CREATING COMIC BOOKS

Presented by Tango Comics Creative Team
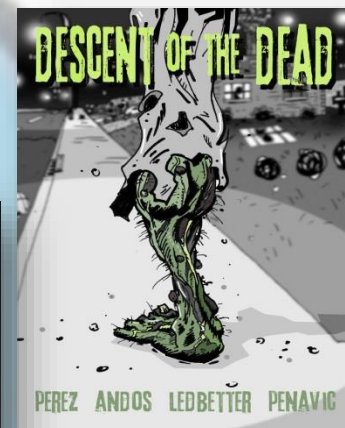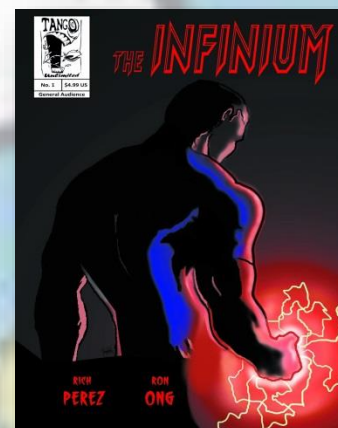
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AGENDA

- About Tango Comics
- Story/script
- Preparing the layout
- Inking/Coloring
- Lettering
- Print vs Digital
  - Recommended Reading / Research
  - Tools of the Trade
  - Tips & Tricks

About Tango Comics

- Established in 2009
    - First publication **Descent of the Dead**
    - Second publication **The Infinium** in 2010
    - Motivated by a desire to create quality stories and artwork back into indie scene
    - Wanting to do something besides our current day jobs which isn't nearly as fun

    - **Ronald Ong** – Artist of The Infinium
    - **Francis Penavic** – Artist of Descent of the Dead, Letterer for both Descent & Infinium
    - **Rage Ledbetter** – Inker, Storyboard artist, and script editor for Descent & Infinium
    - **Rich Perez** – Writer and creator of Descent & The Infinium, editor, color embellisher, Stand-up Philosopher

TANGO COMICS OUR FAMILY PORTRAIT

THE STORY

- Come up with an idea

- Create Your World! – Make a Rule Book and Character Encyclopedia

- Develop an outline for a story arc

- Write it and be prepared to re-write at least 50 times!

- Get it copyrighted! It costs $45

- Get feedback from people
  - Be supportive of criticism (emotionally detach!)

- Finish it! - You will be judged on what you complete not what you dream

One in a Billion written in 1987 re-written in 2000 and re-written yet again & rebranded as **The Infinium** © in 2009 – Since 2009 70+ more revisions!

Plot outline and story arc for **The Infinium** Issue #4 – Over 30 revisions for a single issue!

Twilight of the Dead written in 2008 retitled as **Descent of the Dead** © in 2009 – Over 82 revisions – Still going!

EXERCISE 1: BUILD YOUR STORY

1 ───────── **2** ───────── **3** → **Finish!**

- Develop a Timeline

- Establish Primary Objectives
  – Who-What-When-Where-Why?

- Establish a mid-point Objectives
  – What must be accomplished by now?

- Develop an Ending
  – What must be established just before and at the very end?
  – Fill in gaps in between Objectives 1-2-3
  – Be sure your story transitions smoothly and aligns between plot objectives!
  – Make sure it's easy to follow (by someone other than **you!**)

EXERCISE 1: BUILD YOUR STORY

1 ——————————— 2 ——————————— 3 → **Finish!**

Your first objective:

- Figure out what you'd like to be (Writer or Artist or Both)
  - Base your decision on where you can add the most value fast!
- Pair Up form teams (Writers + Artists) – Know your role!
- Develop an outline similar to what we just went over
- Time permitting start visualizing in detail like a scene in a movie how it should begin, transition and end

Don't be afraid to ask for help! Everyone is here to have fun & learn!

THE COMIC BOOK MAKING PROCESS AT A GLANCE

# THE LAYOUTS, SKETCHES AND PENCILING
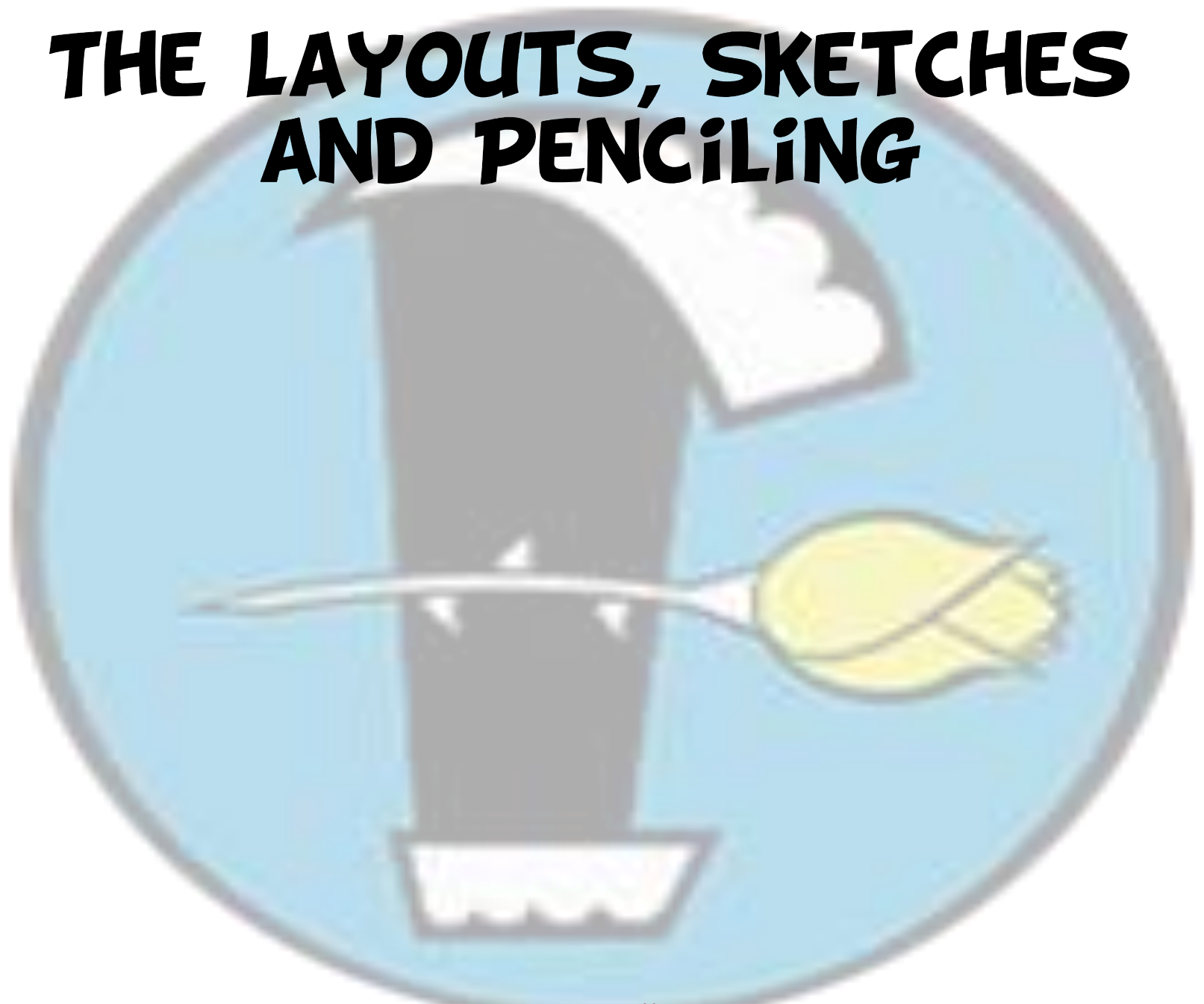
THE LAYOUT
(OR CREATING THE FLOOR PLAN)

- Visualizing the story
- Identifying critical points of the story
  - Change of location, time,& action
  - Beginning and end scenes
- Number of pages (know your limitations!)
- Start with thumbnail sketches

THUMBNAIL SKETCHES

- Rough sketches
- Draw multiple sketches and find which one works for you
- You want to make sure you can fit the story within the number of pages you have
- Play with different panel sizes and shapes
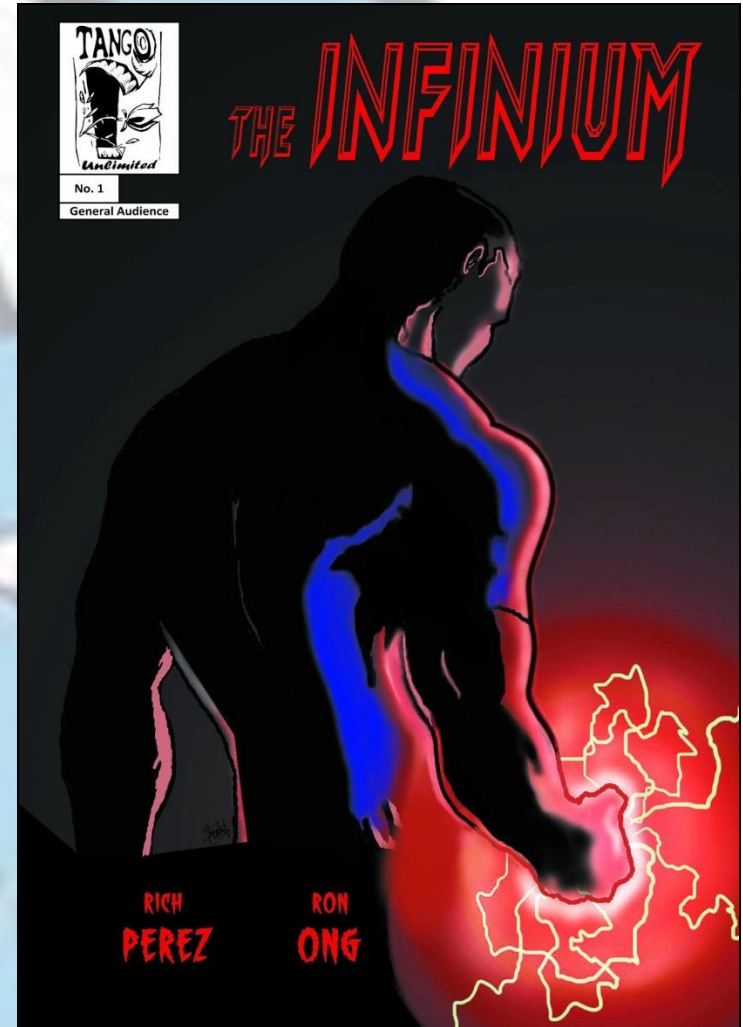
PENCILING

- **Talking with pictures**
- **Pencils can be tight or loose**
- **You are the Director, Light Director, Actor/Actress, Props, Special Effects, and Camera man**
- **Camera angles, composition, body language, facial expressions, lights and shadows**
- **Exaggerate – get creative!**
- **Entertain the readers…but communicate clearly!**

PENCiLiNG

- **Tools:**
  - 2H or 3H pencils
  - H pencils
  - HB or B pencils
  - Kneaded & Magic Erasers
  - Triangles, standard ruler, and T Square
  - French curve rulers (for speed lines)
  - Compass (to draw circles)

  All this stuff you can buy @ Hobby Lobby and Michaels – Look for coupons!

The craft of Inking & Coloring

INKING

- **Not just a person that traces over the pencils**
- **An Inker can make or break a comic book**
- **Must also have basic knowledge of art especially with anatomy, light and shadows**
- **Some tools include: black India ink, brushes, drafting pens, markers**
- **Some artists ink directly within Adobe Photoshop**

INKiNG

- **Tools:**
  - Black India Ink
  - Sharpies Wide/Narrow tip
  - Brushes
  - Markers
  - Scan images into B&W Bitmaps to attain the sharpest blacks (600dpi – 1200dpi)

COLORiNG

- **Manually coloring – Copic Markers**

- **Adobe Photoshop, Krita, Gimp, Clip Studio Paint, Procreate**

- **RGB (Red, Green, Blue) if you will post to the Internet or plan to print**

- **Useful tip:**
  - **Primary colors for the good guys**
  - **Secondary colors for the bad guys**
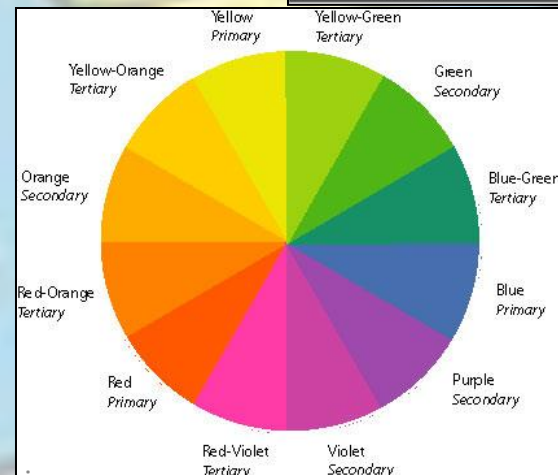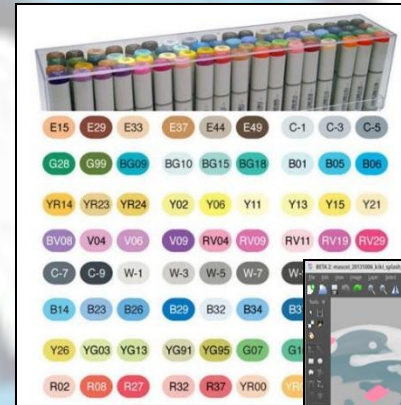
The Beauty and Art of Lettering

LETTERiNG

Adobe Photoshop – The Gimp – Krita – Manga Studio – Adobe Illustrator

- Thousands of free fonts available for download online:
  - Blambot.com
  - Dafont.com
  - Fontspace

- Pick the font that fits your story lines.

- Give Cool Sound Effects !!!

STANDARD		
12 Ton Goldfish	Armor Piercing	Badaboom
Badaboom Pro	Beatdown	Big Bad Bold
Blambot FXPRO	Crash Landing	Damn Noisy Kids
Glassjaw	Krakhead	Piekos FX
Piekos FX Rough	Rackum Frackum	Radioactive Granny
San Diego '04	Square Jaw	Sucker Punch
Two Fisted	Umberto	Zooom

ELEMENTAL		
Boogers	Char	Feedback
	Shock Therapy	Vaporized

JAGGED & DISTRESSED		
12 Ton Fishstick	12 Ton Sushi	Armour Piercing 2.0
Bar Brawl	Blamblam	Bloody Murder
Chainsawz	Crashcourse	Death Rattle
Entrails	Gone Fission	Kill Crazy
San Diego '07	San Diego '10	Shinobi

LETTERiNG

Tips and Crash Avoidance Techniques

- Make sure that the size of the fonts are very readable

- 8 – 9 point font size minimum unless whispering
(also depends on the font style being used – examine carefully)

- Ensure that font colors and size don't drown out panels activity

- Careful with font colors & styles in colored frames
  - Watch carefully for blurring (especially with traditional print)

- Avoid using slang, dialects or acronyms without explaining them prior (always assume your audience is brand new)

- If choosing between Readability vs. Cool Appearance
(Side with readability)

- Too many words will exhaust your audience, too few words will cheapen the experience … find the balance

- Make sure that your words have meaning and carry your story
  - Try not to dazzle your audience with meaningless vocabulary and avoid trying to be the next William Shakespeare (Keep it simple and straight forward)

Getting your Comic Published

# DiGiTAL & WEB COMiCS

- ## Benefits
  - Low Cost no print overhead
  - Easy & Fast to setup
  - Easier distribution and quick access to content
  - Distributors: Amazon Kindle (ComiXology), Apple, iBooks or website (i.e., Webtoons / Tapas)

- ## Issues & Challenges
  - No standard format (eBook-PDF-JPG-MOBI-HTML5)
  - Hurts local retail comic shops (middleman)
  - Many web comics are not copyrighted
  - Potential Licensing Issues with some distributors Price fixing, exclusivity (be careful!)

TRADiTiONAL PRiNT

- Find a good printer service
- Color is expensive - B/W is cheaper
- Save your file as TIFF or PDF
  - Use Tiff for images in paragraph storied books 300-400 dpi
  - Use 300 dpi PDF's for Comic Printing or Digital Submissions
- Decide on Saddle Stitch or Perfect Binding (Page count)
- Gloss or non-gloss paper
- Always review **carefully** before approving for the printer to print in mass quantities

Saddle Stitch Binding

Perfect Binding
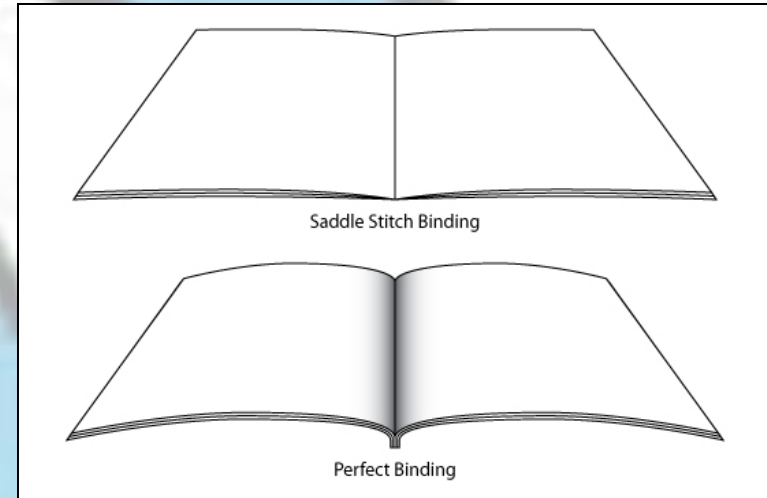
FOLLOW ALL THESE STEPS AND BELIEVE IT OR NOT AND YOU'LL HAVE CREATED A COMIC BOOK ☺

CLOSING WORDS

- Dedicate a lot of time! – Don't try to overly stylize or drown people in your work
  - Start by keeping things simple
  - Then grow and expand
- Explore – Experiment - Make Mistakes!
- Always collaborate with others & be supportive of one another
- Beg / Borrow / Steal when it comes to …
  - (Influences) Books, Film, Comics, Music, Photography, Paintings & Life!
- Finish what you started!
- Avoid taking yourself or your work too seriously

  -- Have Fun

QUESTIONS?

RECOMMENDED READING & REFERENCES

- **How to Draw Comics The Marvel Way** by Stan Lee
https://archive.org/details/DrawingComicsTheMarvelWay

- **Dynamic Anatomy** by Burne Hogarth

- **Comics and Sequential Art** by Will Eisner

- **DC Comics Guide to Coloring and Lettering Comics** by Mark Chiarello, Todd Klein and Jim Steranko

- **The DC Comics Guide to Inking Comics** by Klaus Janson and Frank Miller

- **DC Comics Guide to Writing Comics** by Dennis O'Neil

- **U.S. Copyright Office** www.copyright.gov

- **Kindle Direct Publishing** - kdp.amazon.com

- **10 Rules for Drawing Comics (Moebius' Rules)** - http://www.10rulesfordrawingcomics.com/

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Software

- **Image Editing/Manipulation/Inking/Coloring for Windows/MAC**
  - **Adobe Photoshop & Illustrator**
    - Price: $$$ Expensive $$$ http://www.adob[e]
  - **Manga Studio / Clip Studio Paint**
    - Price: $ Inexpensive $
      https://www.mangastudio5.com/
  - **The Gimp (GNU Image Manipulation Progr[am])**
    - Price: Free! http://www.gimp.org
- **Editing/Manipulation/Inking/Coloring for [] Tablets**
  - **Procreate (iPad only) $12.99**
    https://procreate.com/
  - **Clip Studio Paint (Android & iPad) $50**
    https://www.clipstudio.net/en/dl/
- **Writing**
  - **Word ($$$), Google Docs ($), LibreOffice (free),**
  - **Superscript $40**
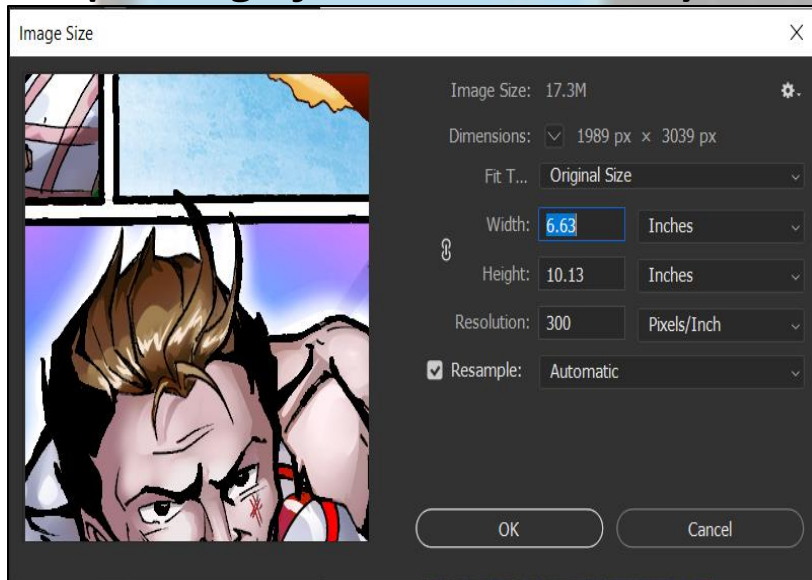   https://www.superscript.app/

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS WORTHY OF MENTION

Image File Specifications

- Keep images within a manageable size for editing and sharing

  (Average file size 29-35 MB)

Established Indie Comic Printers

https://mixam.com/comicbooks

http://ka-blam.com/main/?page_id=3854

https://www.grekoprinting-comixwellspring.com

HELPFUL COMIC PANEL TIPS FROM THE LEGENDARY WALLY WOOD

Tango Comics L3C, http://tangocomics
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HELPFUL LIGHTING TIPS FROM THE LEGENDARY TOM PALMER

TOM PALMER
ZIP-A-TONE & SHADOWS

CAST SHADOW ON THE GROUND

CAST SHADOW ON BODY

CAST SHADOWS ON FACE

SECONDARY SHADOW– BODY
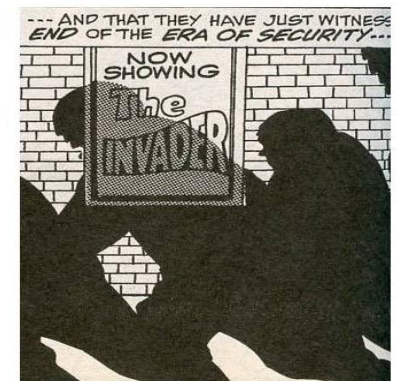
RIM–LIGHT

SIDE SHADOW, FACE AND BODY
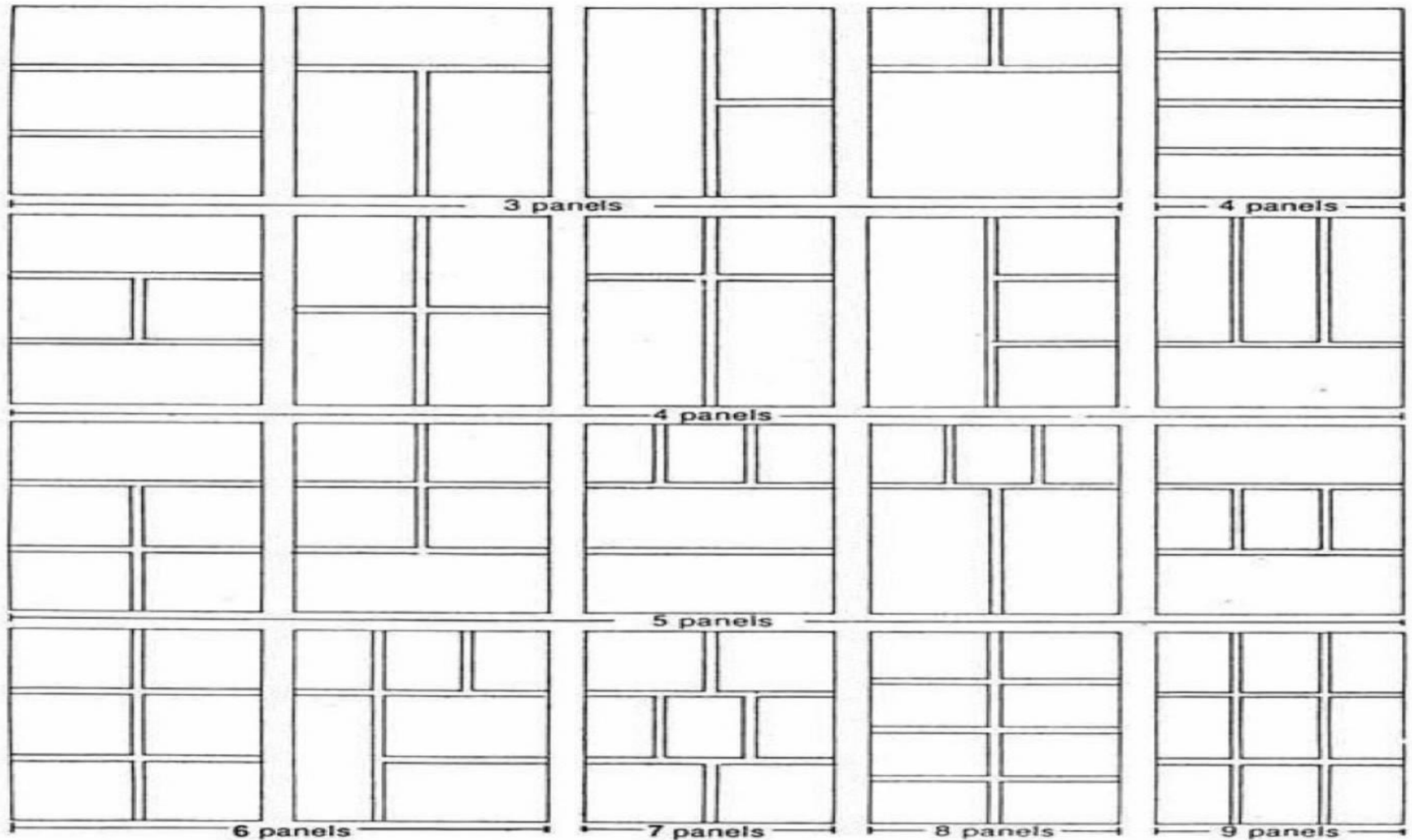
SECONDARY SHADOW– BACKGROUND

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Jack Kirby's Panel Layout Template

Example 1

'KIRBY LAYOUTS'

ABOUT TANGO COMICS

Website: www.TangoComics.com

Facebook: /TangoComics

Twitter: /TangoComics

Instagram: /Tango_Comics

General Inquiries: info@tangocomics.com

Tango Online Store: http://store.tangocomics.com