

cereal:geek[®]

animation of the eighties



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editorial

Issue eleven of **cereal:geek** is here! As I type this we are approaching the end of 2013 (yes, I'm still continuing to fool the history books by backdating the covers), so by the time you hold this issue in your hands it will almost definitely be early 2014.

Pre-orders dwindled towards the end of 2013, which I should have foreseen. People are used to **cereal:geek** appearing rather sporadically. So for eight new issues to appear at once (and for me to ask people to pre-order them all) was a little too much to ask. However, pre-orders are close to being completed on the remaining issues, and as soon as an each issue reaches its target it will be printed. Trust me, there's so much to look forward to with the upcoming issues of **cereal:geek**.

I don't usually talk about life outside of **cereal:geek**, but the fourth quarter of 2013 was a little bit intense with me now fronting the official *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* YouTube channel for Classic Media. This isn't me bragging. This is me simply explaining that I have even more on my plate than before. I'm hoping that in some bizarre way the (possible) success of the channel will reflect positively on **cereal:geek**! As always the more this magazine sells the brighter the future looks.

The theme of this particular issue is **comics**, a theme not seen since issues five and six of the magazine. As with the previous issues the content of issue eleven heavily examines both the DC and Marvel comic book tie-ins during the eighties. Given that there is a wealth of material to discuss on this particular theme do not be surprised if a future issue of the magazine once again tackles the subject matter. For example, this magazine has yet to tackle the incredibly-powerful *C.O.P.S.* comic book, and the long-running UK *Masters of the Universe* comic!

As always I shall end this editorial on a positive note! If all goes to plan then all the pre-ordered issues will be available to purchase in the early part of 2014. And, depending on how sales of the magazine are fairing, I will look into publishing issues seventeen and eighteen. My dream is to get **cereal:geek** to issue twenty. Imagine that! Twenty issues of **cereal:geek**. Dare I say I'd be rather proud of myself and everyone that has contributed to this magazine. But let's not jump the gun here! Let's look at 2014 as the year when there were many issues of **cereal:geek** released. What a year!

Now, stop reading my rambling, and go enjoy everything that this issue has to offer.

James "Busta Toons" Eatock



The cover of **cereal:geek** issue eleven was illustrated by Jose Jaro.

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If you have any **comments**, or if you would like to **contribute** the next issue please send an email to:
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FROM THE EIGHTIES

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OL' BLUE EARS

Captain America has recently spoken about his appearance in a recent *Spider-Man* cartoon in which his ears were blue. "Yeah, I'm not quite sure what happened there", remarked Captain America. "I'm pretty sure Marvel Productions would've sent the Japanese

animation studio an image of me with flesh colored ears. But when all's said and done, at least Spidey and I stopped the machinations of the Red Skull!" Spider-Man was unavailable for comment after the Daily Bugle branded him a traitor. Again.

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CLAW CAPTURED!



Last night Metro City was at the forefront of worldwide news when the villain known as Dr. Claw, the head of the organization known as M.A.D., was captured by Inspector Gadget, possibly making the most important arrest of his career. Shockingly, Dr. Claw was revealed to be none other than Chief Quimby, Metro City's chief of police, and Inspector Gadget's boss. Inspector Gadget was his normal confident self stating to the press, "I have suspected for quite some time that Chief Quimby was acting as a double agent.

He would appear in the strangest of places, and often disappear in a cloud of smoke shortly after giving me my mission details." Gadget continued, "I believe that the missions I have been sent on over the years have been nothing but diversions from the real crimes occurring in Metro City." Chief Quimby, "Inspector Gadget bungled a sting operation we had in place! Our plan was to capture one of Dr. Claw's most trusted allies, but due to a sequence of unfortunate events, Gadget came bounding through the door on his roller-skates and jumped to the conclusion that I was Dr. Claw!" When asked of his chance to prove himself innocent, Quimby remarked, "When the jury looks into the history of Gadget's solved crimes they will notice a certain pattern; a pattern of ineptitude and lucky coincidences. I have no doubt that I will be free within weeks." This is not the first time that Gadget's actions have been called into question. Over the years he has often made the front pages of a variety of newspapers for his, at times, questionable crime-solving techniques. For years rumors that his niece, Penny, and her dog Brain, were the real heroes have remained unproven. In spite all of this Gadget has remained a hero to the people of Metro City, even more so after last night's arrest.

Continued on Page Three

GHOULING OUT OF BUSINESS

Jake Kong, Eddie Spenser and Tracy, controversially known as The Original Ghostbusters have announced dramatic spending cuts in their forthcoming business plan. "Ghostbusting has never been a profitable exercise, and I think that's why our fathers got out as early as they could," Mr. Kong was quoted as saying. Mr. Kong explained that the bulk of their money goes on the running costs of a device in their basement designed for holding the captured ghosts. This remark has confused many in the spiritual world as they are known for eliminating the spirits on sight. Many critics have said that all of the money the Ghostbusters reap is immediately pushed back into advertising, as they attempt to keep themselves in the public eye. Mr. Spenser was more forthcoming in his comments, "Those Real Ghostbusters guys have really done a number on us. It's not like we're incompetent Ghostbusters, but no one seems to have faith when two guys and a gorilla appear at their front door."

by James Eatock - colors by Andrew Cramer

HEADMASTERED

Numerous cast members of *The Transformers* are at a loss for words due to their exclusion from the surprising new series featuring the robots in disguise titled *Headmasters*, exclusive to Japan. "I can understand why Brawn isn't in the series, but me, I didn't even die in the movie", remarked Bumblebee. He continued, "Okay, so the Goldbug thing kind of sucked in the later episodes of the original series, but I'm due for an appearance in this Japanese series." Some Transformers are less than willing to appear in the new series. Autobot Blaster had this to say, "Yeah, I've heard that some of the characters have been renamed. That said, I doubt they'll rename me. After all, Blaster is too cool a name to change. Maybe they'll give me a human name", he laughed.

THE DESIRED EPISODE

by Ross May - illustration by Oscar Celestini



Aside from the size of the firehouse's basement and the color of Egon's hair, *The Real Ghostbusters* stayed largely faithful to the movie it was based on. The only remaining significant disparity is the issue of the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man.

The movie leads viewers to think that the extra-dimensional destroyer Gozer takes on new forms, and Ray Stantz accidentally chose the mascot of a brand of marshmallows. At the end of the film the Marshmallow Man is destroyed and Gozer is banished back to its own dimension. It's never explained in the cartoon series why Mr. Stay Puft exists again, is generally friendly, and seems to be an entirely different entity than Gozer.



"Now is the time to Stay Puft"

A group of Boy Scouts and their Scout Leader are camping outside of New York City. They tell ghost stories by the crackling campfire when suddenly a goopy white monster barges into their camp and scares them off! The ramshackle monster does not seem pleased that they were roasting marshmallows.

The Scout Leader calls the Ghostbusters, who go out to the site to investigate. The monster has left, but Egon finds samples of marshmallow residue with high PKE (psychokinetic energy) readings. Peter figures this is no big deal, but Egon reminds him that in the weeks following their fight with Gozer they have been trying to collect all the remains of the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man and put it into the Containment Unit. While it no longer hosts Gozer it still contains much of the Destructor's awesome power and therefore remains a danger.

The next day the Ghostbusters and Slimer go about their daily tasks. Unseen by them, the marshmallow menace sneaks into the firehouse, goes down to the basement and unlocks the Containment Unit! There is an explosion of marshmallow fluff that quickly flies all over New York. Winston is able to shut down the Containment Unit before any actual ghosts escape.

Egon monitors PKE readings, which are spiking in an industrial district of the city. The Ghostbusters and Slimer head there and find the source of the energy inside an old, unusually designed warehouse. Ray is delighted by the architecture and irregular beams running across the ceiling. He wonders aloud who could have designed the place. Winston answers him when he discovers a plaque with Ivo Shandor's name on it, the same mad architect who designed the building that allowed Gozer to traverse dimensions!

Peter finds mounds of pulsating marshmallow. Hurriedly, the Ghostbusters fire at it but they are too late. The Stay Puft Marshmallow Man reforms and bursts through the roof of the warehouse! The guys watch helplessly as it lumbers away towards the heart of New York City.

The guys give chase in Ecto-1. For Peter's benefit, Egon explains what is going on. Just as Dana Barrett's building brought Gozer to Earth, the warehouse was built to refocus the destructor's ectoplasmic essence if it was harmed. Mr. Stay Puft is back and as dangerous as before, but judging by readings Egon thinks the oversized creature's mind is a blank slate and devoid of Gozer's spirit.

Ray and Winston hop into the gyrocopter Ecto-2 and take to the skies. Egon believes there are only two ways to stop the Marshmallow Man before great harm befalls the city: to either have it stand perfectly still for over a minute and use multiple traps, or for all the guys to cross their proton streams again, possibly destroying themselves and blocks of the city in the process.

Slimer is sent to distract the big guy. Slimer makes annoying sounds and faces, and the Marshmallow Man swats at him. Slimer darts around and slimes the giant, who says, "That tickles!" in a booming voice. He says Slimer is funny. The Ghostbusters have not noticed this change in attitude and blast Mr. Stay Puft, who becomes enraged and attacks them. Ecto-1 and Ecto-2 desperately avoid the big guy, prompting Egon to inform his colleagues that they have no option but to cross the streams once more.

Slimer flies to Ecto-2 and tells Ray they should not fire and that Mr. Stay Puft is not really bad. This seems risky to the Ghostbusters, but they listen to him; although Peter is incredibly apprehensive of taking advice from the little green ghost. Slimer flies back to the Marshmallow Man and asks him in his gibbering manner to stay still. Much to the surprise of the Ghostbusters Mr. Stay Puft complies and calms down.

Ecto-2 lands, and Ray has Slimer relay a message to Mr. Stay Puft. He is too big for New York, but if he will hold still for a minute they can take him to a place for ghosts. Slimer gives the big guy a hug and says a tearful goodbye, and the Marshmallow Man calls Slimer his friend. The Ghostbusters set out a dozen interconnected ghost traps and contain the giant.

Later at the firehouse, Slimer is still sad. Egon invites him to come to the basement and look through a viewer next to the containment unit. Inside, Slimer sees the Marshmallow Man giggling to himself while dozens of smaller, mean ghosts cower in fear over him. He does not have many friends inside, but that doesn't seem to bother Mr. Stay Puft. He winks at the view screen, knowing he'll have a fine after-life, and might even come out occasionally to play with his friend Slimer.

VIC DAL CHELE:

THE FIRST LEGITIMATE HUMAN TO MEET A TRANSFORMER!

Back in the late nineties I became good friends with Filimation storyboard artist and writer Robert Lamb, thanks largely in part to the existence of The He-Man and She-Ra Episode Review Website which I operated with Zadoc Angell. Prompted by our glowing review of two of his episodes Robert contacted us and began sharing lots of behind the scenes information.

In those early informative years, Robert was kind enough to explain in great detail just how much he enjoyed his experience working at Filimation, especially in the storyboard department. He shared some photos from that time, in which many of the male Filimation staff sported mustaches.

I remember seeing a photo of storyboard artist Vic Dal Chele, whose name I had seen pop up during the end credits on many a cartoon of the eighties such as, *He-Man*, *Fat Albert*, *She-Ra*, *G.I. Joe*, *The Transformers*, *MASK*, *Kissyfur*, *The Real Ghostbusters*, *C.O.P.S.*, and many more. I always found it nice to put a face to a name, especially as it was incredibly hard to do so back in those early days of the Internet. Vic Dal Chele had been one of Robert's closest friends at Filimation, and the best man at his wedding. Needless to say Robert had a lot of nice things to say about Vic.



I've always been a big fan of the first season of *The Transformers*. As a child I watched the show debut in the UK (in daily five minute chunks) on an early morning children's TV show fronted by Roland Rat. I recorded each and every episode and watched them over and over again until I knew all the dialogue.

One scene that I always enjoyed for its high drama featured two men discovering the remains of a power plant, which unbeknownst to them had been destroyed for raw materials by the Decepticons. Ever since being shown a photo of Vic Dal Chele I would always be reminded of him during this scene, as one of the men, Joe, bears a striking resemblance to him.

Having met Vic in 2012, and spoken to him a few times since, it turns out that the character model of Joe is indeed based on him! Character designer and storyboard artist Floro Dery decided to base the incidental character designs on his fellow artists!



Not only is Vic's character voiced by Peter Cullen (the voice of Optimus Prime), but he is also one of the first two men in the animated series to meet a Transformer! That's a pretty good thing to put on your curriculum vitae if you ask me!

WHAT BECAME OF... *Peter Venkman?*

by James Eatock
illustration by Pedro Figue



Throughout his life, Peter Venkman has not only proven to have a wonderful way with words, but he has also demonstrated a confidence and charm (and a degree of self-deprecating humor) that has won over the harshest of critics. It was his persuasive tone that convinced fellow university students Raymond Stantz and Egon Spengler to band together and form the paranormal exterminators known as the Ghostbusters. Having been the individual that instigated the idea of capturing ghosts as a business, it was only a matter of time before Peter Venkman moved on and left the group.

His departure came as no surprise to his fellow Ghostbusters. Peter had always believed that, as a brand, the Ghostbusters could make infinitely more money outside of the disposal of spirits. And he was right. Peter slowly turned his attention away from the physical side of ghostbusting and began to engage in a plethora of meetings with a variety of companies. Within the space of a year Peter was able to transform the Ghostbusters into one of the most successful brands of all time! Movies, cartoons, comic books, action figures, and clothing were just a few of the things to sport the Ghostbusters logo.

In short, Peter Venkman transformed he and his fellow Ghostbusters into multi-millionaires. That said, both Stantz and Spengler continue to bust ghosts out of a twisted love for all things supernatural.

These days Peter prefers to relax in his palatial Malibu residence, watch his supermodel wife swim lengths of their pool, and, every once in a while, watch the Ghostbusters movies. Though the casting of Bill Murray still puzzles him.

At times, *The Real Ghostbusters* ventured away from the supernatural aspect of the series. In the episode "Venk-Man!" Peter Venkman gains superhuman abilities (and a ridiculous amount of muscle) after exposure to one of Egon Spengler's experimental rays. Adopting the name Venk-Man he aids his fellow Ghostbusters in the capturing of ghosts. Naturally by the time the episode has ended Peter no longer has these super powers. A fact that we are all thankful for!



TOP TEN

CARTOON-RELATED COMIC BOOKS

During the eighties it seemed that no self-respecting animated series was without some manner of comic book associated with it. *cereal:geek* now proudly presents its definitive top ten cartoon-related comic books of the eighties.

10. BRAVESTARR

Blackthorne Publishing

Okay, so it was only two issues, published months apart, and yes, it just rehashed parts of the animated movie *BraveStarr: The Legend*, but the *BraveStarr* comic was quite interesting. It lent a new spin on the events of the movie by narrating it from the point of view of the female lead of the series Judge J.B. Plus, while it may have been in black and white, it presented in 3D, one whole dimension more than the other comics on this list (ignoring the 3D *Transformers* comics Blackthorne put out, which most right-thinking people would). A novelty, yes, but it at least keeps the resale value up, if you can find that is.

9. CAPTAIN N

Valiant

Debating towards the end of the eighties *Captain N: The Game Master* had an interesting concept that wasn't always done justice by the show itself. Enter the comic book version, which takes a slightly less goofy approach. Rights issues meant that non-Nintendo characters, like Simon Belmont and Mega Man (characters that were a part of the main cast) couldn't be used, which resulted in *Metroid's* Samus Aran being added to the cast, which works rather well. This is still very much a kid's comic though, with short, fairly simplistic (though beautifully colored) stories across its short run of issues.

8. THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

Marvel UK

Though the stories are usually quite simplistic and naïve, rarely running over more than four pages and relying on a punchline at the very end, the level of imagination shown here is worthy of the cartoon that spawned it. Its pool of creators is practically a who's who of up-and-coming British talent of the late eighties, with the likes of Andy Lanning, Mike Collins, and Dan Abnett contributing. Although there were a few memorable stories during the comic's run, most were entertaining, though not challenging. Impressively the comic is one of the longest-running on this list, notching up one-hundred and ninety-three issues!

7. MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

DC Comics/Star Comics

So many publishers, so many failed opportunities. The original mini-comics packed in with the *Masters of the Universe* toys presented a vastly different version of the mythos than the cartoon would later show. Although a nice extra, these were really a less blatant equivalent to packed in toy catalogues. DC produced an impressively-illustrated *Masters of the Universe* mini-series in 1982 that hewed more closely to the concepts in the then upcoming cartoon, but the crossovers with Superman somewhat undermined the world of Eternia. The (somewhat inevitable) Star Comics series dragged for many issues until a change in writers was made. However, even though these stories are (to this day) some of the most memorable *Masters of the Universe* stories ever written, the comic was already in the process of being cancelled. Plans were made beyond the cancelled comic that would've tied in many aspects of the live action movie.

6. THUNDERCATS

Star Comics/Marvel UK

Another product of the short-lived Star Comics, *ThunderCats* lasted twenty-four issues, a respectable number, although a fair few of these, in Star tradition, were just straight adaptations of episodes from the show. The entire series would later be reprinted alongside new material by Marvel UK, whose weekly series lasted for one-hundred and twenty-nine issues and had the distinction of being one of the few comics to not be folded into the UK *Transformers* comic at some point.

5. M.A.S.K.

DC/Fleetway

The DC run of *M.A.S.K.* consisted only of a four issue mini series, which was followed by a regular series that sadly only last nine issues. Although the artwork was often rife with errors, this series boasted an interesting take on the premise by bringing *M.A.S.K.*'s involvement with the Peaceful Nations' Alliance to the fore while also taking the blindingly logical step of having Scott Trakker kidnapped by Venom in the first issue. In the UK Fleetway's *M.A.S.K.* comic produced original material from the start, showcasing incredibly detailed artwork from artists that were (at the time) also illustrating war-based comics! After eighty issues the Fleetway *M.A.S.K.* comic was merged with another comic (a relaunch of the *Eagle*). This proved to be the kiss of death for the UK comic. Easily one of the best looking comics on the list.

4. VISIONARIES

Star Comics

By the mid-to-late eighties, getting a comic book based on a cartoon seemed almost a requirement, with Marvel setting up a short-lived imprint, Star Comics, to deal with them all (including *SilverHawks*, *Defenders of the Earth* and more). *Visionaries* was the cream of the Star crop, most likely owing to the superior nature of its source material. *Visionaries* was already a deeply textured story and comics legend Gerry Conway and Mark Bagley (late of *Ultimate Spider-Man* fame) did nothing to ruin that. Unfortunately, as with the toys and cartoon, *Visionaries* came too late to the party and was cancelled after six issues; whilst in the middle of a four part story!

3. TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Mirage Studios/Archie Comics

The original comic that launched the phenomenon was a self-published, black and white underground parody of the work of Frank Miller and other notable comics of the early eighties. How the grim and grimy work of Eastman and Laird became the day-glo family friendly animated series is a question for the ages. However, the popularity of the animated series spawned a comic book published by Archie Comics. Initially it simply adapted episodes of the cartoon. However, from issue five onwards it was handed over to members of Mirage Studios and became relatively deeper and complex, with multi-issue story arcs, which were by far both deeper and complex than the animated series. And to constantly remind people that this comic was independent of the cartoon, Raphael sported an all black bodysuit!

2. THE TRANSFORMERS

Marvel US/Marvel UK

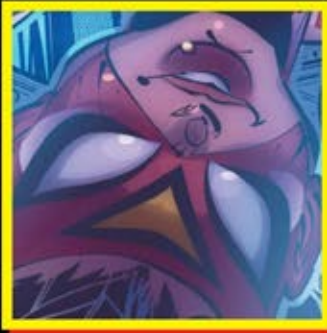
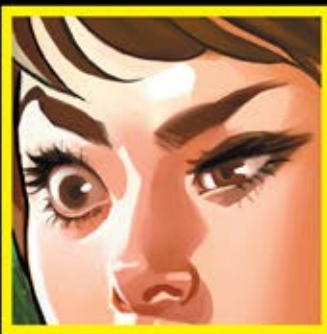
Bob Budiansky's run may have been slightly workmanlike and made decisions that, in hindsight, feel weird (Ratbat leading the Decepticons for example), but it provided a solid alternative to the cartoon, with a higher mortality rate and (some) more rounded characters. Marvel UK's *Transformers* comic has now become the stuff of legend thanks largely in part to the writing of Simon Furman, who worked to create a fully cosmic mythology for the series. The UK comic adapted all eighty issues of the US series whilst at the same time (due to the UK comic being weekly and the US comic being monthly) told its own stories which Simon Furman had to cleverly ensure did not contradict the US comic! So impressed were Marvel US with his work, that they later employed him to work on the US comic (which Marvel UK continued to adapt). The UK comic ran for a staggering three-hundred and thirty-two issues!

1. G.I. JOE

Marvel

With sub-plots that would play out over years, characters as complex as real people, an authentic military voice, and some damn fine action, Larry Hama's *G.I. Joe* comic was more like a novel being written monthly than a comic advertising a toy. It implodes under the popularity of Snake-Eyes and the increasingly abstract toyline towards the end of the series, but when it's at its best, this is one of the best comic books not only related to a cartoon, but one of the best comic books of all time!





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