THE COMIC STRIP FACTORY

THE COMIC-STRIP FACTORY

FOUNDATION PUBLISHING

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Foundation Publishing
presents
Flying Pixel graphics
in a
Pacific BitWorks program

The Comic Strip Factory

Program ....David Durkee
Character Graphics...Trici Venola
Background Graphics..Kurt Wahlner
Manual ....Andy Christie, Clint Hicks, David Durkee
Trici Venola, Kurt Wahlner

Thanks to our beta testers:

Margot Comstock, Jerry Daniels, Clint Hicks, Dennis James, Arnie Katz, Howard Katz, Hartley and Patti Lesser, Bob Levitus, Paul McGraw, Paul Mithra, Carl Philabaum, Daryl Popkes, Gerald Rafferty, Ken Ryall, John Socha, Chuck Weigand, and Andy Wolf.

Thanks to Jock Root, our favorite wizard.

Special thanks to Paul Mithra for his typographical advice and assistance.

The creators would like to dedicate The Comic Strip Factory to the visionary madmen who inspired us:

Stephen Wozniak & **Robert Crumb**

PACIFIC BITWORKS

— PRESENT —

FLYING PIXEL

HARD RETURN

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FRED NERD

THE ROOT WIZ

TAWNY DANCER

STORY:
ANDREW CHRISTIE
&
DAVID DURKEE

GRAPHICS:
KURT WAHLNER
&
TRICI YENOLA

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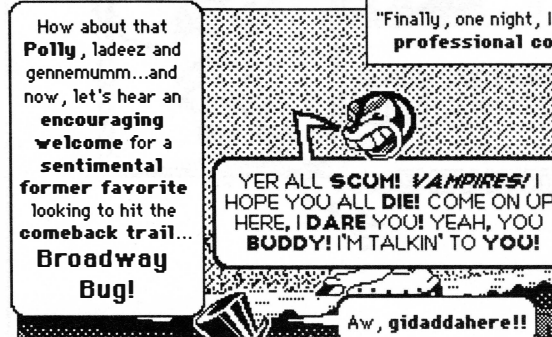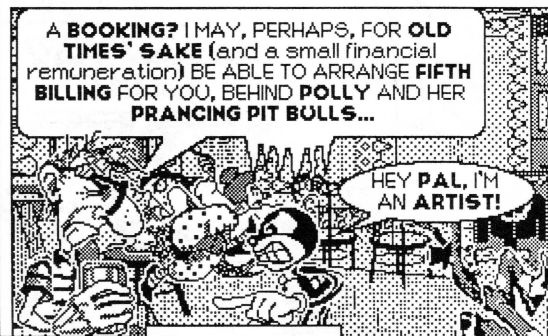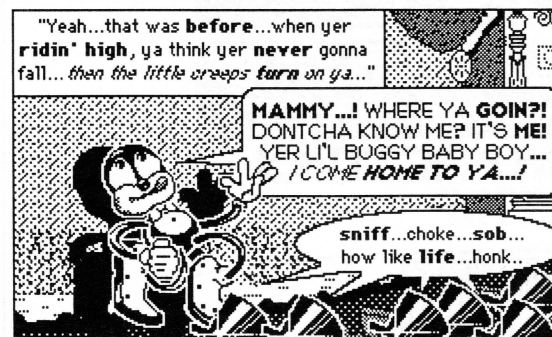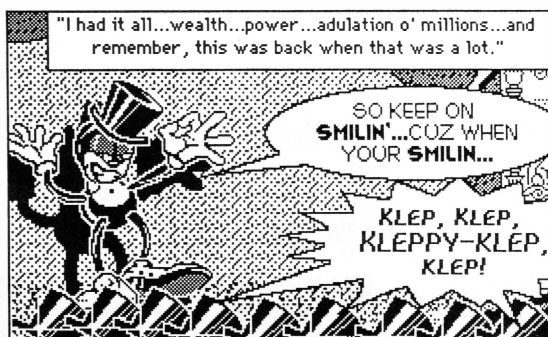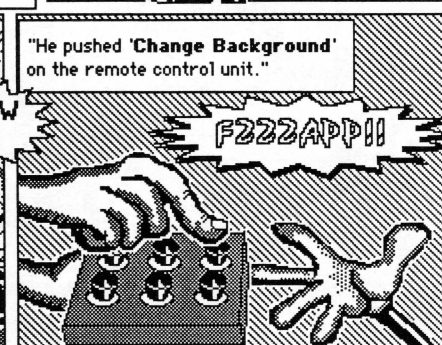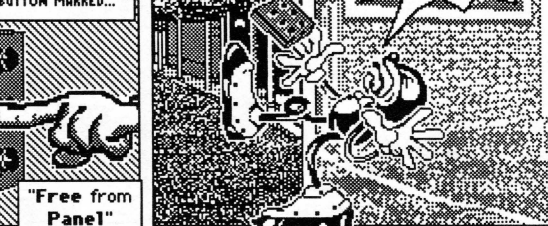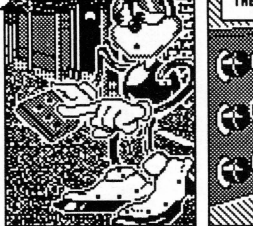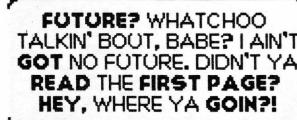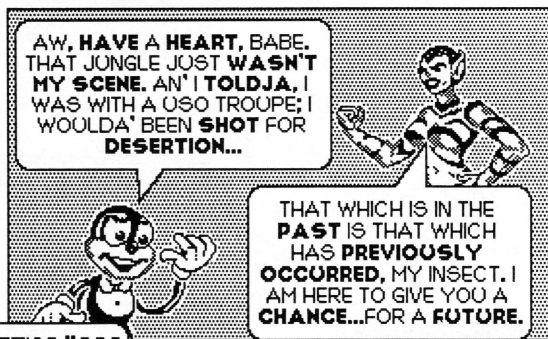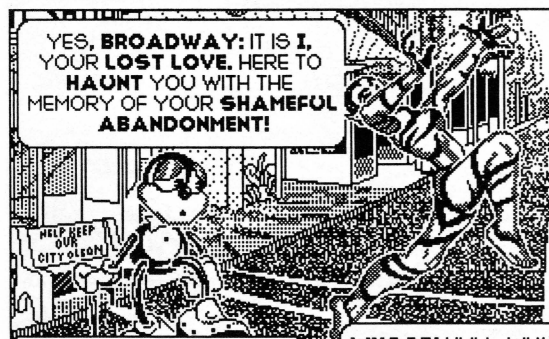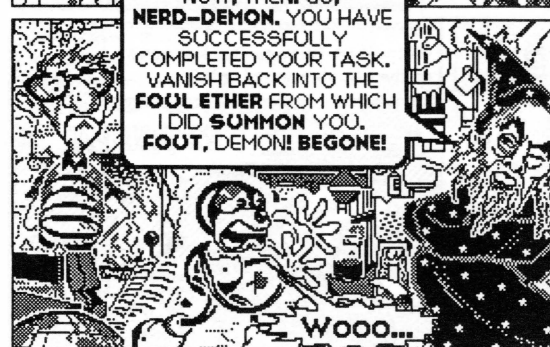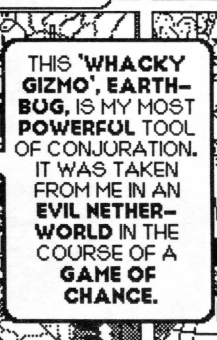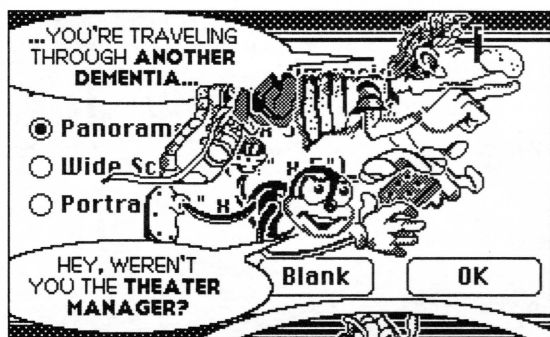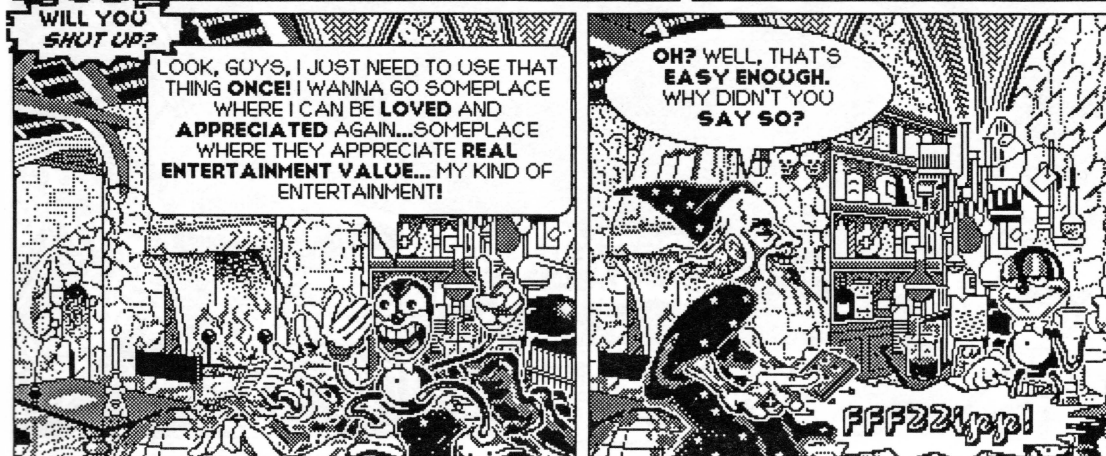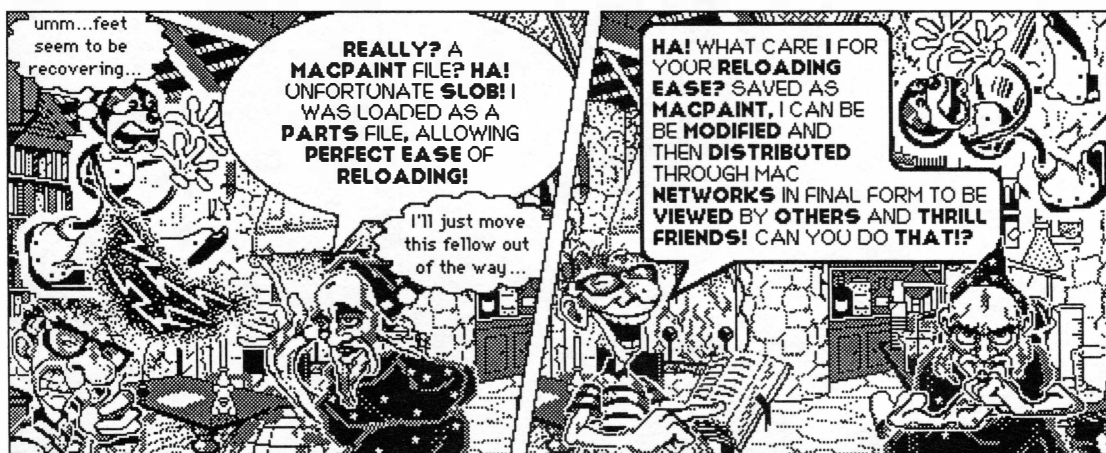
The Comic Strip Factory Tutorial

Before You Begin

Installing *The Comic Strip Factory* on Another Disk

The Comic Strip Factory is not copy protected. We decided against copy protection because we, as Macintosh users, hate dealing with copy protected software. As hard disk owners, we hate it even more. For easier access to the program and its data files, you may want to install *The Comic Strip Factory* on a hard disk, if you have one. If you intend to use the program from floppy disk, you should make a copy of the disks, work from the copies, and put the originals in a safe place.

(Just because the program isn't copy *protected* doesn't mean it isn't copy*righted*, however. You can legally copy the program for the purposes mentioned above, but you are not allowed to give copies to other people.)

Because the program isn't copy protected, installing *The Comic Strip Factory* on the hard disk is easily done. Using the Finder, copy all the files from *The Comic Strip Factory* disks, except the files in the System Folder on the Program disk. Actually, you don't have to copy them all. *The Comic Strip Factory* doesn't use any files but the ones you tell it to use, so you can arrange the files in folders entirely to suit your own working style.

If you aren't sure how to use the Finder to copy files, consult the manual that came with your Macintosh.

Using *The Comic Strip Factory* Fonts

You don't want to copy the Finder and System to a hard disk because hard disks shouldn't have more than one System file on them. You do, however, want to get the fonts from our System file and put them into your System file.

The System file on *The Comic Strip Factory* Program Disk contains several fonts designed for comic strips. They are:

Beach 12 point

Beach Bold 12, 14

Beach Italic 12

Beach Emphatic (bold-italic) 12, 14

CANYON 12

These fonts are designed to mimic hand-lettered styles of professional comic letterers. The characters in the fonts are about the same size as those in standard twelve and fourteen point fonts, but the leading (the space between the bottom of a line and the top of the next) is tighter (there's less of it). This is consistent with lettering in most comic books and strips, where space is at a premium. Also, there are a slew of special characters in the fonts. Open up the Key Caps desk accessory, select one of our fonts from the Key Caps menu, and hold down the Option and Shift keys to see them.

Typically, you can't use fonts if they aren't in the current System file. So if you run *The Comic Strip Factory* from a hard disk, you should use Apple's Font/DA Mover to copy the fonts into the System file on that disk.

Certain utilities now available allow you to use fonts without installing them in your System file. If you use one of these utilities, follow the instructions that came with it to make *The Comic Strip Factory* fonts useable on your computer. This will probably still involve using Font/DA Mover to copy the fonts from

our System file, so if you don't know how to use Font/DA Mover, consult your Macintosh manuals.

We Know You're Not Going To Read This

And we understand. Already, you probably know what you've got here. You know what it means to suddenly have the camera, the crew, the sets, the props, and the actors all in place, awaiting your direction. You appreciate the potential of the graphic story medium. We know, then, that there's nothing to keep you from:

Trying To Do It All At Once

Yes: You're going to start writing before you've got a story, and torture the panels (those boxes where comics happen) into strange and unnatural shapes, and throw in characters without a thought as to what to do with them. Go ahead. We'll wait for you here. But before you go, we urge you to at least peruse this basic rhythm system to keep your errant doodling from bogging down and collapsing entirely right at the start, causing you to bellow "No fun! Dumb program!" and hurl the disk at the wall:

1.   From the title page, click **OK**. From the **Open** dialog, click **New** to create a new comic strip.

2.   Default past the page parameters by pressing Return or clicking **OK**.

3.   From the **File** menu, choose **Open...** and click on the **Parts** radio button.

4.   Select a parts file that looks interesting.

5.   Shift-click over several character body parts.

6.   From the **Panel** menu, choose **Copy to Panel**.

7.   Arrange parts in the panel in an aesthetically pleasing fashion. From the **Arrange** menu, use **Bring to Front** and **Send to Back** to place hats firmly on heads, canes in hands,

one character behind another, and so on. If one part refuses to go in front of another part, try selecting the one in front (that you want in back), selecting **Restrict to Panel** from the **Arrange** menu, then sending it to the back.

8. Repeat steps 5, 6, and 7 until the panel is completed to your satisfaction.

9. Choose **Add Text...** from the **Objects** menu and mess around with words.

10. Choose **Background Pattern...** from the **Panel** menu and mess around with patterns.

11. Choose **Install Background...** from the **File** menu, select a file from the dialog that comes up, click **OK**, move the animated panel shape around in the background window, and choose **Copy to Panel** from the **Panel** menu.

12. Admit that this is going nowhere and stop messing around.

13. Read on.

Ready to Do It the Right Way?

Good. We'll start with a little background, though not the scenic variety. (Pages fly off the calendar as though caught in a gale, or a really big fan, and...)

In big-time comics, since time immemorial (the 1960s), the Act of Comic Creation has gone something like this: A Writer turns in an outline to a Penciller who draws a layout of panels and rough art and gives it back to a Writer who scripts dialog and captions and gives it to an Inker who finishes the art then gives it to a Letterer who puts all the words where they belong.

You are now all those people.

We realize that comics professionals will embrace this concept as happily as studio musicians embraced synthesizers and manual

laborers welcomed automation. This is the price of progress. But that's enough creative karma to handle without the added burden of not knowing what you're doing, as we suspect you've discovered from your messing around.

So. To commit an act of serious comics creation, the first thing to do is establish a:

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Start fresh. If your messing around comic is still on screen, close it and (if you want) save it. Select **New...** from the **File** menu, click on the **Comic Strip** radio button in the **New Document Type** dialog and click **OK** (or press Return). Click **OK** in the **Initial Layout** dialog, then select **Show Page...** from the **Edit** menu.
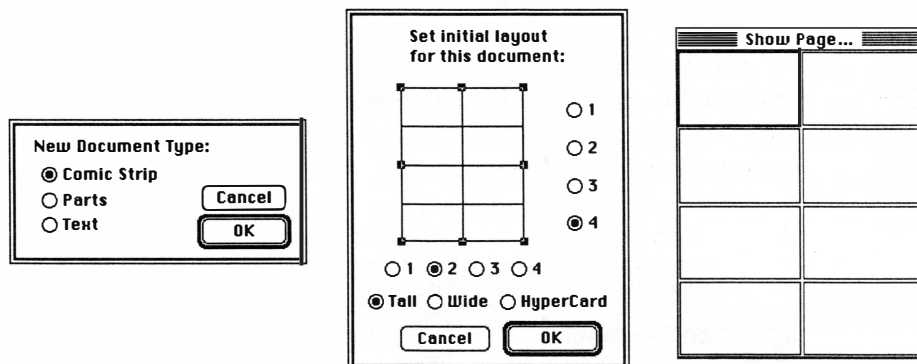
You're now looking at the standard eight-panel page layout, foundation of the modern comic book. (Remove the bottom four panels, and you are looking at a standard four-panel comic strip layout, foundation of the foundation. Remove all panels but one and you'll have a one-panel editorial cartoon layout, first developed hundreds of years ago, completing the foundation trilogy. Sorry.)

The panels are your camera. They're how you shoot and edit. Adjust the panels to the rhythms of your story— larger panels for panoramic scenes or panels with lots of exposition and dialog; thinner, narrow panels to pick up the pace, like quick jump-cuts in film. Jagged panels poke into each other, locked in eternal

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struggle, symbolizing chaos, opposing opposites, modern cultural anomie, '57 Cadillacs... you get the picture.

It's possible to modify the overall panel layout in the dialog box that comes up when you first create a new comic. Clicking in the numbered radio buttons will change the number of rows and columns of panels on the page. The **Tall**, **Wide**, and **HyperCard** buttons control the dimensions of the page. **Tall** is a *MacPaint*-sized document; **Wide** is the same size set on its side. **HyperCard** is the size of the original Macintosh screen, which is good for making comics to use in *HyperCard*.

The diagram shown in the dialog shows how the page will look. You can also modify the overall shape of the panels by dragging on the "handles" — the black rectangles on the corners and sides of the page rectangle. When you've got a page layout you like, click **OK** to dismiss the dialog.

For more extensive panel modification, use the commands **Add Rectangle**, **Add Oval**, and **Add Triangle** in the **Panel** menu. Or click on one of the three leftmost icons on the icon bar, which correspond to **Add Rectangle**, **Add Oval**, and **Add Triangle**.

Panel menu	Objects menu	Arrange menu
Add Rectangle	Add/Edit Text	Bring to Front
Add Oval	Edit Bits/Create Part	Send to Back
Add Triangle	Duplicate	
Background Pattern	Invert	
Copy to Panel	Flip Horizontal	
	Flip Vertical	
	Rotate	

While we're on the subject of icons and menus: from now on, when we mention a command, we'll use its menu item name, and tell you which menu it's on. Some commands have both a menu item and an icon in the icon bar. For these, we'll show the icon in the margin. Whenever you choose an item from the program's

menu, its corresponding icon (if there is one) blinks. This helps you learn which menu items are duplicated as icons.

An important note: *The icon bar doesn't contain additional commands.* Every icon has a corresponding menu item. The icon bar exists only for your convenience; a quick way to issue commands with a single click.

Back to the program. The most important thing to remember in panel reshaping is that shapes are *added* to the current panel's shape. When you add a shape, the added shape outside the current panel becomes part of the panel's new boundary. Adjacent panels are modified to fit the reshaped panel like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle.

Try it. With an empty layout of panels, select the upper left panel. (The selected panel is indicated by a gray outline.) When you click inside the panel, it will highlight. Now choose **Add Oval** from the **Panel** menu. An animated outline of an oval appears inside the panel. Grab the outline by the "handle" in its center: put the cursor over the black box in the oval's center and hold down the mouse button. Now drag the handle halfway between the current panel and the next panel. Now click the **OK** button in the icon bar. See what happens?
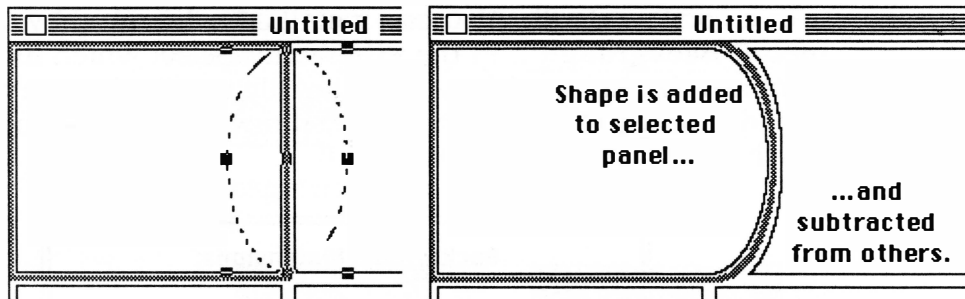
It's possible to return a panel to its original shape by selecting each of the panels that border on it in turn, choosing **Add Rectangle**, then clicking **OK**. If you've made extensive changes to the panel, you may have to do the same thing to the panel itself, and you may also have to adjust the size of the rectangles you're adding.

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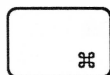
If you hold down the Command key (the key to the left of the space bar with the cloverleaf symbol) while you click **OK**, the shape will be added to the layout as a separate panel. This allows you to make rows with more than the default number of panels or to create inset panels. With practice you can achieve many interesting panel effects.
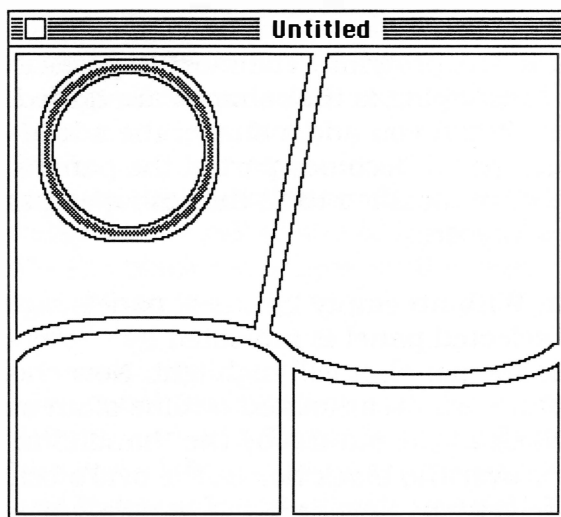
Background files in *The Comic Strip Factory* are a special treatment of *MacPaint* files. Only one background file can be used with a comic strip file. You can install a background by choosing **Install Background...** in the **File** menu. Select which file you want as a background (any *MacPaint* file will do, but we've provided special backgrounds). You'll next get a dialog box asking which type of background to install.
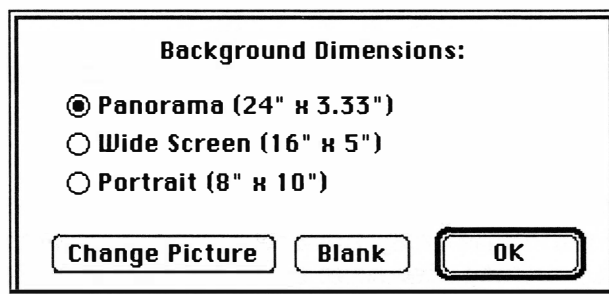
Here are the choices:

- **Panorama** backgrounds are formed by dividing the file into three horizontal strips, then matching the strips end to end. (Use this format if you're using any of the four backgrounds that come with The Comic Strip Factory.)
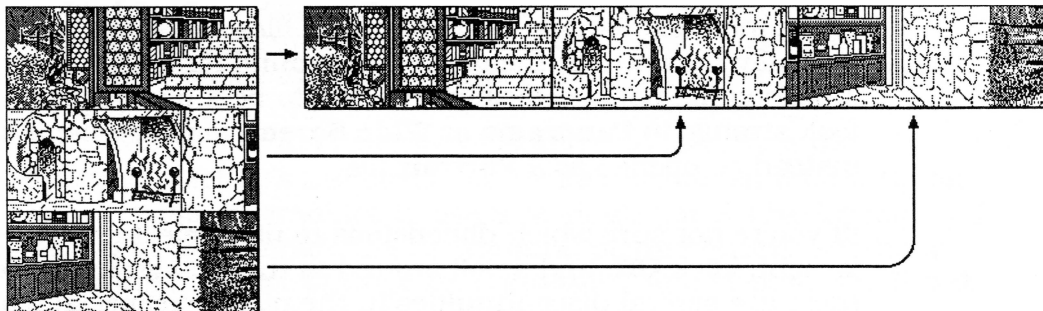
- **Wide Screen** backgrounds are similar, but are divided first into two strips representing the top and bottom halves of a standard *MacPaint* page.
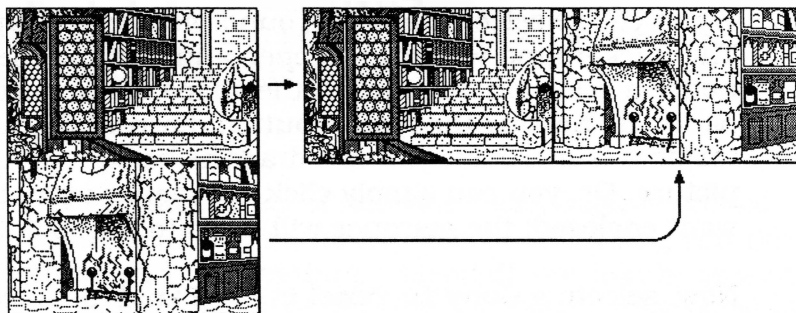
- **Portrait** backgrounds are standard *MacPaint* files that haven't been altered.

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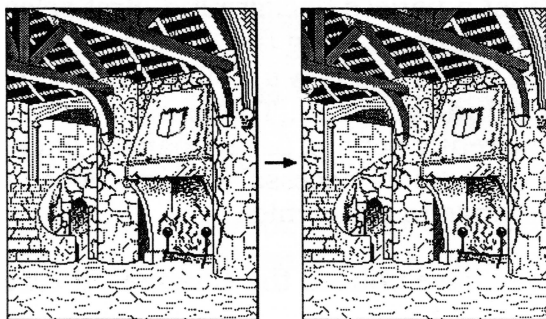
The dialog box gives the dimensions for each type of background file.

Note: If you create a panel that's taller than the background type you've chosen, a background picture in that panel will not completely fill the panel.

We've included Panorama background files that have been specially drawn to fit the given background dimensions. A *MacPaint* file not specifically intended to be a background would look strange in **Panorama** or **Wide Screen** dimensions; it should instead be opened as a **Portrait** file.

(If you're not sure which dimensions to use, select one you think is right, click **OK**, and scroll around in the background window. If there are several discontinuities in the picture, especially places where a floor is shown above a ceiling, the dimensions are probably wrong. Use the **Change Background...** command in the **File** menu and select another set of dimensions.)

When you've selected a background picture and type, click **OK**. The Background window will open and come to the front. You'll notice a selection marquee in the shape of the currently selected panel. By holding the mouse button down while the cursor is inside this marquee, you can drag the background around the picture. Or, you can simply click the mouse over the area you want enclosed; the marquee will jump to that point.

Now, selecting **Copy to Panel** in the **Panel** menu copies the background within the marquee to the current panel, and brings the comic window to the front.

To adjust a panel's background, first select the panel by clicking inside of it. Next, bring the Background window to the front by clicking on the window's visible edge or by selecting **Background** in the **Windows** menu. The marquee will reappear, enclosing the area currently serving as the panel's background. Click or drag to make changes as necessary, then choose **Copy to Panel** to copy your change to the comic.

You may have noticed the **Change Picture** button in the

Background Dimensions dialog box. This enables you to change the background you're using. Choose **Change Background...** from the **File** menu. The dialog box will appear; click on **Change Picture**. The **Open** dialog box appears, and you can now choose a new background file.

Note that the background will change in every panel where you've copied a background picture. There is no way to use two background files in a single strip, although you can, in *MacPaint* (or a compatible program), mix and match portions of our background files to create new background files. (See the reference section's discussion of the **Paste** command for a tip on how to paste in graphics to use as a single panel's background.) If you want to eliminate the background picture entirely, without replacing it, select **Change Background...** and click on the **Blank** button.

Meanwhile, back at the **Panel** menu, don't underestimate the value of the **Background Pattern...** command. Each background file in *The Comic Strip Factory* is designed to show a series of related locations and can be used to indicate a character's "physical progress through space."

Heavy, huh?

However, panel after panel of near-identical, slightly shifted realistic backgrounds are a no-no. This is something you never see in comics (early *Doonesbury* excepted), not just because the weary artist doesn't feel like drawing the same background over and over, but because it's boring. While background patterns can be used to add shading to a background picture, they can also be used instead of actual backgrounds to break things up and provide visual drama. Backgrounds should be selected with the same care as your panel layout. Using the same pattern repeatedly can be more boring than using the same picture. Lightening or darkening with some patterns may cancel out similar patterns in the background picture.

Tip: For subtle background effects, darken your background picture with a light pattern, lighten it with a dark pattern.

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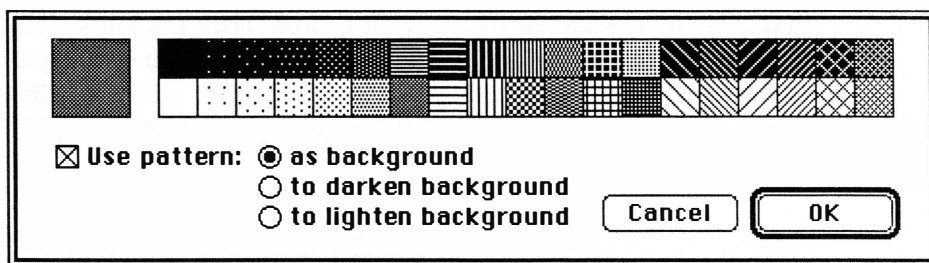
The three radio buttons in the **Background Pattern** dialog allow you to choose between

- **as background**, for using a pattern as the sole background in the panel,

- **to darken background**, for using a pattern to darken the currently installed background picture, or

- **to lighten background**, for using a pattern to lighten the background picture.

Or, you can use the background picture without modification by unchecking the **Use pattern** checkbox. The pattern palette works like it does in *MacPaint*: click on the desired pattern, and the pattern you select appears in the larger box to the left. Click **Cancel** to change your mind and **OK** to put the desired change into effect.

Select a panel in which you've copied a background picture, then choose **Background Pattern...**. With **Use pattern** checked, click in the seventh pattern on the bottom row. Notice that the large square on the left fills with the pattern, indicating that it's selected. Make certain that the **as background** radio button is selected, and then click **OK**.

Now select or create another panel with a background picture in it. Choose **Background Pattern...** again, and click on the **to darken background** radio button. Do the same, with yet another panel, but selecting **to lighten background**. Select another panel, choose **Background Pattern** one last time, uncheck the box next to **Use pattern**, and click **OK**. Compare your results in the different panels.

Experiment with this feature to see the many effects possible.
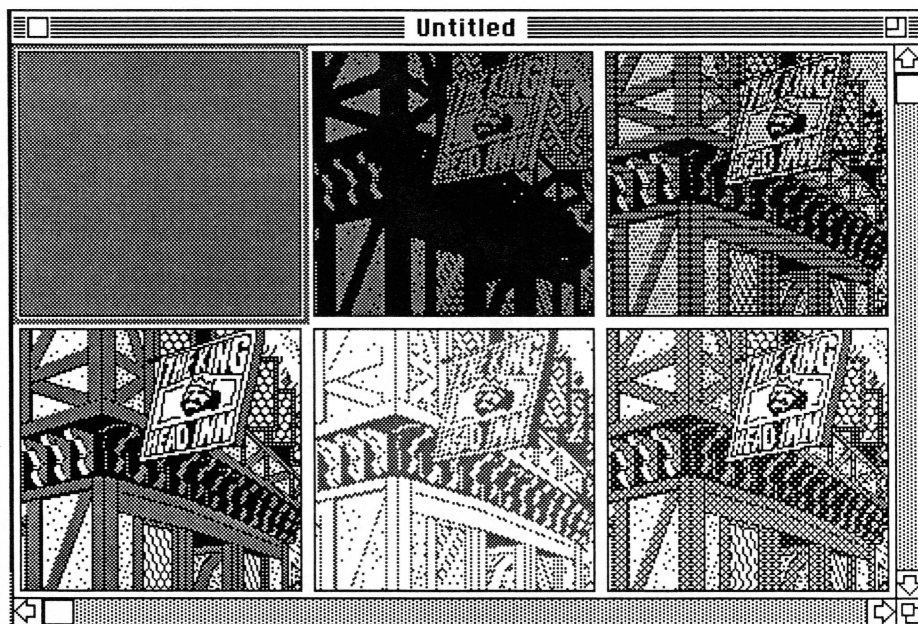
To eliminate a background (picture and pattern) from an individual panel, choose **Background Pattern...** from the **Panel** menu. From the dialog, choose the blank (white) pattern as the background; this eliminates the previous background.

Balloons, Captions, & Scripts

There are two ways to enter text for balloons and captions. Following the classic model outlined under **Ready to Do It the Right Way?**, you could prepare an entire script ahead of time in *The Comic Strip Factory* Text Window or any word processor that saves text-only files. You can also use a text editor disk accessory like CE Software's **MockWrite** or **SideKick**'s NotePad+.

Choosing **Open...** in the **File** menu of *The Comic Strip Factory* and clicking on the **Text** radio button in the **Open** dialog lets you open a text file to copy dialog between it and the balloon editor. You can also create a new script by choosing the **New...** item in the **File** menu and clicking the **Text** radio button in the **New Document**

Type dialog. Or, you can enter and edit all text in the balloon editor itself.

There's an advantage to writing your scripts beforehand. You can then start on a page of empty panels, create all your dialog balloons, and place them roughly where you want them on the page. This way, you'll know whether the script needs padding to fill out the page (or larger panels or a smaller page) or whether dialog needs to be cut to make room for pictures. If you're making a multiple page comic book, you can make sure punch lines are strategically placed to keep readers turning pages. *The Comic Strip Factory* doesn't force you to work this way, but you may find that work proceeds faster if you first "lay down the dialog," then add, remove, and reshape balloons to fit the pace of the action, then put the characters in place.

But dialog balloons are more than just letters, spaces, and punctuation. The format of each balloon, and the style changes in the balloon, are important to the look of the comic strip. To establish these elements, you have to take your text from the simple lines-and-paragraphs environment of the Text window into the balloon editor.
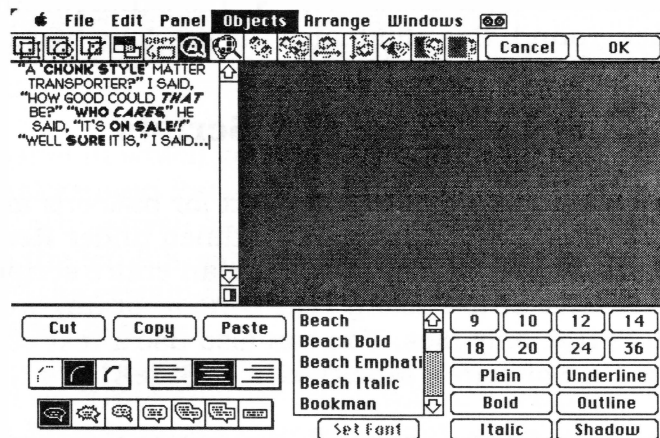
For a guided tour of the balloon editor, Choose **Add Text...** from the **Parts** menu. You'll see the balloon editor take over the screen and activate the icon bar's **OK** and **Cancel** buttons. On the left of the screen under the icon bar is the text entry area, with a cursor, scroll bar, and a grow box (under the scroll bar). The grow box

makes the text area narrower or wider. Drag the grow box as you would the grow box of any standard window.

| Cut | Copy | Paste |

Below the text area are three buttons: **Cut**, **Copy**, and **Paste**. These behave just like Cut, Copy, and Paste commands in the Edit menus of most Macintosh word processors and text editors.

Immediately below and to the left of the Edit buttons are three icons that control the thickness of balloon lines. The far left icon makes the balloon outline invisible. The center icon gives the balloon a one-pixel wide outline; the far right icon makes the balloon outline two pixels wide. (A *pixel* is a single dot on the screen: about 1/72".

To the right of the "line" icons are three icons to control text justification. The first icon sets "flush-left": text that's even on the left margin, but varied on the right margin, like a page typed on a typewriter. The manual you're reading is set flush-left. The second icon sets centered text—the default setting. The third icon sets text "flush-right"; the opposite of flush-left.

Underneath these icons, at the bottom left, are a row of icons to select the balloon type. The balloon types range from bumpy "thought" balloons to a plain rectangle, useful for captions and exposition. Any balloon type can be given a "pointer," but we're getting ahead of ourselves. Click any of the balloon icons to select a balloon type.

Beach		9	10	12	14
Beach Bold		18	20	24	36
Beach Emphati		Plain		Underline	
Beach Italic		Bold		Outline	
Bookman		Italic		Shadow	
Set Font					
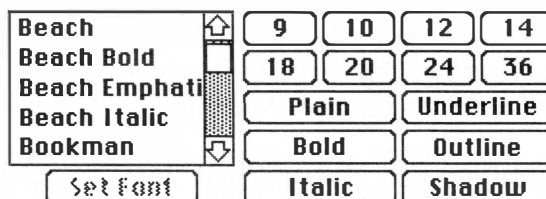
To the right of the balloon icons is a Fonts list and a group of buttons to control text size and style. Select a font by clicking its name (use the scroll bar to find the right one if necessary), then

clicking the **Set Font** button (or just double-click the font name). Text entered after clicking **Set Font** will be displayed in the selected font. To change some or all the text you've already entered, select the text then change the font. This is done as in *MacWrite*: click and drag over a range of text or double-click to select an individual word. First select, then change.

The same is true for size and style changes, which are done with the buttons to the right of the Font list.

When you've finished with the changes and additions for your balloon, click the **OK** button in the icon bar. Or click **Cancel** and return to the comic window without making changes.

Tip: When putting words into a comic strip, don't describe what your pictures are showing. Dialog in comics is for communication between characters; captions are for exposition and narrative. The use of boldface or other style, or even a different font, on selected words keeps your characters from **speaking** in a **monotone**. Watch a television **newscast** and listen to the way the **anchorpeople** talk. That vocal **rise** and **fall** and emphasis on every seventh **word** is something they learn in **famous broadcaster's school**. It keeps your **attention**. *But don't overdo it.*

Let's try it out. Start from scratch: back in the main program screen with just a Comic window open. Choose **New...** from the **File** menu and select the **Text** document type. Type "This is a test." Now select the text and choose **Copy to Panel** from the **Panel** menu. The balloon editor window appears with "This is a test." centered on the top line of the text area. Select the entire sentence, click the **Copy** button, then click **Paste** three times.

Experiment with the size box in the lower right corner of the text area. Grab it and move it back and forth; notice the effect on text in the window. Try out the flush right and flush left icons, immediately under the **Paste** button.

Now double-click on the third "test" to select it; it will be displayed inverted. Next click Chicago in the scrolling Font list at the screen's bottom and click the **Set Font** button. Select the last "is" in the text and click the **Italic** button. Finally, move the cursor to

the end of the text, set the font to Monaco, click the **9** button for nine-point type and type "end of test." Now select a balloon type, and make sure it has a visible outline. Click the **OK** button in the icon bar.

The balloon will appear in the current panel, with a selection marquee around it. To give a selected balloon a pointer, choose **Point Balloon** from the **Objects** menu. A special point-balloon cursor will appear, along with an outline of the pointer. Notice that the balloon pointer always starts from the center of the balloon. Move the cursor around until the pointer "points" where you wish, then click the mouse button. (Note: you can Cancel **Point Balloon** without adding a pointer by clicking on the balloon or outside the window).
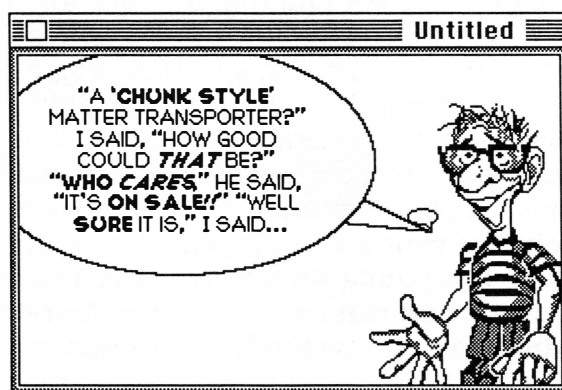
Additional pointers can be added by selecting the balloon and choosing **Point Balloon** again. You can remove all pointers or change a balloon entirely by selecting it, then choosing **Edit Text...** in the **Objects** menu. The balloon editor will appear again with the text and current settings in place. Change these as needed or desired. Or click **OK** without making any changes to eliminate all pointers. Easy, huh?

Point Balloon can only make straight pointers. If you want to have thought bubbles coming down from thought balloons, or if you want curvy or jagged pointers, a sampling of such is available in the parts file "Bubbles & Pointers." It's also very easy to make your own bubbles and pointers with the **Create Part...** command in the **Objects** menu. Or use *MacPaint* and import the results with PartMaker II or the Scrapbook desk accessory.

Balloons, Captions, & Scripts

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Words & Characters

Even if you're an accomplished computer comic artist, *The Comic Strip Factory* is invaluable as a framework tool, and for the ease of layout and lettering it provides.

But maybe you're not a accomplished computer comic artist, and bought *The Comic Strip Factory* to give your literary instincts a better showcase than your artistic abilities, alone, provide. If so, you're limited to the Parts files that came with *The Comic Strip Factory*, *Comic People* volumes, and commercially available clip art, to vent your urge to self-expression.

Fortunately, it's *not* limiting, because any *MacPaint*-based image can be used by *The Comic Strip Factory* (see the "Rolling Your Own Parts" section for details). But this program presupposes that you have a tale worth the telling and the ability to tell it. We can't supply computer-generated plots or a sense of humor (yet). And the telling is a matter of taste and inspiration. As you start putting the pictures in panels, they may suggest things to you that change your story. The characters may overwhelm the story and take everything somewhere else. You may decide you don't need words and can tell it in mime. There's just no way of knowing: This is New Stuff. Let it happen. Have fun. Be happy.

Customizing & Cleaning Up

The fine points of parts and balloons can be cleaned up using the **Edit Bits...** command in the **Objects** menu. The **Edit Bits...** command lets you modify both the comic object and object's "background mask."

Think of the background mask as a small sheet of paper where the object is drawn. The mask blocks anything behind it from showing through. To make a convincing doughnut, you'd make sure the background mask *didn't* cover the hole. That way, the background would show through the hole.
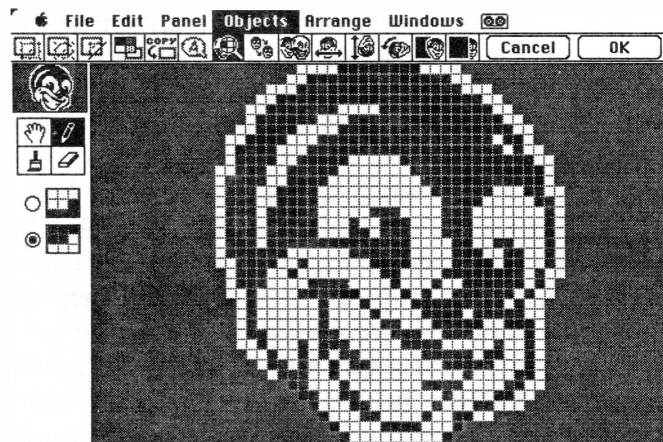
Here's how to do it. Select an object and choose **Edit Bits...** from the **Objects** menu. On the window's left you'll see four *MacPaint*-style tools. These function as in *MacPaint*: the hand moves the image around, the pencil changes (draws or erases) single pixels, the paint brush paints a larger area, and the eraser erases.

Below these tools, though, are two additional selections. These determine which pixels can be edited. With the top button selected, you'll be editing the white background mask pixels. The bottom button lets you edit black pixels of an object. The gray area represents the background behind the transparent part.
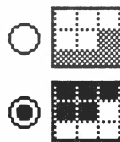
[Note that black pixels can only be drawn on the background mask. If you want to "add on" to a part or a balloon, you'll have to draw the mask area first. This needn't be precise, and you can erase unneeded mask bits after you've drawn the black bits. But be sure to leave a border around an object, about one pixel wide, so it stands out from the background. And it's good to erase the border where a part touches another part— where the head and torso join, for example.

Customizing & Cleaning Up

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There's a regular-size image of the object at the upper left to guide you as you work. The image will change to mimic your Edit Bits changes. Click **Cancel** to throw out changes you've made, or **OK** if everything's cool and you want the changes incorporated.

Note: **Edit Bits...** can also be used to edit balloon pointers, and to give balloons nifty special effects like "icicles." You can edit only the outline of a regular balloon. To edit the black bits, choose **MergeBits** in the **Objects** menu. **MergeBits** converts a balloon into a part. The text inside the balloon can no longer be edited, however, nor can the balloon be changed further except with **Edit Bits....**. **MergeBits** gains you access to the black bits of **Edit Bits...** at the expense of "freezing" your balloon text. Experiment to determine when to "merge" and when not to "merge."

Rolling Your Own Parts

We've provided you with a raft of ready-drawn art, but you'll probably want to import your own graphic creations, or use graphics from other packages and programs. At the simplest level, art can be copied to the Clipboard or Scrapbook then pasted into an existing or new parts file, or directly into a comic strip. The object can then be cleaned up in **Edit Bits....**.

MultiFinder is great in these instances. With it, you can run both *The Comic Strip Factory* and *MacPaint* (or another paint program) together. Then you can draw objects as needed and quickly move them to *The Comic Strip Factory*. *The Comic Strip Factory* requires at least 320K of memory with MultiFinder, and is happier with 512K or more.

There are a number of graphic desk-accessory tools that you can use with *The Comic Strip Factory*. These provide varying degrees of power, ranging from Art Grabber, which just allows you to Copy and Paste rectangular areas, to *DeskPaint* and *Canvas*, with a full range of painting features. Any of them are useful in a pinch.

PartMaker II
We've also provided a utility program, PartMaker II, that works

with standard *MacPaint* files. PartMaker II:

- reads *MacPaint* files,

- converts *MacPaint* graphics into parts, and

- saves the parts for use in *The Comic Strip Factory*.

How it Works

PartMaker II "sees" a paint file as blobs of black dots separated by white space. The blobs are converted to parts and copied to a parts file, which you can then name and save.

Before we discuss how it's done, let's define "paint file" and "white space."

A paint file is any file *MacPaint* can open. But the file needn't be created by *MacPaint*. *FullPaint*, *SuperPaint*, *MacBillboard*, *GraphicWorks*, *The Comic Strip Factory*, and most graphic digitizers can save *MacPaint* files. Some of these products save paint files as an option. Others, like *MacBillboard* and *FullPaint*, use paint files exclusively.

Most clip art comes in paint files. Clip art is ideal for parts files because clip art objects are surrounded by generous white space.

The white space is important. To PartMaker II, white space is "space separating distinct objects." That definition is used by PartMaker II to find graphic objects and to create parts.

A paint file is scanned until a black dot is found. The object's edge is then traced. The edge is where white dots meet black dots. To PartMaker II, everything within the edge is an object.

So far, PartMaker II is like an automatic *MacPaint* "lasso."

Many comic parts, however, aren't tightly enclosed. Fred Nerd and Root Wiz, for example, have wispy hair— potentially many, many separate objects!

To include those stray bits, PartMaker II looks at neighboring

parts. If a neighboring part is only one white dot away, the two parts are merged together.

When designing your own parts, remember that "white space" means "separated by *more than one* white dot."

Using PartMaker II is simple. Just run the program, choose **Convert Paint** from the **PartMaker 2.0** menu, select a paint file you want to make into parts, and click the **Open** button. When it's done, give the new file a name (or accept the default of the old name plus ".parts") and click the **Save** button. Now you're ready to open the new parts file from *The Comic Strip Factory*.
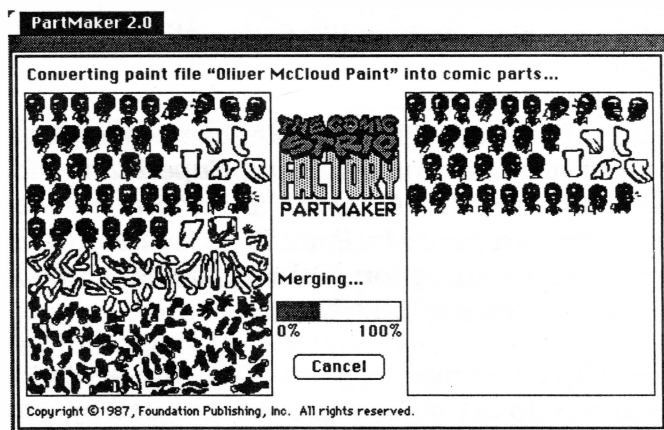
You may find, though, that wisps of hair or whatever are wispier than PartMaker II takes into account. Remember, if stray dots are separated by more than one white dot, PartMaker II makes them separate objects. To merge these "strays" manually, load the new parts file into *The Comic Strip Factory*. Then drag a selection rectangle around objects that may be several parts. If two or more animated marquees appear, select **MergeBits** from the **Objects** menu. The **MergeBits** command "merges" the separate parts into one object.

You may also find objects that aren't completely enclosed. White sections of these parts may become transparent. To find the transparent areas, use **Background Pattern** in the **Panel** menu to put a gray background in the Parts window. To fix partially transparent parts, use **Edit Bits....**

"Character Assembly"

OR

Mold Me Closer, Tawny Dancer

TAWNY DANCER EXPLAINS IT ALL FOR **YOU!**

BY ANDY, TRICI, AND DAVID

HIYA! AS THE MOST **COMPLEX** AND **ANATOMICALLY CORRECT** FIGURE IN THE COMIC STRIP FACTORY AT THE MOMENT, THE GUYS THOUGHT IT WOULD BE NEAT IF I EXPLAINED A FEW THINGS ABOUT **PUTTING BODY PARTS TOGETHER...**

I THOUGHT IT SOUNDED KINDA **YUCKY** WHEN THEY PUT IT THAT WAY, BUT THEN THEY SAID I COULD **USE MY OWN BODY** TO SHOW YOU HOW, AND I SAID **"NEAT!"** I THINK A PERSON SHOULD TAKE **EVERY OPPORTUNITY** TO USE THE GIFTS THEY'RE BORN WITH TO **PERSONALLY EDUCATE OTHERS**, DON'T YOU?

ALSO, I GOT TO DO LOTS OF **SILLY STUFF**, LIKE **THIS...**

HERE'S **ME** WITH **TWO RIGHT FEET**. I SURE COULDN'T DO MUCH DANCING **LIKE THIS!** THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS MAKE SURE **BOTH BIG TOES** ARE TOWARD THE **CENTER** OF MY BODY. UNLESS I'VE GOT MY LEGS CROSSED, **NATCH!**

Big Toe!

HERE WE SEE MY **INNER THIGH**. SEE HOW THE **"V" STRIPE** POINTS TO THE **KNEE?** I KNEW THESE WOULD COME IN HANDY! COMPARE IT TO MY **OUTER THIGH**. (OH GAWD, I SWEAR I AM SUCH A **TUB!**)

Inner thigh

Outer thigh

POP QUIZ:

IS THIS HER **LEFT** FOOT OR HER **RIGHT** FOOT?

"V" Stripe

Big toe
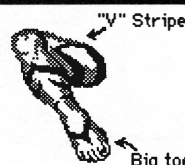
ANSWER: Right

ATTACH MY **LEGS** SO THAT THE **TOP EDGES MEET**. THINK OF A **"V" NECK** SWEATER.

WRONG! WRONG! RIGHT!

ARMS ARE **GREAT**. DONTCHA **LOVE** 'EM? THE RADIUS BONES CAN TWIST AROUND EACH OTHER SO THE **PALMS OF YOUR HANDS** CAN BE FACING **FRONT OR BACK**, NO MATTER WHICH WAY YOU'RE **FACE** IS **FACING**.

JUST SO YOU **KNOW**, THOUGH, THE **BACKS** OF MY HANDS HAVE "V" SHAPES ON 'EM! MY **PALMS** ARE **BLACK!**

Backs

Palms

ON THE **INSIDE** OF MY **UPPER ARMS**, THE "V" **STRIPES** POINT **DOWN**, TOWARD MY ELBOW.

ON THE **OUTSIDE**, THEY POINT **UP**, TOWARD MY **SHOULDER**!

THUMBS ARE LIKE **BIG TOES** (REMEMBER?): PALM **UP**, THUMB **OUTSIDE**; PALM **DOWN**, THUMB **INSIDE**!

EASY, **HUH?**

FOR THE **TWISTY STUFF**, USE **YOUR OWN ARM** AND **HAND** AS A **MODEL**!

WHEN YOU'RE STICKING MY **ARMS** ON MY **BODY**, THEY SHOULD JOIN RIGHT AT MY **SHOULDERS**. IF THERE'S A STRAY **PIXEL OR TWO** AFTERWARDS, JUST SMOOTH IT OUT WITH **EDITBITS**!

WANNA HELP ME **GET MY HEAD TOGETHER**? JUST STICK THE **BOTTOM** OF MY **NECK** ON MY **BODY**!
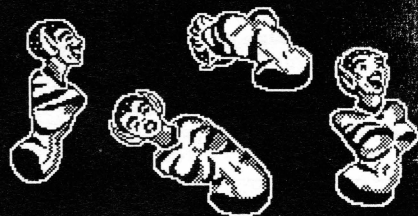
ON **FORESHORTENED** OR **TILTED BODIES** OR **HEADS**, LINE UP THE **CENTER-POINT** OF MY **NECK STRIPE** WITH THE **CENTER POINT** OF MY **CLAVICLE STRIPE**. IF EITHER OF THEM DOESN'T SHOW, JUST OVERLAP MY **NECK STRIPE** WITH MY **BODY STRIPE**! (TICKLES!)

ALL TOGETHER NOW. START WITH MY **TORSO**. NOW ADD MY **HEAD**...

...THEN MY **ARMS** AND **LEGS**. DON'T TRY TO JOIN UP MY **LEGS** FIRST!
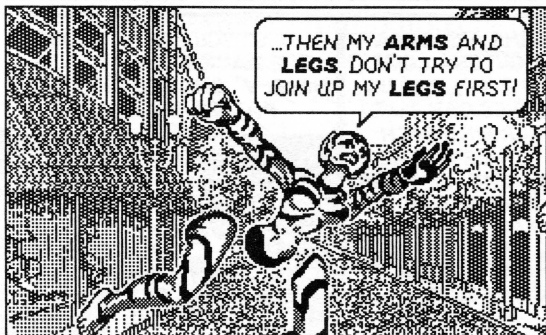
OKAY, NOW **YOU** TRY IT. HOW DO I LOOK? **KINDA WEIRD!** CHECK A MIRROR AND SEE IF YOU CAN TAKE THE **SAME POSITION!** NO? THEN I BETTER TELL YOU ABOUT:

Contrapasto!
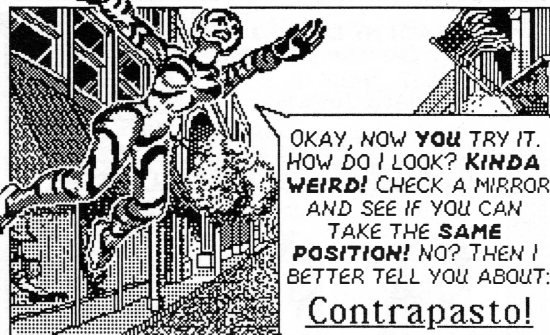
Contrapasto!

THE **BUG** TOOK ME TO AN **ITALIAN RESTAURANT** ONCE AND I **PIGGED OUT** ON THIS STUFF. **HA-HA!**

THAT'S A JOKE.

WHAT IT **REALLY** MEANS IS "HOW TO STAND LIKE A **GREEK STATUE**" OR SOMETHING...WITH **ALL THE ANGLES** OF THE BODY **OPPOSITE** ALL THE **OTHER ANGLES!**
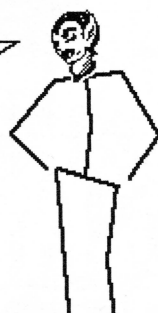
IT'S THE **RIGHT WAY** TO STAND, ANYWAY. THE **SHOULDER** SLANT IS ALWAYS OPPOSITE THE **HIP** SLANT. IF YOU **DON'T BELIEVE** ME, STAND WITH **YOUR WEIGHT ON ONE LEG** AND LOOK IN A **FULL-LENGTH MIRROR!**
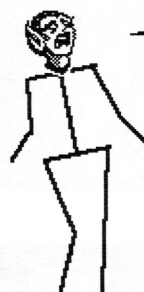
NOW TRY TO SLANT YOUR SHOULDERS THE **SAME WAY** AS YOUR HIP. **ICKO!**

THE **HIGH** HIP SUPPORTS THE WEIGHT. THE **FOOT** ATTACHED TO THE **LEG** ATTACHED TO **THAT HIP** SHOULD BE **UNDER THE CROTCH!**

RIGHT!

YOW!

OFF BALANCE!

YOU SHOULD HAVE AS MANY TORSOS AS YOU NEED FOR THIS BUT YOU CAN HELP BY ASSEMBLING **ONE ARM** SLIGHTLY HIGHER THAN THE **OTHER.** THAT'S WHY MY **SHOULDERS** ARE BUILT INTO MY **ARMS!** **NEATO!**
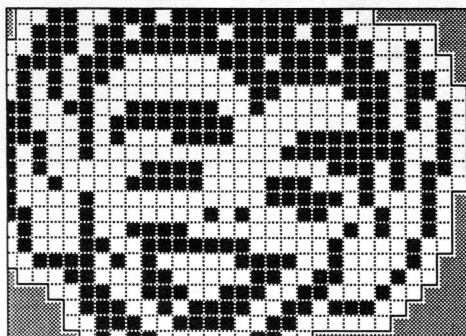
DID I MENTION **FATBITS?** WELL I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT MY **CELLULITE, BUSTER...** NONE OF US HERE IN **C.S.F.** WOULD **THINK** OF TRYING TO GET ALONG **WITHOUT** THESE **LITTLE PIXEL PALS.**

THEY'RE **ACTUALLY** CALLED **EDITBITS** IN THIS PROGRAM. ON THE **NEXT PAGE**, MY LITTLE BUDDY THE **NERD** WILL SHOW YOU WHAT **YOU** CAN DO WITH THEM!

Character Assembly

31
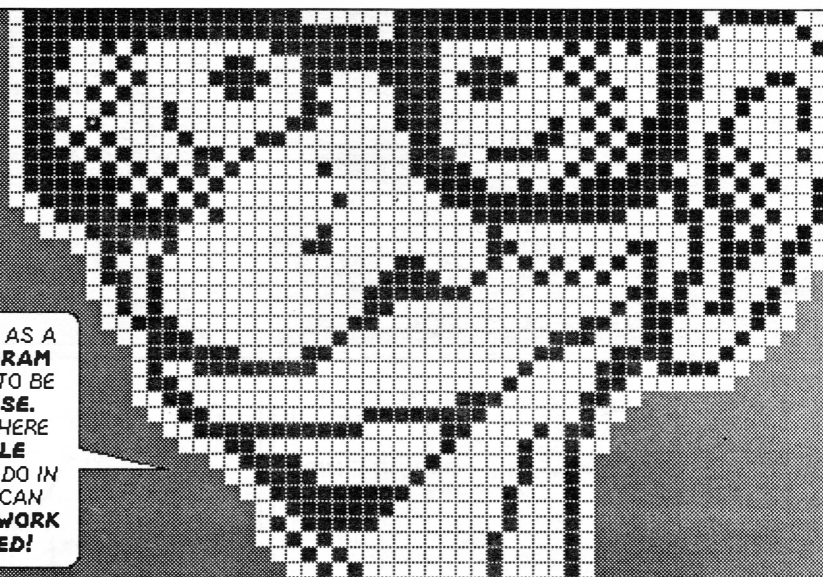
HI! WE BILL **C.S.F.** AS A **GRAPHICS PROGRAM** YOU **DON'T** NEED TO BE AN **ARTIST** TO **USE.** NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE SOME **SIMPLE THINGS** YOU CAN DO IN **EDITBITS** THAT CAN **EXTEND** THE ARTWORK WE'VE SUPPLIED!
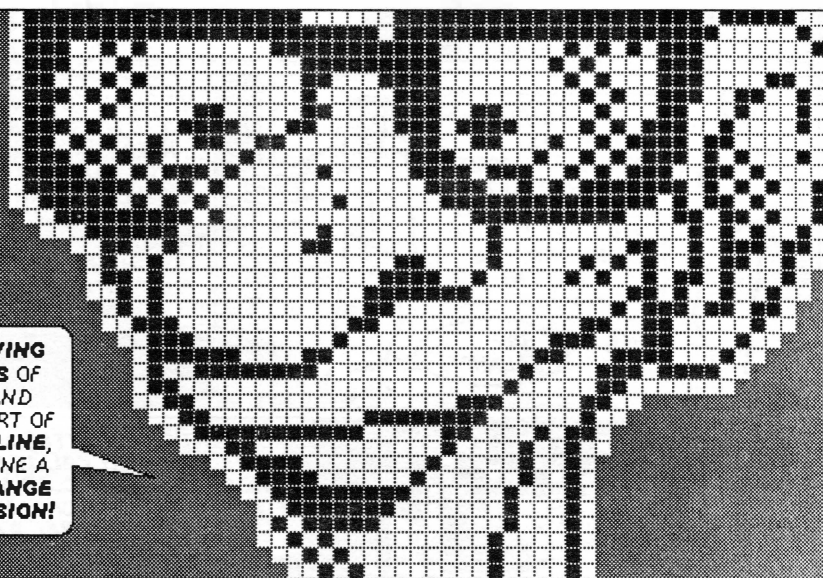
JUST BY **MOVING THE PUPILS** OF THE EYES AND **ERASING** PART OF THE **CHEEK LINE,** I'VE UNDERGONE A **SUBTLE CHANGE OF EXPRESSION!**

SOME *LESS SUBTLE* CHANGES, LIKE *ERASING* THE WHOLE *SMILE LINE* AND *ADDING SHADING* TO THE *NOSE*, MAKE ME LOOK LIKE A *DIFFERENT GUY!*

A *LOT* LESS *HANDSOME,* I MIGHT ADD!

TAKE A FACE THAT'S *ANGRY...*

Character Assembly

33
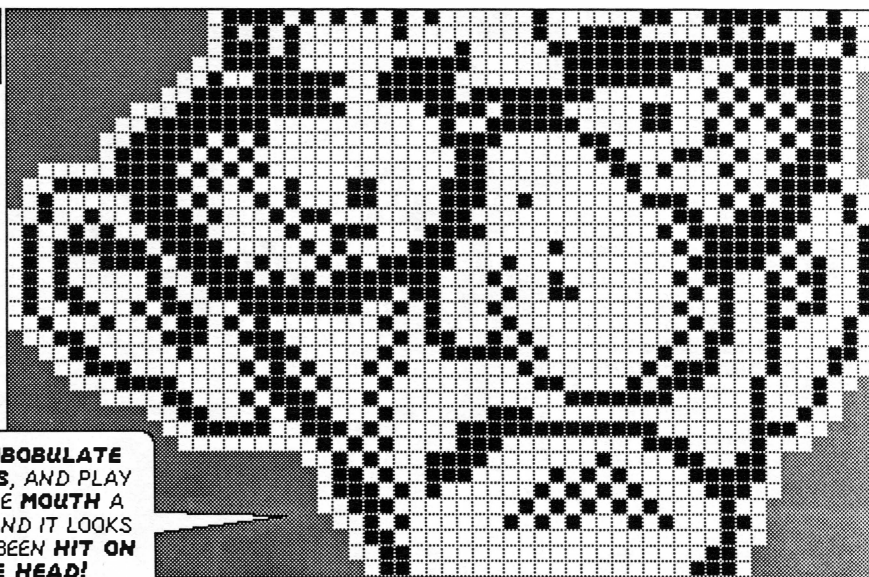
DISCOMBOBULATE THE **EYES**, AND PLAY WITH THE **MOUTH** A LITTLE, AND IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN **HIT ON THE HEAD!**
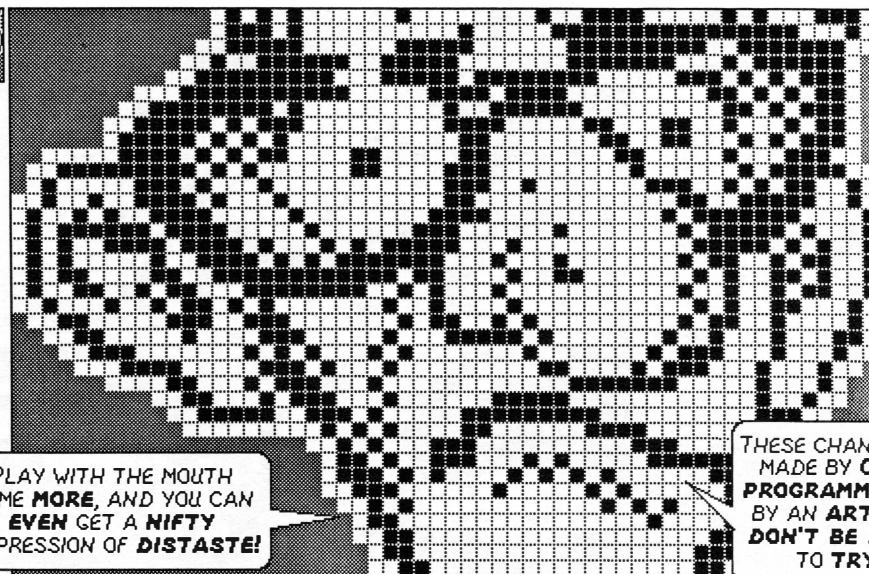
PLAY WITH THE MOUTH SOME **MORE**, AND YOU CAN **EVEN** GET A **NIFTY** EXPRESSION OF **DISTASTE!**

THESE CHANGES WERE MADE BY **C.S.F.'S PROGRAMMER, NOT** BY AN **ARTIST**, SO **DON'T BE AFRAID** TO **TRY IT!**

The Comic Strip Factory Reference

Introduction

The Comic Strip Factory provides all the tools you need to create comic strips. The comic strip can be created using artwork supplied with *The Comic Strip Factory* or graphics created in *MacPaint* and compatible graphics programs. Like *MacPaint*, *The Comic Strip Factory* creates single-page documents. Multiple page comic strips require multiple comic files.

The Comic Strip Factory is a little like *MacDraw* in that it allows you to manipulate parts of the document on the screen as if they were individual objects. Think of these objects as pieces of paper on which elements of the document are drawn: the pieces of paper can then be shuffled around to construct a pleasing whole.

This contrasts with the *MacPaint* "bitmapped" approach, in which the document emulates a piece of paper or a canvas you can paint on. Unlike *MacDraw*, however, the objects that *The Comic Strip Factory* can manipulate are not lines and circles and rectangles, but pieces cut from a *MacPaint* canvas. Special tools in *The Comic Strip Factory* for working with these bitmapped objects— or Parts, as we call them— and other special objects optimize the program for making comics.

Roadmap

This **Introduction** to the reference section of the manual provides

a conceptual overview to *The Comic Strip Factory*, introducing the terms and ideas used elsewhere. The following two sections, **Windows, Keys, and Mouse Actions** and **Menu and Icon Commands**, will give you the meat and potatoes of how to use the program. **Using PartMaker II gives you** to lowdown on *The Comic Strip Factory*'s accompanying utility program for converting *MacPaint* files into Parts files. The final reference section, **Keyboard Shortcuts & Extensions**, is a listing of features that make the program faster and more powerful for the experienced user.

Objects and Panels

The Comic Strip Factory uses graphic **objects** which are placed in, and in front of, **panels**. Objects that overlap the panel boundaries are said to be freed from panels.

Panels are shapes where objects and backgrounds usually appear. Panel arrangement defines the structure and flow of the comic strip. When a comic page is created, it contains rectangular panels, all the same size. Existing panels can be customized by adding resizeable rectangles, ovals, and triangles to panels. And new panels can be created from these three editable shapes. An area of the page may be covered by a panel or be empty, but it can't be covered by more than one panel. Since panels don't overlap, when you add a shape to one panel, you usually also

subtract part of that shape from one or more neighboring panels.

Each panel may be given a background picture and a background pattern.

There are four types of objects. The first are **parts**. Parts are small pictures that are usually pieces of comic characters— heads, bodies, arms, legs, hands, feet, and so on— that can be put together in combinations to populate a comic strip. Parts are supplied with *The Comic Strip Factory* in **parts files**.
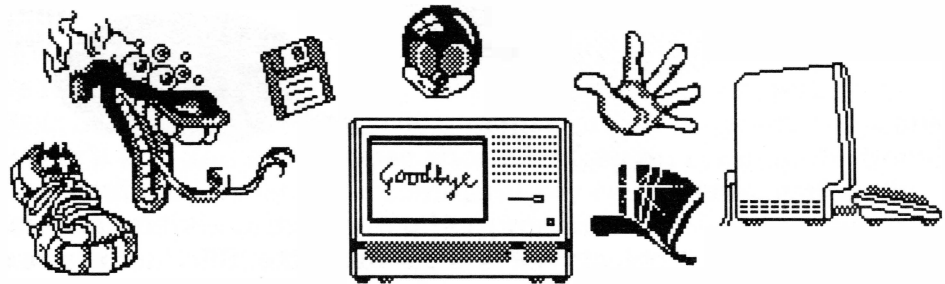
We sell additional parts disks with more comic characters under the name *Comic People*. The first volume, *Office Days*, is already available; sample art from it appears elsewhere in this manual. (Send in your registration card, and we'll let you know about new offerings by flooding you with junk mail!) There are also tools to create new parts files from *MacPaint* artwork. A tool similar to *MacPaint*'s FatBits (we call it **Edit Bits**) allows you to customize parts.

The second object type is the **text object**. Text objects include seven different kinds of dialog and thought balloons and narrative

boxes. Text in balloons can vary by font, style, and size. Text objects are created with a **balloon editor** that has editing features similar to a word processor's. Text can be typed into the **balloon editor** or copied from text-only files created by most Macintosh word processors and text editors. There is also a simple text editor built into The Comic *Strip Factory*. Once a balloon is created, pointers can be added to indicate the speaker or speakers. The balloon shape can be customized with **Edit Bits**.
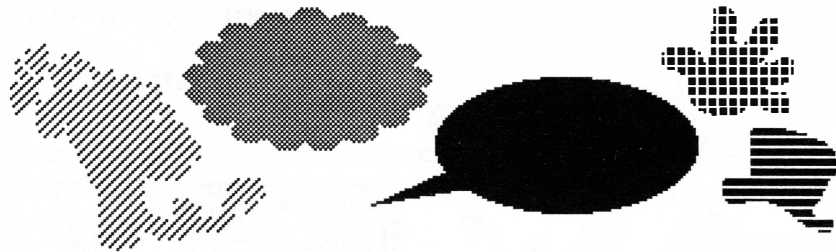
The third object type is the **silhouette**. Silhouettes are shadows of other objects. They are unique to *The Comic Strip Factory*. Silhouettes are created black, but can be changed to a pattern, and they can be painted over the background and objects they cover; or they can be semitransparent, lightening or darkening the background. The silhouette shape can be edited with *The Comic Strip Factory*'s by-now famous **Edit Bits** command.

The final object type is the **group**. A group is a collection of objects of any type, including other groups. **Group** is a convenience feature: once you've assembled parts, silhouettes, and text balloons, you can group them. Grouping makes many objects behave as a single object, making it easier to move and copy the group intact.

Grouping isn't permanent: To change the head on a character that

you've grouped, for example, you can easily ungroup the character, delete the old head, put in the new one, and group it again.

The Icon Bar

The Comic Strip Factory includes another convenience: the **Icon Bar**.

Under the menu bar is a white strip containing fourteen icons. The icons duplicate frequently used menu commands. Since *The Comic Strip Factory* is primarily a mouse-driven program, the icons provide a fast and easy mouse shortcut to menu commands. Some menu commands also have command key equivalents, especially those commands common to other programs. When a command is unavailable, both its menu item and its icon dim.

On the right-hand side of the icon bar is a white space. When the program is in certain special modes, such as the balloon editor, Edit Bits, and Show Page, two buttons appear here: **OK** and **Cancel**. These buttons are used to exit those modes.

Windows

There are four types of *The Comic Strip Factory* windows. First and most important is the **Comic window**. This is where a comic document is edited. A Comic window is opened by choosing **New...** or **Open...** from the **File** menu and clicking the **Comic Strip** radio button in the resulting dialog.

Second is the **Background window**. This holds the background picture associated with the currently opened comic file. A background picture is loaded from a *MacPaint* file with the **Install Background** command in the **File** menu.

The Background window treats a *MacPaint* file in one of three ways: 8" by 10" Portrait (the normal *MacPaint* orientation), 16" by 5" Wide Screen, or 24" by 3 1/3" Panorama.

The Icon Bar

Install Background... creates Wide Screens and Panoramas by dividing the portrait into two or three horizontal strips, then reassembling them next to each other. Four background pictures are provided with *The Comic Strip Factory*, and you can use any *MacPaint* file as a background as well. Once installed, the background picture can be changed or blanked out with the **Change Background...** item in the **File** menu, which replaces **Install Background...** when a background is installed.

The third window is the **Text window**. This is a basic text editor that can be used to write comic strip scripts. Scripts can also be written in *MacWrite*, *Microsoft Word* and other programs that save text-only files. Text in the Text window can be selected with the mouse and brought into the balloon editor to be transformed into text objects.

The Text window is opened by choosing the **New...** or **Open...** command from the **File** menu and clicking the **Text** radio button in the resulting dialog.

The fourth window is the **Parts window**. The Parts window is where parts files supplied with *The Comic Strip Factory* are loaded, and where new parts files are created. Parts can be created by pasting graphics into this window from *MacPaint* and other graphics programs. Parts can be moved into the Comic window using the usual **Edit** menu features, or using **Copy to Panel**, a special, faster copying feature of *The Comic Strip Factory*.

The Parts window is opened with the **New...** or **Open...** command in the **File** menu and the **Parts** radio button in the resulting dialog.

Windows, Keys, and Mouse Actions

All four windows behave like windows in most other Macintosh programs. Clicking on a window behind another window brings the rear window to the front. Dragging the title bar moves the window; dragging the grow box (in the lower right corner) resizes the window. Scroll bars scroll in expected ways (refer to your Macintosh user's manual if you're not familiar with the Macintosh

user interface).

The Comic Window

contains the comic document. It consists of panels and areas not
bounded by panels. There must always be at least one panel in a
Comic window. There is always one panel selected, and up to
thirty-two objects may be selected as well. Most editing actions act
on the selected objects and the current panel. The current panel is
outlined with a gray border, and the selected objects are
surrounded with animated rectangular marquees.
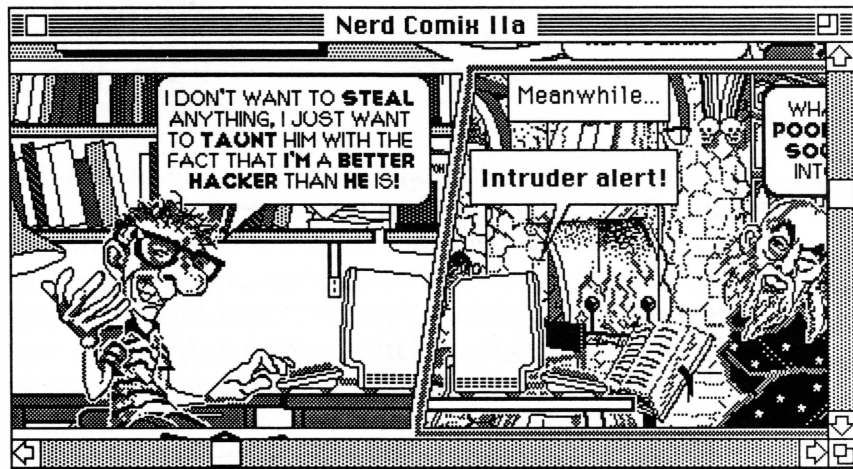
Pressing the Tab key scrolls the window to the current panel if it is
not entirely visible in the window.

Objects are selected in the Comic window as icons are selected in
the Finder, with the following restrictions and limitations. Only
thirty-two objects can be selected at once. These may include both
objects restricted to the current panel and objects freed from panel
boundaries. The selection may not include objects that are
restricted to other panels. An object is shown to be selected by an
animated marquee rectangle around it.

shift

Clicking on an object selects it. If the Shift key is held down,
previously selected objects remain selected; otherwise, clicking
deselects previously selected objects. Clicking on a point where
there is no object, without holding down the Shift key, deselects

The Comic Window

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all objects. Shift clicking on a selected object deselects that object without deselecting other selected objects.

Clicking in a panel other than the selected one, except to select a freed object, selects the new panel as the current panel and deselects all selected objects.

The availability of menu items depends on what object or objects are selected. Most menu actions are performed on selected objects.

Clicking on an area where there is no object and dragging stretches a selection rectangle. When the mouse it released, objects inside or overlapping the rectangle are selected. If the Shift key is down, the new selections are added to objects already selected.

shift
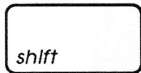
Clicking on a selected object and dragging moves that object and other selected objects when the mouse is released. If the mouse cursor enters a panel other than the selected one while objects are being dragged, the newly entered panel is selected. Any restricted objects are dropped into the panel that is selected when the mouse is released, unless they don't overlap it, in which case they are freed from panel boundaries.

Dragging objects beyond the Comic window's edge causes the window to "auto-scroll" in that direction.

option

Holding down the Option key while clicking on and dragging objects moves copies of the objects, leaving the originals where they were.

⌘
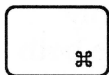
Holding down the Command key while clicking on and dragging objects restricts movement to the vertical or horizontal axis, depending on which direction the mouse is first moved.

Pressing the Backspace key deletes all selected objects.

The Background Window
contains the background picture, which is actually stored as part of the comic document. When the Background window is brought to the front, it displays an animated outline representing the

current panel in the Comic window. The location of this outline (along with settings in the **Background Pattern** dialog) determines the background picture displayed in the panel.
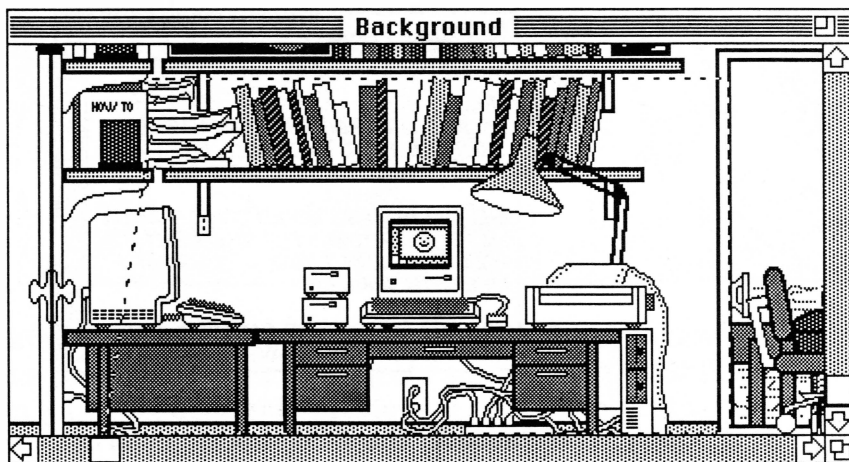
The background picture of the selected panel may be changed by dragging the animated panel shape to another location on the background picture. If the distance you want to move the shape is larger than the window, you can scroll to the desired destination and click the mouse to "snap" the shape to the new point. Or, if you drag the shape off the edge of the window, the window will auto-scroll in that direction.

The part of the background picture surrounded by the animated shape is copied to the panel by the **Copy to Panel** command in the **Panel** menu. This also brings the Comic window to the front. Any other method of bringing another window to the front leaves the background of the panel unchanged.

The Text Window
contains a text-only document which may have been created in *The Comic Strip Factory* or a word processor or text editor.

Clicking the mouse in the text places an insertion point; clicking and dragging selects a range of text. Typing while a selection is displayed deletes the selected text and replaces the selection with an insertion point. Typing while there is an insertion point inserts

the characters typed at the insertion point.

```
▤▢▦▦▦▦ Ad Text ▦▦▦▦▢▤
(CIRCULAR PANEL)                        ⬆
FEATURING FRED NERD!

FRED:
I'M JUST AN ORDINARY COMPUTER GUY.
SURE, I'VE TRIED MACPAINT, BUT I
CAN'T REALLY DO ANYTHING ON IT.

BUT I'VE ALWAYS LOVED COMICS. AND I
HAVE GREAT IDEAS FOR THEM! BUT, OF
COURSE, I CAN'T DRAW A STRAIGHT
LINE WITH A RULER!

SO I GOT COMIC STRIP FACTORY, AND   ⬇
IT'S GREAT! I DON'T HAVE TO DRAW:   ▣
```
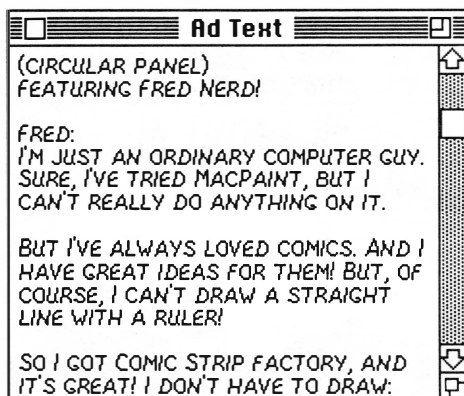
Cut, **Copy**, and **Paste** in the **Edit** menu perform as they do in other text edit programs. **Cut** deletes the selection, leaving a copy on the Clipboard. **Copy** copies the selection to the Clipboard. **Paste** replaces the selected text with the Clipboard contents or inserts the Clipboard contents at the insertion point.

Selected text is copied into the balloon editor by selecting **Copy to Panel** from the **Panel** menu. Text can then be made into a balloon and placed in the Comic window.

The Parts Window
contains parts that may be copied to the comic document. A parts document is a library of parts; it usually contains a set of parts that are used to create a single character. Some parts files may contain props (things) or body parts for use by more than one character. Actually, since you can create your own parts files, the Parts window can contain whatever assortment of parts you want.

Selecting objects in the Parts window works like selecting icons in the Finder. There are fewer restrictions in the Parts window than on selecting and manipulating parts in the Comic window because the Parts window contains no panels. Still, only thirty-two objects may be selected at once. An object is shown to be selected by an animated rectangle around it.

Root Wiz
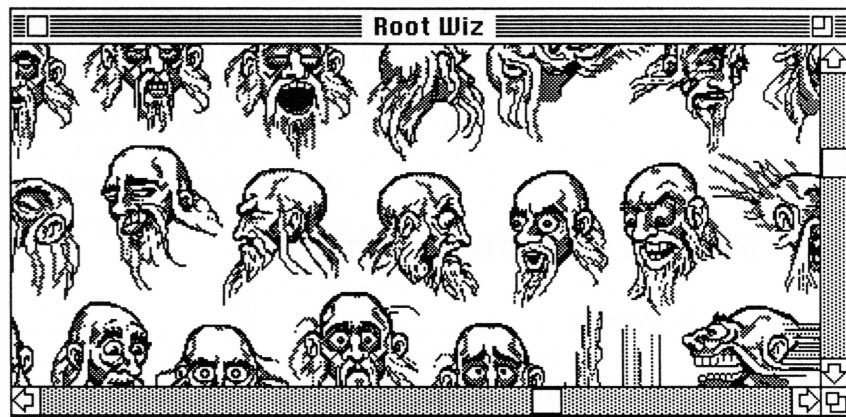
shift

Clicking on an object selects it. If the Shift key is down, clicking leaves previously selected objects selected; if the Shift key isn't down, clicking deselects previously selected objects.

Clicking where there isn't an object, without holding the Shift key down, deselects all objects. Shift-clicking on a selected object deselects that object without deselecting other selected objects.

Clicking on an area where there is no object and dragging stretches a selection rectangle. When the mouse is released, objects inside or overlapping this rectangle are selected. If the Shift key is down, the objects are added to the objects currently selected.

The availability of certain menu items depends on what object or objects are selected. Most menu actions are performed on the selected objects.

Hitting the Backspace key deletes all selected objects.

Clicking on a selected object and dragging moves that and all other selected objects when the mouse is released. Dragging objects off the window auto-scrolls the window in that direction. Holding down the Option key while clicking on and dragging objects leaves a copy of the objects behind.

option

Holding down the Command key while clicking on and dragging objects restricts the movement to the vertical or horizontal axis,

⌘

The Parts Window

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depending on which direction the mouse is first moved.

Selected parts may be copied to the current panel of the Comic window, bypassing the **Edit** menu, by selecting **Copy to Panel** from the **Panel** menu.

Menu and Icon Commands

Apple Menu

The Comic Strip Factory has a standard Apple menu. The first item is **About Comic Strip Factory...**, where program credits are shown. The remainder of the menu contains the desk accessories installed in your system.

File Menu

New...
brings up the **New Document Type** dialog from which you can select the kind of document— Comic Strip, Parts, or Text— to create.

```
New Document Type:
  ● Comic Strip
  ○ Parts          [ Cancel ]
  ○ Text           [   OK   ]
```
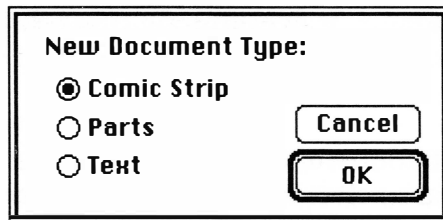
Since *The Comic Strip Factory* can only have one of each kind of document open at once, radio buttons in the dialog for types already open are dimmed. The first available type will be preselected. Depending on the radio button selected when you click **OK**, the following will happen:

The **Parts** radio button creates a new parts document and opens the Parts window. It is available only when no parts document is open.

The **Text** radio button creates a new text document and opens the Text window. It is available only when no text document is open.

The **Comic Strip** radio button creates a new comic document. It is available only when no comic document is open. It brings up the **Initial Layout** dialog, which allows you to establish the initial layout of panels on the page.
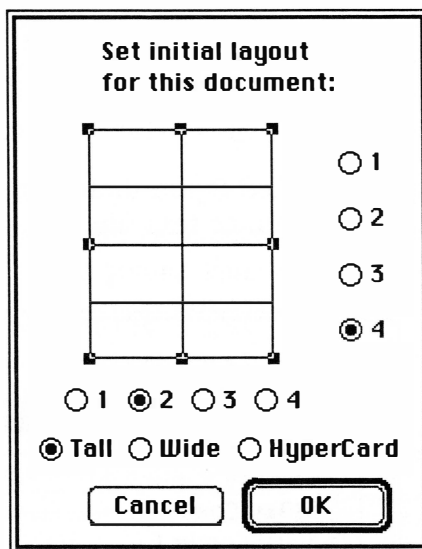
You can create a layout that consists of up to four rows of panels and up to four panels in each row. The panels will be rectangles of equal size and shape. The layout is reflected in a diagram in the middle of the dialog. Two sets of four radio buttons, to the right of and below the diagram, select the number of rows and number of panels per row.

The **Tall**, **Wide**, and **HyperCard** radio buttons select page size and orientation. **Tall** is eight inches wide by ten inches tall. **Wide** is ten inches wide by eight inches tall. These sizes were selected for compatibility with *MacPaint*. **HyperCard** size is the same size as the original Macintosh screen. It allows you to create comics that can be saved as *MacPaint* and then loaded into *HyperCard* stacks. It's also good for creating comic startup screens.

The stretch handles on the page rectangle allow the area of the

File Menu

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page that will be filled with panels to be changed. Note that in a **HyperCard** layout, the default panel layout leaves a small amount of space at the top. This space is so that the comic won't be partially obscured by the menu bar when the comic is imported into *HyperCard*. If you are designing a stack in wh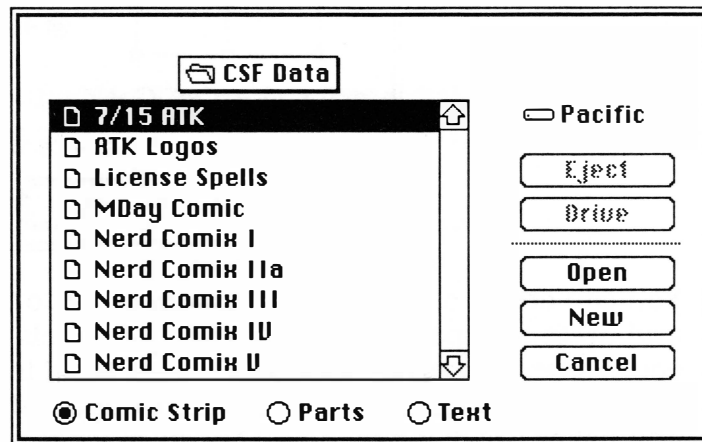ich the menu bar will be hidden, or if you are using the **HyperCard** option to make a startup screen, you might want to stretch the rectangle upwards to cover the whole page.

All changes to the default layout will be shown in the diagram. Clicking **OK** creates a new document laid out as shown.

Open...

brings up a modified **Open** dialog and allows you to open or create a comic strip, parts, or text file.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│         ┌───────────────┐                    │
│         │ ⌨ CSF Data    │                    │
│         ├───────────────┤  ┌─┐               │
│         │ ▢ 7/15 ATK      ⇧ │  ▭ Pacific     │
│         │ ▢ ATK Logos       │                │
│         │ ▢ License Spells  │  ┌─────────┐   │
│         │ ▢ MDay Comic      │  │ Eject   │   │
│         │ ▢ Nerd Comix I    │  └─────────┘   │
│         │ ▢ Nerd Comix IIa  │  ┌─────────┐   │
│         │ ▢ Nerd Comix III  │  │ Drive   │   │
│         │ ▢ Nerd Comix IV   │  └─────────┘   │
│         │ ▢ Nerd Comix V  ⇩ │  ┌─────────┐   │
│         └───────────────────┘  │  Open   │   │
│                                └─────────┘   │
│                                ┌─────────┐   │
│                                │  New    │   │
│                                └─────────┘   │
│                                ┌─────────┐   │
│  ◉ Comic Strip  ○ Parts  ○ Text│ Cancel  │   │
│                                └─────────┘   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

The three radio buttons at the bottom of the dialog act like those in the **New Document Type** dialog: They determine the kind of file to be opened or created. If a file of a given type is already opened, the corresponding radio button will be dimmed. The first available radio button will be the one selected when the dialog first comes up. To open a file of a given type, select that type by clicking on its radio button. The list of files presented will all be files of that type. Click on the file desired, or use the standard **Open** dialog controls to find the file you want in another disk or directory and then click on the file desired, and click the **Open** button to open the file.

To create a new document, click on the type of the document you wish to create and click the **New** button. The program will proceed as if you had selected that document type from the **New Document Type** dialog: See **New...** above.
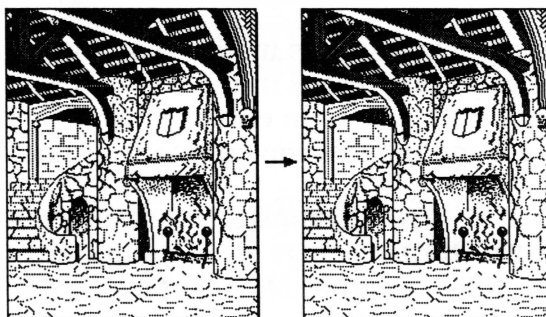
Install Background...

brings up the standard **Open** dialog and allows you to select a *MacPaint* file to be the background picture for the current comic document. It is available only when there is a comic file open that does not already have a background associated with it (see **Change Background...**). After it opens the Background window and displays the picture, it brings up the **Background Dimensions** dialog.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  ┌───────────────────────────────────┐  │
│  │      Background Dimensions:       │  │
│  │                                   │  │
│  │  ● Panorama (24" x 3.33")         │  │
│  │  ○ Wide Screen (16" x 5")         │  │
│  │  ○ Portrait (8" x 10")            │  │
│  │                                   │  │
│  │  [ Change Picture ] [ Blank ] [  OK  ] │
│  └───────────────────────────────────┘  │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
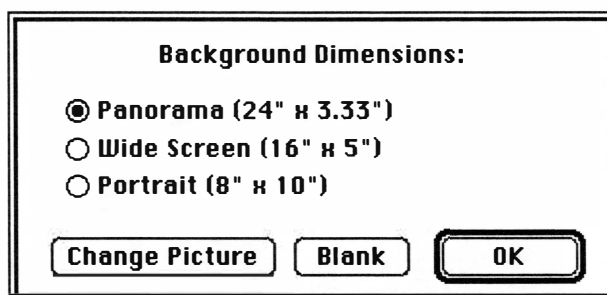
The **Background Dimensions** dialog has three radio buttons to set the background type. A *MacPaint* file is always eight inches wide by ten inches tall. We call those dimensions **Portrait** dimensions.

A background can be drawn in two other ways. One way is to

divide a *MacPaint* picture into three horizontal strips then display the strips as a single strip, three times as wide as the *MacPaint* file, but only a third as tall; we call this **Panorama**.
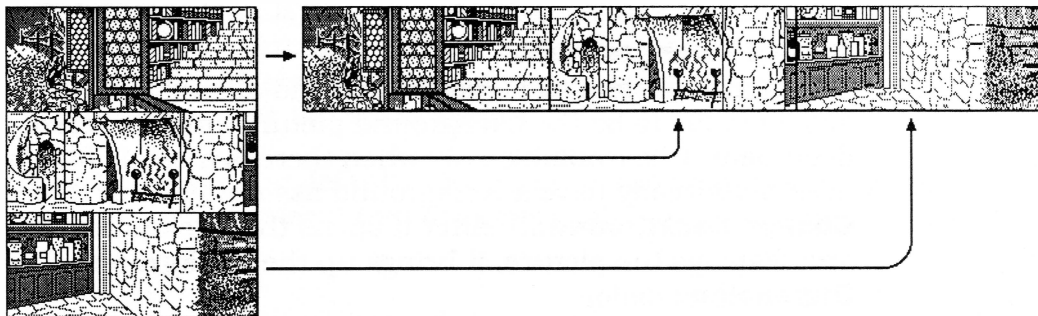
The other divides the paint file into two horizontal strips and reconnects them twice as wide as the *MacPaint* file, but only half as tall; this is called **Wide Screen**.
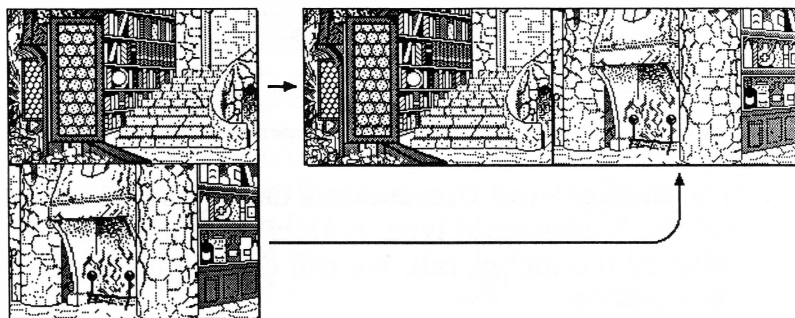
Once a background is installed and interpreted in one of these three ways, any panel in the comic that is not larger than the background picture in either dimension can have part of the background picture copied into it as background.

Also on the **Background Dimensions** dialog are three buttons. **Change Picture** brings up the standard **Open** dialog and allows you to select another *MacPaint* file as the background. **Blank** allows you to return to the original state of having no background picture associated with the file. It closes the background window and exits the dialog. **OK** accepts settings you've made and exits

the dialog.

Change Background...
is available when a comic that already has a background associated with it is open. It brings up the **Background Dimensions** dialog, where you can change the dimensions of the background or replace the background picture with another (see **Install Background...**). Any changes made will affect backgrounds in all panels that show background pictures.

Close
If the Comic window, the Text window, or the Parts window is in front, **Close** closes the window. If there have been changes to the file since it was opened or last saved, you're first asked if you want to save your changes. If a desk accessory is frontmost, the **Close** command closes the desk accessory. The desk accessory may then ask if you want to save data. Since the background is part of the comic file and not a separate document, if the Background window is in front, the **Close** menu item is disabled. The background window may be closed without closing the Comic window by clicking the **Blank** button on the **Background Dimensions** dialog, accessible through the **Change Background...** and **Install Background...** commands. See **Install Background...**.
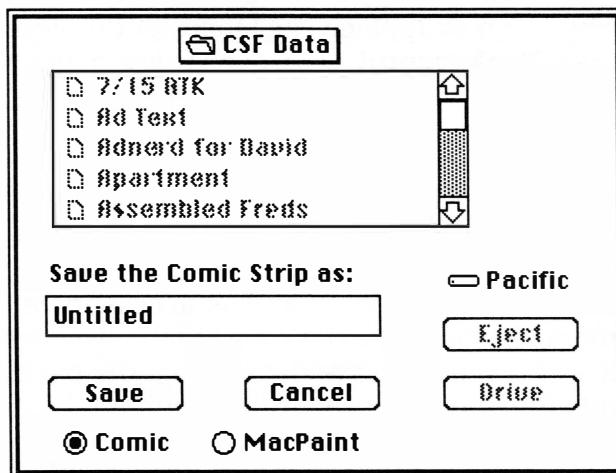
Save
If the Comic window, the Text window, or the Parts window is frontmost, the **Save** command saves the document in the window. If the file has never been saved (when the window is titled "Untitled"), the program will ask you for a file name through the standard **Save As** dialog. See **Save As...**. Since the background is part of the comic file, if the background window is in front, this menu item is disabled.

Save As...
If the Text window or the Parts window is in front, this command brings up the standard **Save As** dialog and allows you to name and save the document in that window.

If the Comic window is in front, the **Save As** dialog includes two radio buttons that allow you to choose between saving the comic as a comic file or as a *MacPaint* readable file. Wide documents will

be rotated to fit into *MacPaint* format. Since *The Comic Strip Factory* can't open *MacPaint* files as comic files, it does not consider that the document has been saved if it has only been saved in *MacPaint* format. Closing the document will still result in the program asking if you want to save it first.

```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────┐
│    ┌──────────────────────┐                │
│    │  🗁 CSF Data         │                │
│    ┌────────────────────────┐  ┌─┐         │
│    │ ▯ 7/15 RTK            │ ⬆ │         │
│    │ ▯ Ad Text            │  ├─┤         │
│    │ ▯ Adnerd for David   │  │▓│         │
│    │ ▯ Apartment          │  ├─┤         │
│    │ ▯ Assembled Freds    │ ⬇ │         │
│    └────────────────────────┘  └─┘         │
│                                            │
│    Save the Comic Strip as:     ⊂⊃ Pacific │
│    ┌──────────────────────────┐            │
│    │ Untitled                 │  ┌────────┐│
│    └──────────────────────────┘  │  Eject ││
│    ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐   └────────┘│
│    │   Save   │   │  Cancel  │   ┌────────┐│
│    └──────────┘   └──────────┘   │  Drive ││
│     ◉ Comic    ○ MacPaint        └────────┘│
└──────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Since the background is part of the comic file, if the Background window is in front, this menu item is disabled.

Print...

If the Comic window or Parts window is in front, this command prints the document in that window. *The Comic Strip Factory* begins printing immediately, without going through a standard **Print** dialog. It does bring up a **Now Printing...** dialog, and allows you to cancel by holding down the Command key and hitting period.

If the Background window or Text window is in front, this command is disabled.

Transfer...

Since *The Comic Strip Factory* is designed to use data from other programs, we included **Transfer...** in the **File** menu. This allows you to run another program without quitting to the Finder. **Transfer...** asks if you wish to save open files before exiting. This allows you to save changes, discard changes, or cancel the

operation. If you don't cancel, the standard **Open** dialog is displayed after all files are closed. From this dialog you can select an application to run.

In conjunction with the **Transfer...** item in PartMaker II, you can move back and forth between *The Comic Strip Factory* and PartMaker II quickly.

Quit

quits *The Comic Strip Factory* . It first closes any open documents and, if they haven't been saved, asks if you wish to save them.

Edit Menu

Undo

will undo most actions in the Comic window and Parts window. Undoable actions include

- dragging,
- duplicating,
- deleting,
- Pasting, and
- all commands in the **Object** and **Arrange** menus.

Changes to panels, including changing the shape, background picture, or panel pattern, can't be undone.

In addition to Command-Z, the ⌐ key is a shortcut for **Undo**.

Cut

in the Comic window and Parts window puts copies of the selected objects on the Clipboard and deletes them from the document. In the Text window it does the same with selected text. It is unavailable from the Background window.

(The *Clipboard* is a Macintosh convention: it is where data goes when cut or copied. The Clipboard only remembers the *last thing* cut or copied. The contents of the Clipboard can be inserted at a new location, in another document, or in some cases even in another program's document with the **Paste** command.)

Copy

in the Comic window and Parts window puts copies of the selected objects on the Clipboard. In the Text window it does the same with selected text. It is unavailable from the Background window.

Paste

puts whatever is on the Clipboard into the selected window, if applicable. Parts, groups, text objects, and silhouettes may be pasted into the Comic window. Only parts may be pasted into the Parts window: Groups, text objects, and silhouettes are converted to parts. Only text may be pasted into the Text window. Nothing may be pasted into the Background window.

Pasting graphics from outside the program into the Comic window or Parts window has a few options. Multiple objects can be pasted from sources outside *The Comic Strip Factory* . Also, pictures can be pasted in as a single rectangular object.

Which type of Paste— "Paste as multiple objects," or "Paste as one object," is determined by the picture on the clipboard and by keyboard modifiers.

Follow along, and we'll explain how it works.

Smart Paste

Without a modifier key, **Paste** first tries to separate distinct objects in the picture. This is useful if, for example, you create a set of parts (separate objects) in a paint program, then paste them in all at once. If there are fewer than thirty-two parts on the clipboard, **Paste** treats them as separate objects.

After separating the picture into objects, **Paste** checks to see if any of the objects are close to other objects. ("Close" means separated by only one white dot.) If the objects are close together, you probably intended them as one object, not many separate objects. And that's what **Paste** assumes. The neighboring objects are then merged together before pasting.

That's one way smart **Paste** works. Here's the other way: If a picture on the clipboard contains more than thirty-two distinct objects, the picture is pasted as a single object with a rectangular

background mask. This is a handy way to use part of a *MacPaint* picture as a panel background.

(Note: Smart Paste applies only to pictures pasted from outside *The Comic Strip Factory*, not overlapping parts copied from within the program. Objects cut or copied within *The Comic Strip Factory* will paste as they originally appeared, unless modified by a special **Paste** command, as described below.)

option

Option-Paste
Option-**Paste** gives you more control over **Paste**.

If you hold down the Option key while pasting, the contents of the Clipboard are pasted as a single part with a rectangular mask. This applies to pictures cut from within *The Comic Strip Factory* or from another source.

Subsequent **Paste** commands also paste this one object, unless modified by the Shift key as described below.

Note on using objects as background...

As we mentioned above, a single object with a rectangular mask is useful as an alternate panel background.

Such an object isn't the same as a standard background, though. It should be "sent to the back," or it will cover other objects in the panel. Also, be careful not to send other objects behind it. The "background object" can still be selected and moved as an object, so you won't be able to start a selection rectangle in that panel.

Even sent to the back, the background object is in front of the "real" background pattern, so the **Background Pattern...** menu item can't be used to lighten or darken it.

You can, however, do this: Make a silhouette of the object, bring the silhouette in front of the object, select a pattern and whether to darken or lighten from the **Set Pattern...** dialog.

This is one workaround to the limitation of one background picture per file. Another workaround is to use a paint program

Edit Menu

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to create a composite background file from the desired parts of two or more existing background files.

Shift-Paste

Shift-**Paste** is the opposite of Option-**Paste**. It tells the program to try harder to paste the clipboard as separate objects with fitted background masks.

If the clipboard contains objects copied from *The Comic Strip Factory*, Shift-**Paste** first makes the objects into a single picture, then attempts to separate them.

Shift-**Paste** is somewhat different from the standard **Paste** command. Shift-**Paste** tries to merge objects with neighboring objects as each object is created instead of waiting until all objects are found. This means the thirty-two object limit is reached much later than with the standard **Paste** command. (The trade-off is that Shift-**Paste** isn't as fast as Smart **Paste**.)

Here's an example.

You use standard **Paste** with a picture from a paint program. You want to paste separate objects, but standard **Paste** interprets the clipboard as a single rectangular object.

To force the issue— to make **Paste** try harder to separate objects— try again with Shift-**Paste**.

If the Clipboard still pastes as a single object, try pasting fewer items at a time.

Shift-**Paste** is also useful for splitting one object into two objects. Using **Edit Bits...**, erase enough of the object's black bits to simulate two separate objects. (Black bits of the intended separate objects must be separated by at least two dots.) It's not necessary to erase the white bits. Click **OK**. Copy the object to the clipboard then Shift-**Paste**. The clipboard will paste in as two objects.

Like Option-**Paste**, Shift-**Paste** changes the contents of the clipboard to the set of objects just pasted.

If both the Option key and the Shift key are held down while pasting, the Shift key will be ignored and an Option-**Paste** will be performed.

Pasting Recap
Here again, in abbreviated form, are the various ways to paste:

Paste, if fewer than 32 objects, tries to paste as separate objects. Neighboring objects are merged. If more than 32 objects, pastes as a single rectangular object.

Option-Paste pastes as a single rectangular object.

Shift-Paste tries harder to paste as separate objects.

Clear
if the Comic, Text, or Parts window is in front, Clear deletes whatever is selected, without storing it on the Clipboard. The previous contents of the Clipboard, if any, remain intact. The Clear command is unavailable in the Background window.

Show Page...
if the Comic window is in front, displays a miniature version of the layout of the comic document. The comic displayed is simplified: all objects are shown as black outlines around white shapes, and panels with any other background but white are shown in light
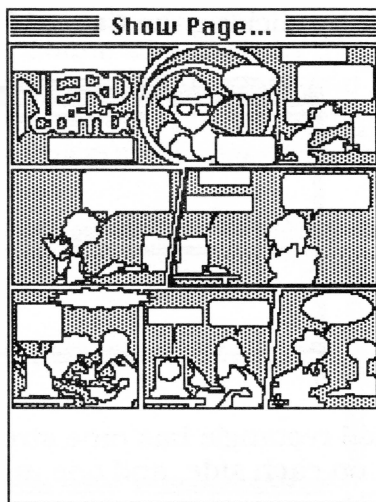
gray. The current panel has a bolder outline than the other panels.

A new panel may be chosen as the current panel in the **Show Page** dialog by clicking in it. Clicking outside of the panel boundaries places a crosshair on the miniature page at that point.

Entering Show Page mode brings up an **OK** and a **Cancel** button on the right-hand end of the icon bar. If the last click on the miniature page was inside a panel, clicking the **OK** button scrolls the document to that panel. If the last click was outside all of the panel boundaries, clicking **OK** scrolls the document to that point. Clicking the **Cancel** button closes the miniature page without changing the selected panel or scrolling the document.

Panel Menu

Add Rectangle
is available when the Comic window is in front. It creates an animated, stretchable rectangle the same size and location as the selected panel and places you in panel reshaping mode. **OK** and **Cancel** buttons appear on the icon bar. In this mode, you can scroll the document or select a different panel. You cannot select or move objects, issue other commands, or bring other windows to the front. The purpose of this mode is to reshape a panel by adding the animated shape to it or to create a new panel from the animated shape. You can exit this mode without changing the panel layout by clicking the **Cancel** button on the icon bar.
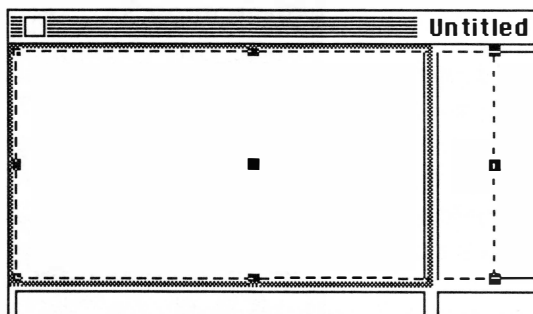

The animated rectangle has nine stretch handles: one on each corner, one on each side, and one in the middle. By grabbing the

stretch handles, you can move or reshape the rectangle. Clicking the **OK** button on the icon bar has several possible effects:

- If the animated rectangle borders or overlaps the selected panel and the Command key is not held down, the animated rectangle is added to the selected panel and subtracted from other overlapping panels.

- If the animated rectangle does not border on the current panel, a new panel is created from the animated rectangle, the shape of which is subtracted from overlapping panels.
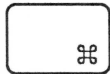
- If the Command key is held down while **OK** is clicked, a new panel is created from the animated rectangle, the shape of which is subtracted from overlapping panels. The background pattern and picture in the new panel will be consistent with the background in the selected panel.

- If the Shift key is not held down while **OK** is clicked, panel reshaping mode is exited and the animated shape is discarded.
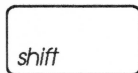
- If the Shift key is held down while **OK** is clicked, panel reshaping mode is not exited. The same rectangle can be added to the same panel or another panel, or a new panel can be created from it, by moving or reshaping it and clicking **OK** again.

Add Oval
is available when the Comic window is in front. It creates an animated, stretchable oval the same size and location as the selected panel and places you in panel reshaping mode. This is used primarily for adding curved edges to panels and making

Panel Menu

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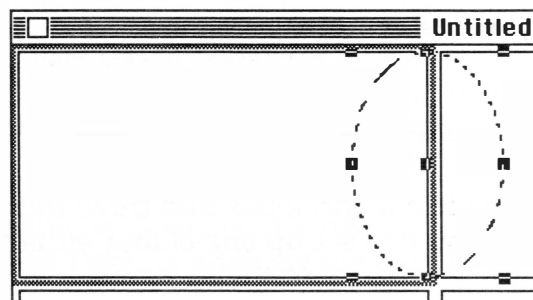
circular panels. See **Add Rectangle**.

Add Triangle

is available when the Comic window is in front. It creates an animated, stretchable triangle the same size and location as the selected panel and places you in panel reshaping mode. The triangle, having only three sides and three corners, has only seven stretch handles. This is used primarily for adding slanted and jagged edges to panels. See **Add Rectangle**.
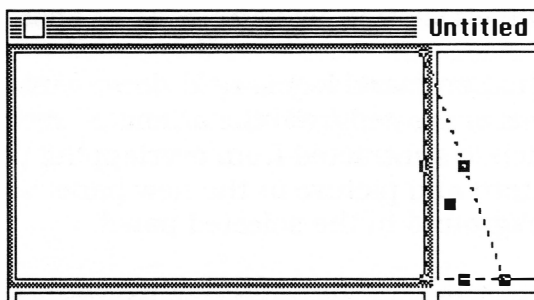
Background Pattern...

if the Comic window is in front, brings up the **Background Pattern** dialog, allowing you to set a number of background options in the current panel. Panel backgrounds consist of part of the background picture and a pattern. Either the picture or the pattern may be unused. The **Background Pattern** dialog contains thirty-eight patterns which you can select by clicking. The large square on the left displays the current pattern.
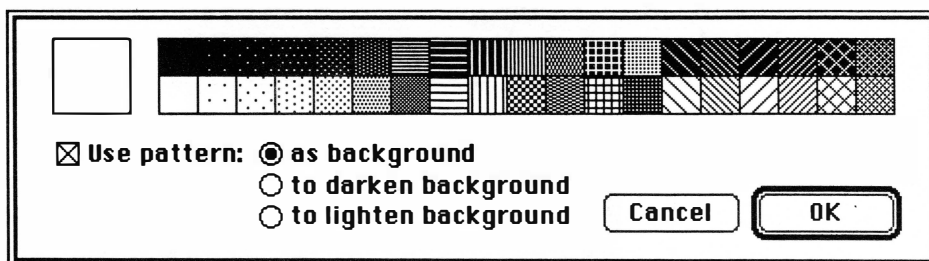
The dialog has a check box and three radio buttons. Using these controls, you can set up one of four situations.

- If the **Use pattern** checkbox is unchecked, the three radio buttons are dimmed; their settings are remembered, but ignored. The panel will display the background picture without any pattern modification.

- If the **Use Pattern** box is checked and the **as background** radio button is on, only the selected pattern is used as the background; no picture is displayed.

- If the **Use Pattern** box is checked and the **to darken background** button is on, the selected pattern is washed over the picture like a watercolor. White parts of the picture are darkened (replaced with the pattern) and black parts are left alone.

- If the **Use Pattern** box is checked and the **to lighten background** button is on, the selected pattern is subtracted from the picture, producing an "overexposed photograph" effect. Black parts of the picture are lightened (replaced with the pattern) and white parts are left alone.

If the Parts window is in front, **Background Pattern...** brings up the same dialog without the check box or radio buttons. This is used simply to select a background pattern for the Parts window. The menu item is unavailable for other windows.

Copy to Panel
is available in the Background, Parts, and Text windows, but not in the Comic window.

- In the Parts window, it copies the selected part or parts into the current panel and brings the Comic window to the front, scrolling to the selected panel if necessary.

- In the Background window, it places the part of the background surrounded by the animated shape in the background of the selected panel and brings the Comic window to the front, scrolling to the selected panel if necessary.

- In the Text window, it copies the selected text into the balloon editor (see **Add Text...**), allowing the user to edit the text and

Panel Menu

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specify formatting information. If **OK** is clicked, a new balloon
will be created and placed in the current panel. The Comic
window will be brought to the front, scrolling to the selected
panel if necessary.

Remove Panel

is available when the Comic window is in front and there is more
than one panel in the document. It deletes that panel from the
page. Although the panel's background will be lost, any objects in
the panel remain where they are, freed from panel boundaries.

Objects Menu

Edit Text...

is available in the Comic window when a text object is selected. It
brings up the balloon editor screen with the text of the selected
balloon, formatted as in the balloon, in the text area.

The balloon editor is like a basic word processor in a single screen.
When you use the balloon editor, menus are disabled; all balloon
editor functions are available through controls on the screen. The
editor is exited through the **OK** button or the **Cancel** button on
the icon bar.
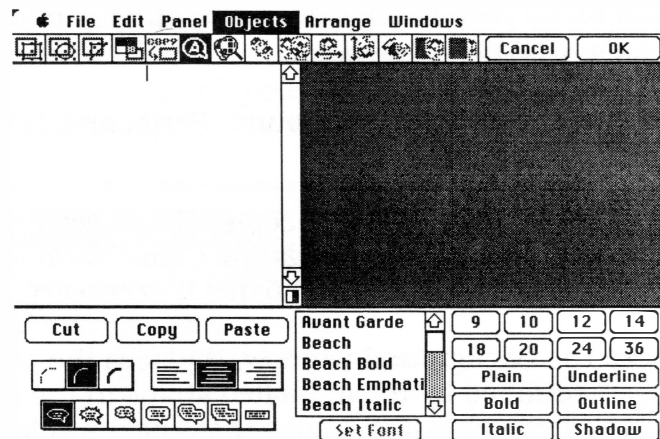
Characters typed at the keyboard are inserted in the text area.
Clicking the mouse in the text area places the cursor for text
insertion. Clicking and dragging over text selects that text.

Double-clicking on a word selects the word. Double-clicking and dragging selects a range of words.

Clicking on the scroll bar scrolls the text up or down. Clicking on the icon at the bottom of the scroll bar and dragging it left or right resets the width of the text area. The width of the text area controls the width of automatic word wrapping. Text can be wrapped manually by typing returns.

The **Cut**, **Copy**, and **Paste** buttons duplicate commands on the **Edit** menu. **Cut** copies the selected text into the Clipboard and deletes it from the text area. **Copy** copies the selected text to the Clipboard. **Paste** inserts the text in the clipboard at the insertion point, or if text is selected replaces the selected text with the contents of the clipboard. **Cut**, **Copy**, and **Paste** have keyboard equivalents of Command-X, Command-C, and Command-V, respectively.
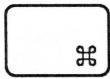
In the center of the control area is a scrolling list of fonts available from the current system. Clicking on a font names and clicking the **Set Font** button, or double-clicking on the font name, changes the selected text to that font. If no text is selected, it sets the font for subsequent text entered at the insertion point.

On the right side of the control area are buttons for setting the style and size of selected text or of text subsequently entered at the current insertion point. The number buttons set point sizes; the lower six buttons set styles. Style buttons have keyboard alternatives consisting of the Command key and the first letter of the style name: Command-B sets bold, for example.
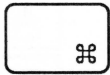
Three rows of icons in the lower left corner of the control area set text alignment and set the appearance of the balloon. The top right set of three icons set text flush left, centered, and flush right. These changes are reflected immediately by the text displayed in the text area. The top left set of icons control the thickness of the line used to draw the balloon: from left to right, the settings are no line, one pixel thick, and two pixels thick. The bottom row of icons controls the type of balloon created. The balloon is not created until you click **OK**, so changes made by clicking on these icons aren't apparent until then.

Command-K sets the selected text to all capital letters, and Command-L sets the selected text to all lower case letters.

Add Text...
is available in place of **Edit Text...** when the Comic window is in front and nothing is selected. It brings up the balloon editor with an empty text area and allows you to create a balloon from scratch. See **Edit Text...**.

Edit Bits...
is available from the Comic window and the Parts window when one part, text item, or silhouette is selected. It cannot be used with multiple objects or groups. The command brings up the bit editor screen and lets you edit the selected part in a FatBits-like manner. In the bit editor, all menus are disabled; available controls are the mouse, the tools and other icons on the left, and the **OK** and **Cancel** buttons on the icon bar, which are used to exit the mode.
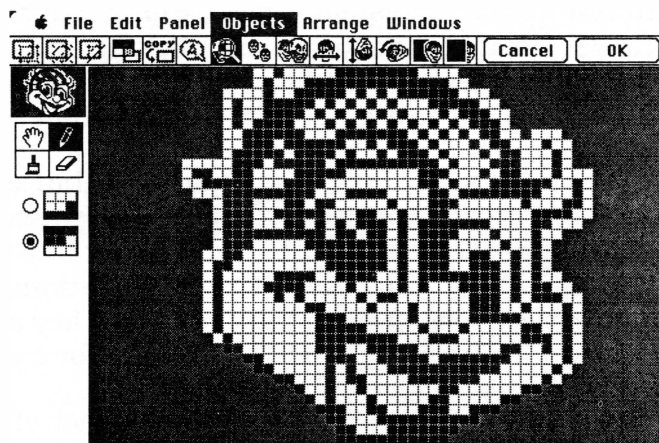
There are actually two pictures, superimposed on each other, that can be edited in the bit editor. One, represented by black squares, is the picture of the object. The other, represented by white squares, is the background mask: the white part of the object through which the background can't show. Think of the white bits as a paper cutout where black bits are drawn. The gray area is the background: it doesn't represent part of the object. The general rule is that black bits may only be drawn on white, not on gray,

and white bits may only be drawn on gray, not on black (because there is already white under the black). You also can't erase the white underneath black bits unless you first erase the black.

Which plane you are drawing on or erasing from is determined by the two radio buttons on the left. Selecting the one with an icon showing black bits against a background of white bits allows drawing or erasing black bits. The one showing white bits against a gray background allows the editing of white bits.

These options are only available when you are editing a part. When editing text items and silhouettes, you can only edit white bits, and the black bits radio button doesn't appear.
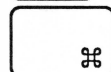
The four tools are selected by the icons on the left, above the radio buttons. The tools are similar to tools with the same icons in *MacPaint* and other programs. The hand tool allows the object to be scrolled. Holding down the Option key while any of the other tools are active brings up the hand tool temporarily. Double-clicking on the hand icon centers the object. Holding down the Command key while dragging causes the scrolling to be restricted to the first axis along along which you move the mouse.

The pencil icon is a pencil that acts on the selected plane (black or white— see above). If you click first on a bit that is off and drag, it acts as a one pixel wide pencil. If you click first on a bit that is on and drag, it acts as a one pixel wide eraser.

The bottom two icons are each a "hard wired" brush and eraser. They paint or erase the selected bitmap in swaths as wide as their cursors.

Create Part...
is available when the Comic window or Parts window is in front and nothing is selected. It replaces **Edit Bits...** in the menu. It brings up the bit editor with no object drawn in it and allows you to create a part from scratch. See **Edit Bits...**.

Duplicate
is available in the Comic window or the Parts window when one or more objects of any type are selected. It makes copies of the

Objects Menu

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selected objects, placing them below and to the right of the originals.

Invert
is available in the Comic window or the Parts window when one or more objects of any type are selected. It inverts the objects selected. It has no effect on silhouettes.

Flip Horizontal
is available in the Comic window or the Parts window when one or more parts, silhouettes, or groups that don't contain text items are selected. Text items and groups containing text items cannot be flipped. The command flips each object around its own vertical axis, swapping left for right.

Flip Vertical
is available in the Comic window or the Parts window when one or more parts, silhouettes, or groups that don't contain text items are selected. Text items and groups containing text items cannot be flipped. The command flips each object around its own horizontal axis, swapping top for bottom.

Rotate
is available in the Comic window or the Parts window when one or more parts, silhouettes, or groups that don't contain text items are selected. Text items and groups containing text items cannot be rotated. The command rotates each object ninety degrees counter clockwise around its own center point.

Point Balloon
is available in the Comic window when one text item is selected. It enters pointer adding mode, which is used to add a pointer to that balloon.

In this mode, when the mouse cursor is in the window and not over the balloon, the cursor changes to a picture of a balloon with a pointer on it. A stretchable pointer from the center of the balloon comes to a point at the cursor's pointer. If you click the mouse button when the cursor looks like a balloon and the pointer is visible, the pointer is added to the balloon. If the cursor is arrow

shaped when the mouse is clicked, the mode is exited without adding a pointer to the balloon.
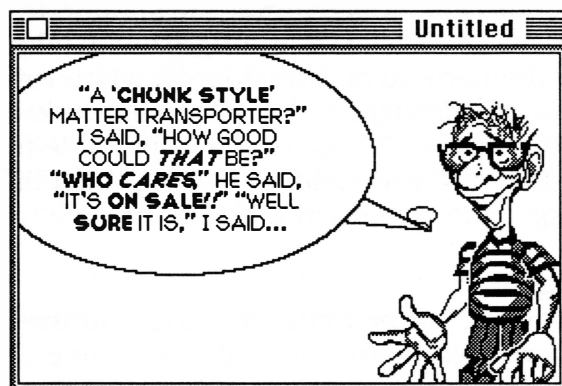

More than one pointer can be added to a given balloon. To revert the balloon to its original state, select it, choose **Edit Text...** from the **Objects** menu, and click **OK**.

Make Silhouette

is available in the Comic window when any object or objects are selected. The command duplicates the shape of the objects in black silhouette form, offsetting the silhouette below, to the right of, and underneath the original object. Silhouettes are good for making shadows or for lightening or darkening a portion of the picture for some other purpose.

Set Pattern...

is available in the Comic window when one or more silhouettes are selected. It brings up a **Silhouette Pattern** dialog similar to the dialog used for background patterns.
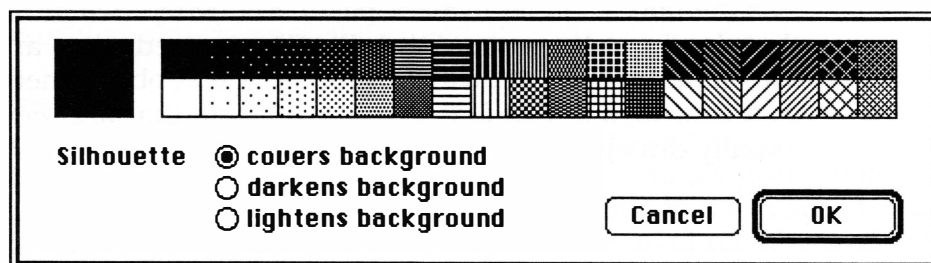
You can select a pattern for the silhouettes selected by clicking on the pattern; it will be displayed in the box on the left. Three radio buttons allow you to determine how the pattern is drawn. If you select **covers background**, the silhouette will be opaque. The **darkens background** and **lightens background** buttons cause the silhouette to be translucent; whatever is under the silhouette will show through, but it will be lightened or darkened by the pattern selected. Note that it is possible to make silhouettes invisible and lose them by having them lighten an already white background or darken a black one.

MergeBits

is available in the Comic window and the Parts window when one or more objects are selected. If only one object is selected, it must be a group, text object, or silhouette. The command merges the selected objects into a single part.

This is superficially similar to the **Group** command in the **Arrange** menu. The difference is that **Group** remembers each object separately and allows them to be ungrouped later. **MergeBits** makes them all into a single part; it cannot be undone. **Group** makes it easy to treat an assembled character as a single object while still having the freedom of ungrouping them and exchanging a head or a hand. **MergeBits** creates objects that can be edited with **Edit Bits...** and flipped or rotated even if they contain text, although text objects made into parts with **MergeBits** can no longer be edited as text.

Groups always take up slightly more memory than the component parts, while several objects made into a single part with **MergeBits** usually take up less memory than the original set of objects. The exceptions to this rule are when a single text object or a single silhouette is merged, as text objects and silhouettes use less memory than equivalent parts, and when two or more parts that don't overlap are merged. Finally, merged parts are usually drawn faster than equivalent groups. A text object merged into a part is always drawn faster, and two parts that are merged are usually drawn faster.

Arrange Menu

Bring to Front

is available in the Comic window and the Parts window when any object or objects are selected. It brings objects that are restricted to a panel up in front of all other objects in that panel, but not in front of freed objects, and objects that are freed from panel boundaries in front of other freed and restricted objects. (See **Free from Panel**.) Since there are no panels in the Parts window, it just brings objects in the Parts window to the front of all other objects.

If the Shift key is held down while this command is issued, the selected objects are each moved one step forward instead of all the way to the front.

If the Option key is held down while this command is issued, restricted objects will be freed from their panels and brought to the front of freed objects as well as restricted objects.

Send to Back

is available in the Comic window and the Parts window when any object or objects are selected. It sends objects that are restricted to a panel behind all other objects in that panel and objects that are freed from panel boundaries behind other freed objects, but not behind restricted objects. (See **Restrict to Panel**.) Since there are no panels in the Parts window, it just sends objects in the Parts window behind all other objects.

If the Shift key is held down while this command is issued, the selected objects are each moved one step backward instead of all the way to the back.

If the Option key is held down while this command is issued, freed objects will be restricted to panels and send behind other restricted objects as well as freed objects.

Group

is available in the Comic window if more than one object is selected. It makes the selected objects into a single group object. If the group is selected or moved, all the objects in it are selected or moved. Anything done to the group is done to all members of the
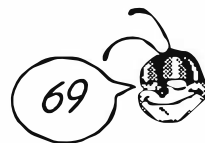
group. All objects in a group that is rotated or flipped are rotated or flipped around a common center. Groups that contain text objects cannot be rotated or flipped.

Although **Group** is superficially similar to **MergeBits**, they are really quite different. See **MergeBits** for a discussion of the relative merits of the two commands.

Ungroup

is available in the Comic window when a single group is selected. It breaks down the group into its component parts. Note that a group may contain other groups; **Ungroup** only undoes the top level of grouping.

Free from Panel

is available in the Comic window when one or more restricted parts are selected. The command frees the parts from their panel, allowing them to overlap panel boundaries. They will initially be behind previously freed objects. Freed objects are always in front of objects that are restricted to a panel.
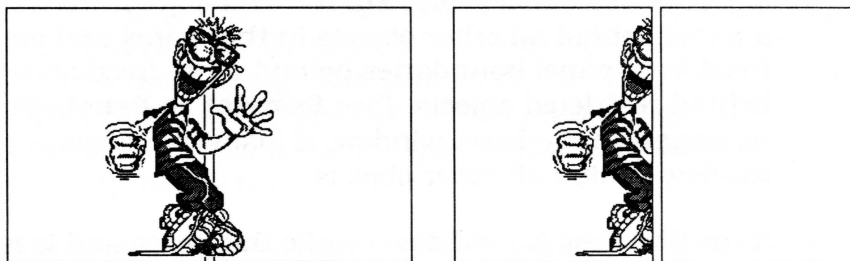
Restrict to Panel

is available in the Comic window when one or more freed objects are selected. The command restricts the selected objects to the selected panel, if they overlap it. The objects will be in front of all previously restricted objects in that panel. Restricted objects are always behind freed objects.

Windows Menu

Comic Strip
is available whenever the Comic window is open. It brings that window in front of all other windows.

Background
is available whenever the Background window is open. It brings that window in front of all other windows.

Text
is available whenever the Text window is open. It brings that window in front of all other windows.

Parts
is available whenever the Parts window is open. It brings that window in front of all other windows.

Using PartMaker II

PartMaker II is a utility for converting paint files into Parts files. It scans the paint file for conceptually separate objects and makes them into separate parts. It works best with clip art style paint files that are drawn as collections of separate objects. It works poorly with full page images like backgrounds from *The Comic Strip Factory*, as it depends on white space between objects to determine boundaries. This function was written as a separate application instead of being integrated into *The Comic Strip Factory* because it temporarily uses a lot of memory.

To convert a paint file, open PartMaker II from the Finder. Choose **Convert Paint...** from the **PartMaker 2.0** menu. Open a paint file. PartMaker II brings up the **Converting Paint** dialog.
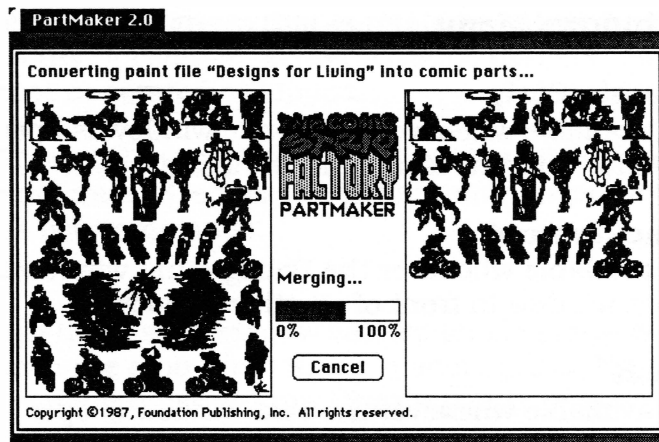
The paint file is at the left. As parts are found, they're copied to the rectangle on the right. The thermometer shows the conversion's progress. The word above the thermometer shows the conversion stage in progress: "Tracing…" when the object's edge is being traced, "Copying…" when the object is made into a part, and "Merging…" when other parts are checked for possible merging.

You can press **Cancel** at any time to stop the process and save parts already converted.

When the entire paint file has been converted, or when you cancel, a **Save** dialog allows you to save the new parts file to disk.

It helps to clean up *MacPaint* files before converting them by removing unwanted parts, labels, unfinished sketches, stray bits, and copyright notices (although you should heed these if you intend to publish your work).

Parts created in PartMaker II generally still need to be cleaned up with **Edit Bits…**, especially to repair "leaks" in the background mask that allow the background to show through undesired areas (like a face). To detect these leaks, open the Parts file in *The Comic Strip Factory* , choose **Background Pattern…** to set a gray pattern for the background of the Parts window, and scroll through the file, looking for parts that have gray areas which should be white.

Select those parts, choose **Edit Bits...**, and fill in those areas by painting them white.

You may find that this happens: PartMaker II may interpret as "many parts" a part that—to you—appears as a single part. This happens when "stray pieces" aren't connected to the main part. You can fix this by dragging a selection rectangle around the set of parts, without disturbing any, then choosing **MergeBits**. You may still have to use **Edit Bits...** to fix stray holes. Be sure to **Save** the parts file after fixing it up.

Keyboard Shortcuts & Extensions

Comic window:
Tab scrolls to the selected panel.

Edit menu:
$\boxed{\tilde{\ }}$ is a shortcut for **Undo**.
Option-Paste pastes as a single rectangular object.
Shift-Paste tries harder to paste as separate objects.

Arrange menu:
Option-Bring to Front causes objects to be freed and brought to the front of other freed objects.
Shift-Bring to Front causes objects to be moved one layer forward.
Option-Send to Back causes objects to be restricted to the current panel (if they overlap it) and sent behind other objects in the panel.
Shift-Send to Back causes objects to be moved one layer backward.

Selecting and moving objects:
Shift selects new object without deselecting.
Option duplicates the objects being moved.
Command restricts movement to one axis.
Arrows or **Command-I**, **J**, **K**, and **M** move object one pixel.

Panel reshaping mode:

Shift-clicking OK causes the program to remain in panel reshaping mode.

Command-clicking OK forces a new panel to be created with background consistent with current panel.

Edit Bits mode:

Option changes tool to the grabber for easy scrolling.

Balloon editor:

Command-X cuts the selection to the clipboard.
Command-C copies the selection to the clipboard.
Command-V pastes the clipboard at the insertion point.

Command-P sets the style of the selection to plain.
Command-U sets the style of the selection to underline.
Command-B sets the style of the selection to bold.
Command-I sets the style of the selection to italic.
Command-O sets the style of the selection to outline.
Command-S sets the style of the selection to shadow.

Command-K makes letters in the selection upper case.
Command-L makes letters in the selection lower case.

Option-Shift on *The Comic Strip Factory*'s fonts get a bevy of special characters:
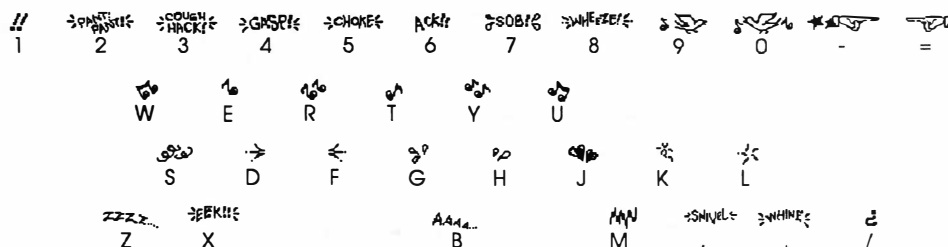
Other special characters are on the ⌐ key, which contains the character ✦, and Option-?, which displays ⁈.

COMIC STRIP FACTORY ORIGINS
OR: "HOW WE ALL MET"

THE STORY YOU ARE ABOUT TO WITNESS IS TRUE. NO NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED BECAUSE THERE ARE NO INNOCENT.

BY TRICI VENOLA

SOFTALK[1] 1983:

DURKEE!! GET OUTA THE ART CAVE!! WE'RE TRYING TO PUT MAGAZINES TOGETHER!!!

!!#$@%! EDITORIAL TYPES!

GRRRRRRR!

KURT'S[3] ON A RAMPAGE AGAIN.

HE'S OVERWORKED. LET'S HIRE ANOTHER ART DIRECTOR TO LIGHTEN HIS LOAD—

DO YOUR OWN DISHES

NOW WHAT WE HAVE HERE, TRICI,[4] IS A NO-WIN PROPOSITION —FOR YOU. IF YOU TAKE THIS JOB, YOU HAVE TO WORK WITH KURT, AND IF YOU DON'T TAKE THIS JOB, WE'RE SENDING YOU TO TAHITI WITH KURT FOR TWO WEEKS.

I'LL TAKE THE JOB!! I'LL TAKE THE JOB!! ...WHAT IS THE JOB?

HI! I'M ANDREW CHRISTIE.[5] WHO ARE YOU?

YOU'RE THE EDITOR OF SOFTLINE?[6] I'M YOUR NEW ART DIRECTOR.

SAY! ARE YOU INTO COMIC BOOKS?

HEY SKINNY!

SIX WEEKS LATER:

ANYBODY GOT ANY B-12?!!

(@*!$%!! WOMEN!)

(GROAN!) TAHITI IS LOOKIN' BETTER ALL THE TIME, KURT.

WE HAVE TO FOLD SOFTLINE!! THE PIRATES HAVE KILLED IT! ANDREW, YOU GO WORK WITH DURKEE ON SOFTALK APPLE EDITORIAL. TRICI, YOU TAKE OVER AS A.D. FOR ST. MAC[8] KURT'S TOO BUSY TO DO IT NOW THAT HE AND MITHRA[9] ARE PUTTING TOGETHER DOUG CLAPP'S[10] BOOK.

WHAT ABOUT JOCK ROOT'S[11] COLUMN?

HE'LL WRITE FOR THE OTHER MAGAZINES, TOO.

JANUARY 1984:

IT WOULD REALLY HELP IF YOU DREW ON THE MACINTOSH FOR THE MAGAZINE.

DRAW ON A COMPUTER?!! ME? ECCH!! BLAUGH!!

1. **Softalk Publishing**, North Hollywood, CA: The first outfit dedicated to the principle of writing computer magazines in lay English, with lots of pictures. 2. **David Durkee:** hot young technical writer imported from Vermont. 3. **Kurt Wahlner:** Head of *Softalk* art department, famed for his great talent and nasty temper. 4. **Trici Venola:** freelance illustrator hired after pounding on *Softalk*'s door for two years. 5. **Andrew Christie:** Editor of *Softline*, comic maven. 6. *Softline:* Games magazine beloved by pirates, eschewed by advertisers. 7. **Hi De Ho Comics & Fantasy** in Santa Monica, CA: Probably the best comic book store in the whole world. 8. **ST.Mac:** The first Macintosh magazine. 9. **Paul Mithra:** Enormously popular director of Softalk book division. 10. **Doug Clapp:** Author of *Macintosh Complete*, in from Minnesota to oversee publication. 11. **Jock Root:** *Softalk* contributing writer and resident wizard.

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12. **Clint Hicks:** Postcollegiate computer sharpie up from Texas.
Cast of Characters: The Comic Strip Factory:
2. **David Durkee:** Programmer, copublisher. 3. **Kurt Wahlner:** Background design. 4. **Trici Venola:** Character design, original Factory concept. 5. **Andrew Christie:** Manual coauthor. 9. **Paul Mithra:** Laserprinting expertise. 10. **Doug Clapp:** Copublisher. 12. **Clint Hicks:** Manual coauthor. Not in comic: **Ken Ryall:** Copublisher.

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Glossary

Background: A *MacPaint* file loaded into a comic strip file. It may be interpreted as a Panorama (a 24" wide by 3 1/3" tall strip) a Wide Screen (16" by 5") or a Portrait (8" by 10"). Panels that are not larger than the background type chosen may have portions of the background picture copied into them.

Balloon: A shape containing text for either narrative or dialog. Also a text object.

Cancel: A button on the icon bar (with **OK**) used to exit special editing modes without accepting any changes to the thing being edited.

Character: An actor in a comic strip, built up of parts.

Comic: A graphic document built up of panels, backgrounds, characters, and balloons. Occasionally humorous.

Group: An object in a comic that is a collections of parts, text objects, silhouettes, and other groups. It may be moved around as a single object, or ungrouped to get at the individual objects that make it up.

Icon Bar: The strip under the menu bar containing fourteen icons, duplicating the features of the most frequently used commands in the program's menus, and two buttons used in special editing modes.

Object: Any thing that can be moved around in a comic strip. There are four different kinds: parts, text objects, silhouettes, and groups, each with special characteristics and capabilities.

OK: A button on the icon bar (with **Cancel**) used to exit special editing modes and incorporate changes to the thing being edited.

Panel: A structural element in a comic strip. A shape used to contain background and characters.

Part: A bitmapped object. May be a head, body, arm, hand, foot, leg, or

miscellaneous segment or personal prop of a comic character.

Silhouette: Just what it sounds like; can also be used behind parts as shadows. Created from other objects, they are exclusive to Comic Strip Factory and can't be loaded or pasted in from MacPaint.

Text Object: Text in the form of dialog, thought balloons, and narrative boxes, which can be varied by font, style, and size in the balloon editor. A text object can have one or more pointers added to it to indicate the character speaking.

Appendices

Appendix A
Recommended Reading

The following list is a sampling of work currently available by some of the best comic practitioners of the last forty years. They can show you how it's done. (They've showed other comic creators for years.) All titles are available at comic specialty stores or directly from the publishers.

Periodicals

Weirdo, Aline Kominski Crumb, ed. Last Gasp Eco-Funnies, P.O. Box 212, Berekeley, CA 94701. Single copy price $2.50.

Steve Canyon Magazine, by Milton Caniff. Kitchen Sink Press, 2 Swamp Road, Princeton WI 54968. Single copy price $3.50.

The Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers, by Gilbert Shelton. Rip Off Press, P.O. Box 14158, San Francisco, CA 94114. Single copy price $1.50.

Kurtzman Komix, by Harvey Kurtzman. Kitchen Sink Press, 2 Swamp Road, Princeton, WI 54968. $1.50.

Love and Rockets, by Los Bros Hernandez. Fantagraphics Books, 4359 Cornell Road, Agoura, CA 91301. Single copy price $2.25.

Books

"The Carl Barks Library of Walt Disney's Donald Duck." Another Rainbow Publishing, Inc., Box 2206, Scottsdale, AZ 85252. Ten boxed sets, sometimes available in single volumes.

"Frontline Combat." Russ Cochran, Publisher, P.O. Box 469, West Plains, MO 65775. 3-volume boxed set, $70.

"The Smithsonian Collection of Newspaper Comics." Blackbeard and Williams, eds. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC 20560. $25.

Appendix B
Getting Published

Before submitting your work to any syndicate or publisher, write the Submissions Editor to request a copy of their submission guidelines. Enclose a long (business size), stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Major Comic Strip Syndicates

United Feature Syndicate
200 Park Ave.
New York, NY 10166

King Features Syndicate
235 East 45th St.
New York, NY 10017

News America Syndicate
1703 Kaiser Avenue
P.O. Box 19620
Irvine, CA 92714

Universal Press Syndicate
4400 Johnson Drive
Fairway, KS 66205

McNaught Syndicate
537 Steamboat Road
Greenwihch, CT 06830

Tribune Media Services
720 North Orange Avenue
Orlando, FL 32801

Major Comic Book Publishers

Marvel Comics Group
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

First Comics
435 North LaSalle
Chicago, IL 60610

Eclipse Comics
P.O. Box 199
Guerneville, CA 95446

Comico
1547 DeKalb St.
Norristown, PA 19401

Eagle Comics
58 St. Giles Street
London, WC2H 8LH ENGLAND

Fantagraphics Books
4359 Cornell Rd.
Agoura, CA 91301

Continuity Publishing, Inc.
62 West 45th Street
New York, NY 10036

Kitchen Sink Press, Inc.
No. 2 Swamp Road
Princeton, NJ 54968

Appendix C
Comic People

Comic People Join
The Comic Strip Factory

Minneapolis, MN– Comic enthusiasts wept for joy as Foundation Publishing today announced *Comic People Volume One: Office Days*, the firsdt volume of additional art for The Comic Strip Factory. ;COUGH;~;GASP!;~;CHOKE;~;HACK!~SOB!;~;WHEEZE!;~

...Well, maybe we should just tell you about *Comic People*, and skip the press release format!

Comic People is what The Comic Strip Factory customers asked for: More characters. Human characters. A completely new cast of seven comic characters in various ages, shapes, sexes, and all the popular ethnic groups. As the package says:

A COMPLETELY NEW CAST OF COMIC PEOPLE!
CREATE THOUSANDS OF LIFE-LIKE POSITIONS!
Two disks, stuffed with characters and backgrounds! Each character has dozens of heads, bodies, arms, and legs! Put 'em together any way you want! For comics, ads, storyboards, pamphlets, newsletters, and more! Use Comic People with *any MacPaint*-compatible program!

The first Comic People collection, Office Days, is $39.95. To purchace Comic People, see your computer dealer, call your favorite mail-order company, or call us: (612) 925-6027!

Here's a sample:

Featuring characters from *Comic People Volume One: Office Days*.

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