

Worth the Wait...Right?

6-21-10

It's been awhile since my last update here...partly due to the fact that this web-site template is difficult to navigate and partly due to my participation on Facebook...that's been my primary venue for personal and professional news over the last few months. Anyway...there's a lot of stuff to cover so let's get going.

First and foremost is (of course) the much-awaited publication of *Cryptozoica*. The book has its own dedicated web-site, where personalized autographed copies of the book may be ordered directly from the author (that's me). Or you can order from Amazon.com or Barnes and Noble.com.

<http://cryptozoica.com/>

As the bromide goes—what a difference a year makes.

This time last June (to the day) I was dealing with emotionally devastating news about *Cryptozoica*—regardless of the fact that ace agent Richard Curtis repped the book for six months and personally loved it, the horribly unstable condition of the publishing industry due to "Black Wednesday" (mentioned in a earlier blog entry) conspired against seeing its publication anytime in the near future.

I received some advice from a writer of my acquaintance that might have been workable if I were in his circumstances—i.e. not completely reliant on my writing income and believed that if I just wished reeeeeeeal hard and kept submitting the book over and over and over, the publishing industry would eventually turn itself around and make a place for *Cryptozoica*.

The other option suggested to me was just to forget about it and write a new book, sell that one and then resubmit *Cryptozoica*. Presumably, all of that would happen long before I started collecting Social Security.

Thanks, but upon consideration—Nah.

With the enthusiasm, dedication and inspiration of graphic designer (and not so coincidentally, my wife) Melissa Martin-Ellis and artist Jeff Slemmons, within the space of a year *Cryptozoica* went from an unrealized dream to not just a reality but attained true collectible status.

You can read about the genesis of *Cryptozoica* on its own web-site, but I'd say this about it...the book is everything the best of my *Outlanders* novels are and everything the best of my *Outlanders* novels are not...which is my way of saying that *Cryptozoica* is everything *Outlanders* ever was and by the same token, never could be.

With Jeff's beautiful, wraparound cover and 18 interior illustrations, *Cryptozoica* is a book designed for readers to treasure for years to come.

In other news...Moonstone Books' *The Green Hornet Chronicles* containing my story "By Scarab and Scorpion" should be on sale in July.

And speaking of Moonstone...I recently signed a contract with the publisher to revive...

Yep...*The Justice Machine* is gearing up for a new mini-series and a special that will bring veteran readers up to speed and explain (to some extent) to new readers who they are and how they came to be. Featured above is a model sheet rendered by soon-to-be-superstar Preston Asevedo.

The Justice Machine is historically significant because they are first the super-team in the independent comics movement; the first issue appeared in 1981 featuring an iconic cover by John Byrne.

Over the next eight years, the title was published by Noble Comics, Texas Comics and then by Comico—the company where the series enjoyed its longest run.

I began chronicling the Machine's adventures in 1989 when Innovation licensed the book from creator Mike Gustovich. A short time later, I bought the rights to the Justice Machine property from Mike and have held them ever since—come to think of it, I've owned them considerably longer than even he did. The last new Justice Machine story appeared in 1993, from Millennium Publications.

In 2009, Millennial Concepts released a TPB compilation of some of the Innovation issues which accomplished what I hoped it would—revive interest in the team.

I'm working on The Justice Machine Special at the moment with Preston Asevedo. We're taking the approach as if the Machine were the Fantastic Four who have been gone for nearly 20 years—and return to face not only devastating personal issues but the fact that their arch-enemies have actually achieved what they set out to do all those years ago (dare I say it—world domination?)

Here is the first new Justice Machine artwork in 17 years—

I'm very excited about this project for a couple of reasons—mainly because it just feels so dang cool and right to be working on them again. I guess if you're going to own a super-team property, you sure could do worse than own The Justice Machine.

I'll post periodic updates as color art becomes available.

Also, Melissa and I will be holding a two-day graphic novel writing workshop at the 48th annual Cape Cod Writer's Conference in Centerville Massachusetts on August 19 –20.

This is a prestigious writer's conference, one of the largest in New England and Melissa and I are very much looking forward to it.

http://www.capecodwriterscenter.com/conference_writers_authors.html

There are other projects in the wings, both prose and in the "graphic narrative" mediums; for example, I'm currently in discussions with the literary agent of a thriller writer's estate to revive his hero in a new series of novels. I'll post more news as I have it.