSWER AND HE STRAINED TO HEAR. A MILLION MILLION BACKS OF A MILLION MILLION LEAVES.

TO JOHN HITCHCOCK - JEFF SONGER



TO JOHN WITCHCLOCK - Jeff Jones



TO JOHN BITCHCOCK - JEFF SONG

X



TO JOHN BITCHCOCK - XFF SONGS