

ARTISTIC

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A REAL
COLLECTOR'S
ITEM!

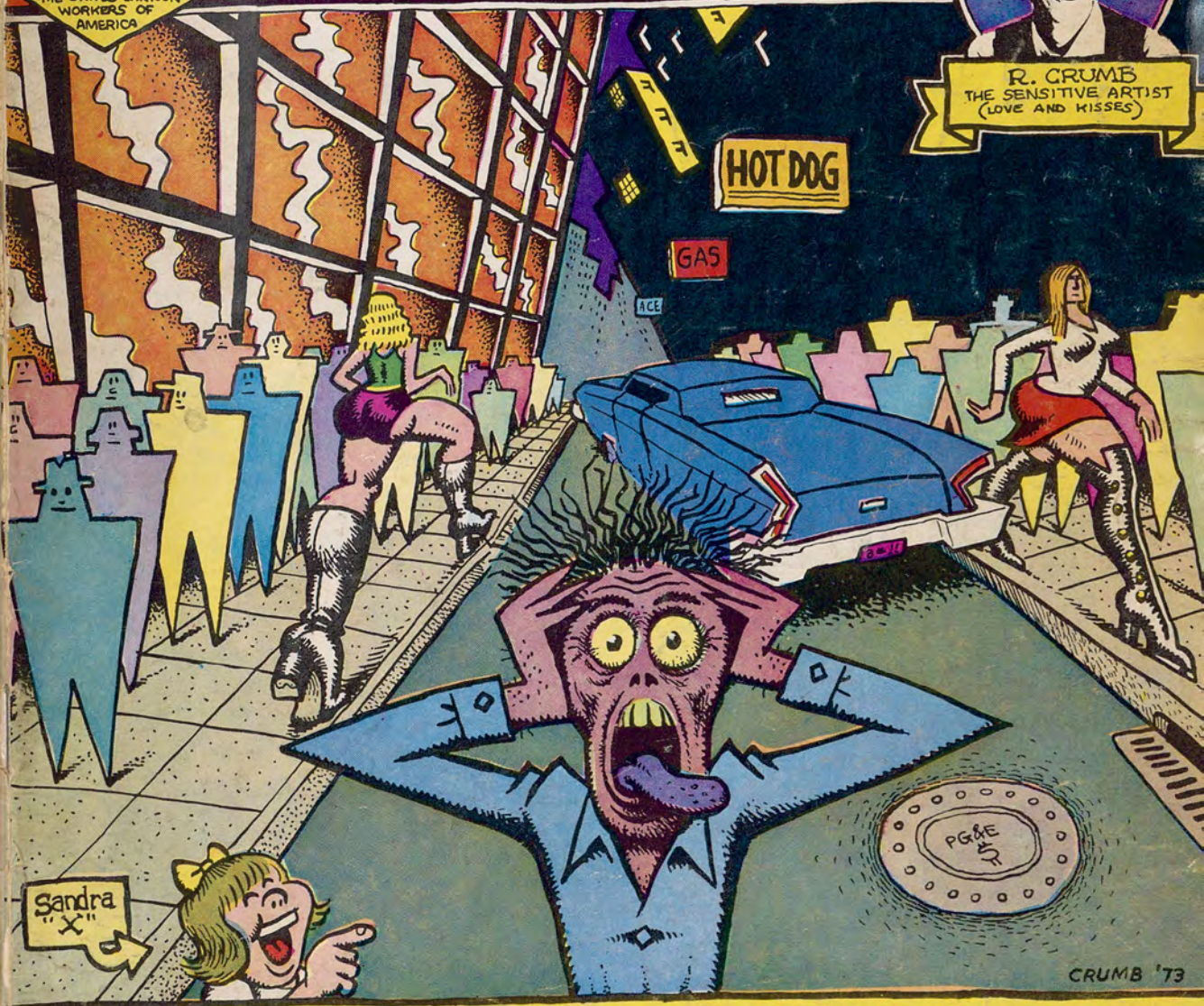
COMICS



A
MEMBER OF
THE UNITED CARTOON
WORKERS OF
AMERICA



R. CRUMB
THE SENSITIVE ARTIST
(LOVE AND KISSES)



CRUMB '73

A SPECIAL ISSUE MADE UP ENTIRELY OF EXERPTS
FROM THE SECRET SKETCHBOOKS OF R. CRUMB!

ABOUT THE ARTIST

R. CRUMB, the man, is an enigma wrapped in a mystery, packaged in a puzzle, and all of it enveloped in contradictions.

R. Crumb, the intellect, is a rare specimen of Neo-American thinking. In him, the metaphysical flowering of a renaissance scholastic has been grafted on the rough branch of midwestern plainsmanship.

R. Crumb, the artist, is important.

More than any other ranking artist now alive, this slim and deceptively pliant young man is a cultural bridge. With not the slightest intention of propounding a theory or founding a school, he has become the link between so-called "representational" art and the outer rangings of creative cerebration.

The growth of his genius, the varied approaches he has essayed toward the ultimate truth, are to be found in this volume—what we have here is a young man, most certainly still to reach peak creative performance, whose focus is perceptible both to traditionalists and the seekers. His drawings possess a unique mystic quality, a sensitive feeling of youthful exuberance and wonderment.

Some of his major works have drawn (and earned) comparisons with Thomas Eakins, Grant Wood, both Wyeths, and others with solid, and may we add solidified, American tradition behind them, but also with Brueghel, Bosch, Daumier, Goya, Da Vinci, Dali, even the Elgin Marbles. I think his streams of inspiration well in part from the intense, passionate lines of George Grosz, and Toulouse Lautrec, and reaching further back, to Byzantine Mosaics and Egyptian Bas reliefs.

No other artist worked in such a range. This startling splurge of evocations goes beyond just hinting at his universality. Each of these other artists, or objects, was, in its way, a trail blazer. What R. Crumb's lonely pathway aspires to reach is no simple thing for him or anyone else to explain.

In the barest possible terms, he has awareness of a meshing of unseen cogs, and the pulsing of unimaginable forces. These, he is convinced, are manifestations of a grand design for the Universe. He does not think that mankind is a helpless dust mote in this orderly chaos, unable to alter itself and doomed to be swept out some day. R. Crumb cleaves to the conviction that man has (or has been given) the power to steer his course. And Art is a sweep oar, for bad or good. To put it another way, he thinks that Art is a clue to the solution, and can lead man to the kind of world that lives now only in dreams—and in that selfsame Art. So in a way, R. Crumb thinks of himself as drawing road signs.

All of this would be pretty heady stuff for the cocky kid from Philly whose first professional achievement was visual aids for the Latex Corporation. But not for the dedicated anti-sophisticate who ponders Tolstoy and Teilhard de Chardin between concentrated drawing sessions (but avoids continental philosophers at his European showings), argues persuasively over a checkered tablecloth in San Francisco's North Beach (but disintegrates at thought of making a public speech), draws like a wizard (but can't drive a car).

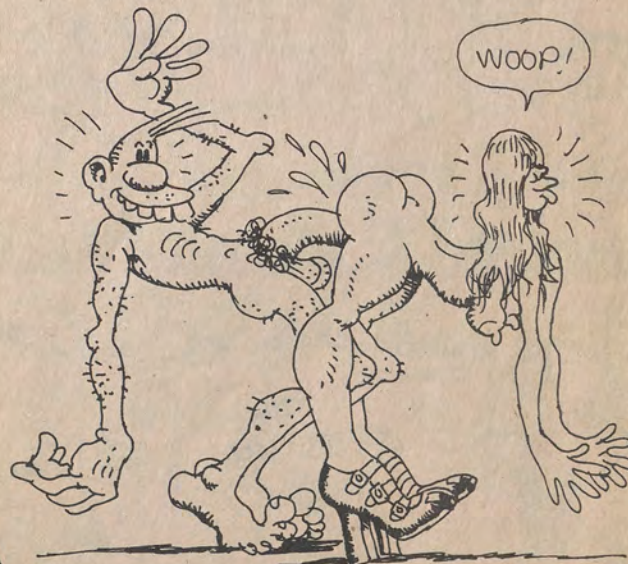
A key to one of the locked doors between us and R. Crumb (a good cryptographer would come in handy here) is his insistence upon universality in Art. When he says Art is a route to everybody's bliss, he means all kinds of Art. Intensely personal, completely introverted, in fact, these drawings are nevertheless representational of Art as a whole. Nobody has yet decided to compose a novel, or libretto an opera that is themed by one of R. Crumb's sketches, but I have no doubt that they will come. La Gioconda waited quite awhile for her apotheosis. Quo Vadis?

—Elton Fiscus-Powell

The DISMAL WORLD of R. CRUMB

"YOU READ IT-I CANT" COMIX
presents

"IT'S DEPRESSING!" — HERB CAEN
"HORRIBLE!" — RALPH GLEASON
"DREARY AND TEDIOUS" — ROLLING STONE



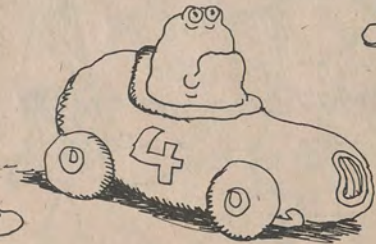


I USED TO LIVE IN THE MOMENT...

SURVIVAL IS TRANSCENDENTAL!!



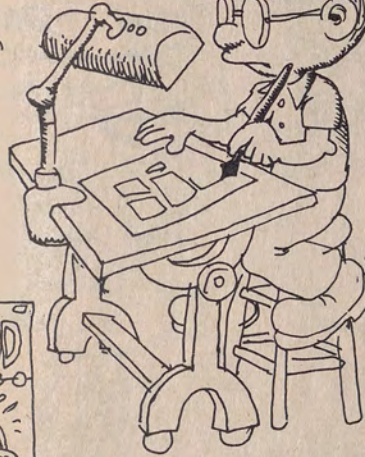
GET YER SHIT TOGETHER BUE!!



R. CRUMB BOY GENIUS



R. KRUMB, KID KARTOONIST



R. CRUMB ANGRY YOUNG MAN



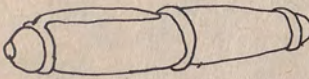
WORK IS TH' CURSE OF TH' DRINKING CLASS YUK YUK



R. CRUMB, BITTER OLD FOGEY



R. CRUMB URBAN SOPHISTICATE



THE ARTIST
and his **MUSE...**

DON'T MOVE,
LADY!! THIS WON'T
TAKE LONG!!

SKRITCH
SKRATCH

MAKE ME
LOOK
SULTRY...

