

MR. ABOBAZIZ
&
THE NANCY

*a cautionary tale of eroticism, innocence and corruption,
and trickery in 137 drawings by*

Edward R. Beardsley

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END NOTE

Before “Mr. Abobaziz & The Nancy” became a book it was something else, a storyboard for a film. This was in the mid-seventies in Riverside, California. It was laid out on 22 X 30 inch sheets of Arches buff, a fine, cold press paper favored by printmakers for intaglio printing (dry points, etchings, etc.). For pen and ink drawings it is ideal.

The working title back then was simply “Magic Man.” I had discussed my plans with my good friend Frank Zappa who liked the story and drawings enough to commit to providing a music score should the project develop that far. I was encouraged further by my good friend Jamie Shourt to think about doing it as an animated film. Jamie was then a partner with Douglas Trumbull in a company doing pioneering special effects for big budget sci-fi movies in their Canoga Park studio. Using their studio I was able to do some limited experimentation with 16mm film, working off the drawings.

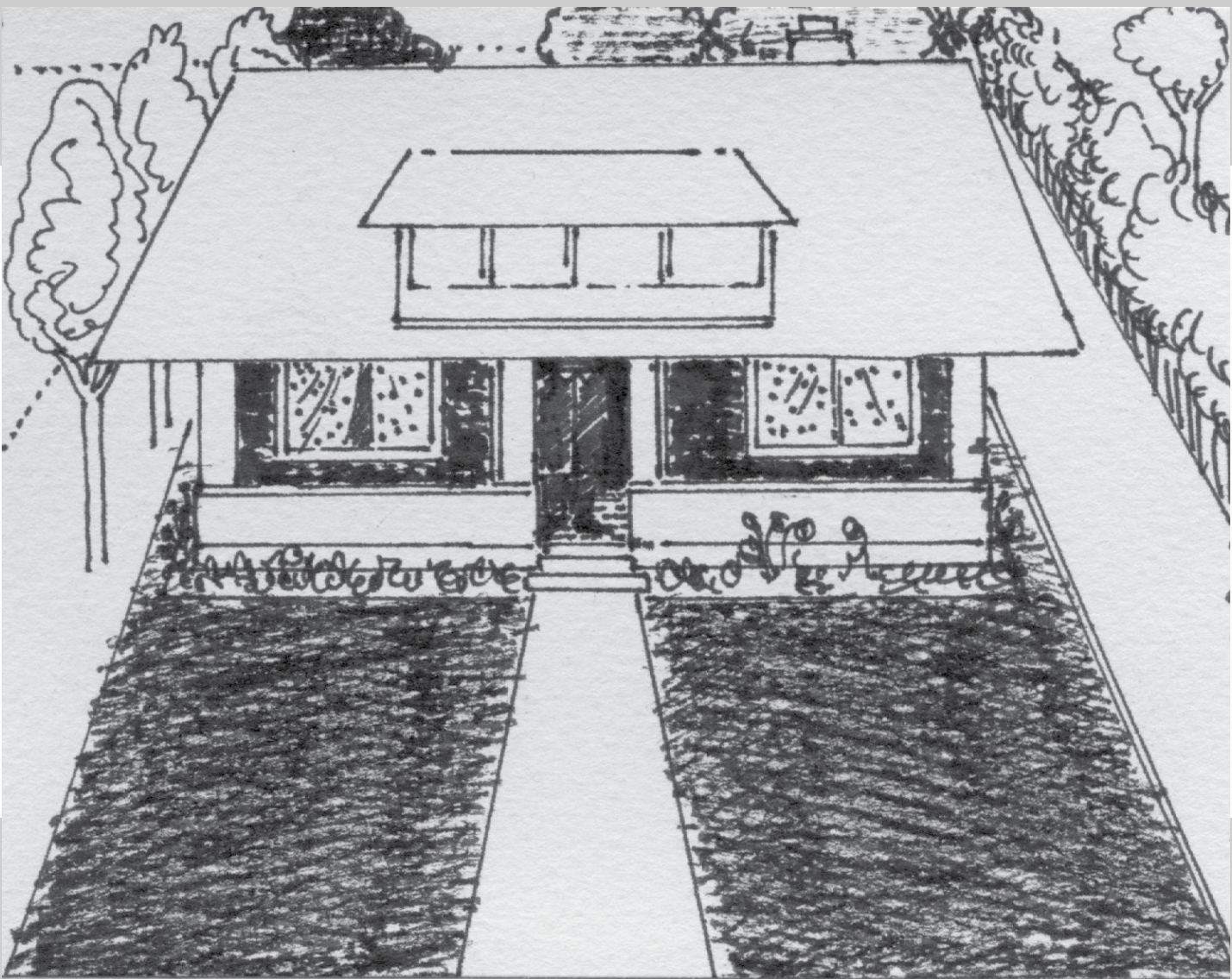
Time and circumstances conspired against further development, however. Frank had signed with Warner Brothers and was involved in a number of projects of his own that would understandably take precedent over any small favors for old friends. Trumbull and Shourt parted ways and I had in the meantime become involved in founding the California Museum of Photography at UC Riverside and various other large projects on campus, as well as work in my studio.

I left UC Riverside in 1979 in a state of exhaustion, moving to a ranch in the Pacific Northwest where I spent the next fifteen years reading books, writing, painting and staying alive. By the time I was able to return to the “Magic Man” project the film idea was already a lost cause.

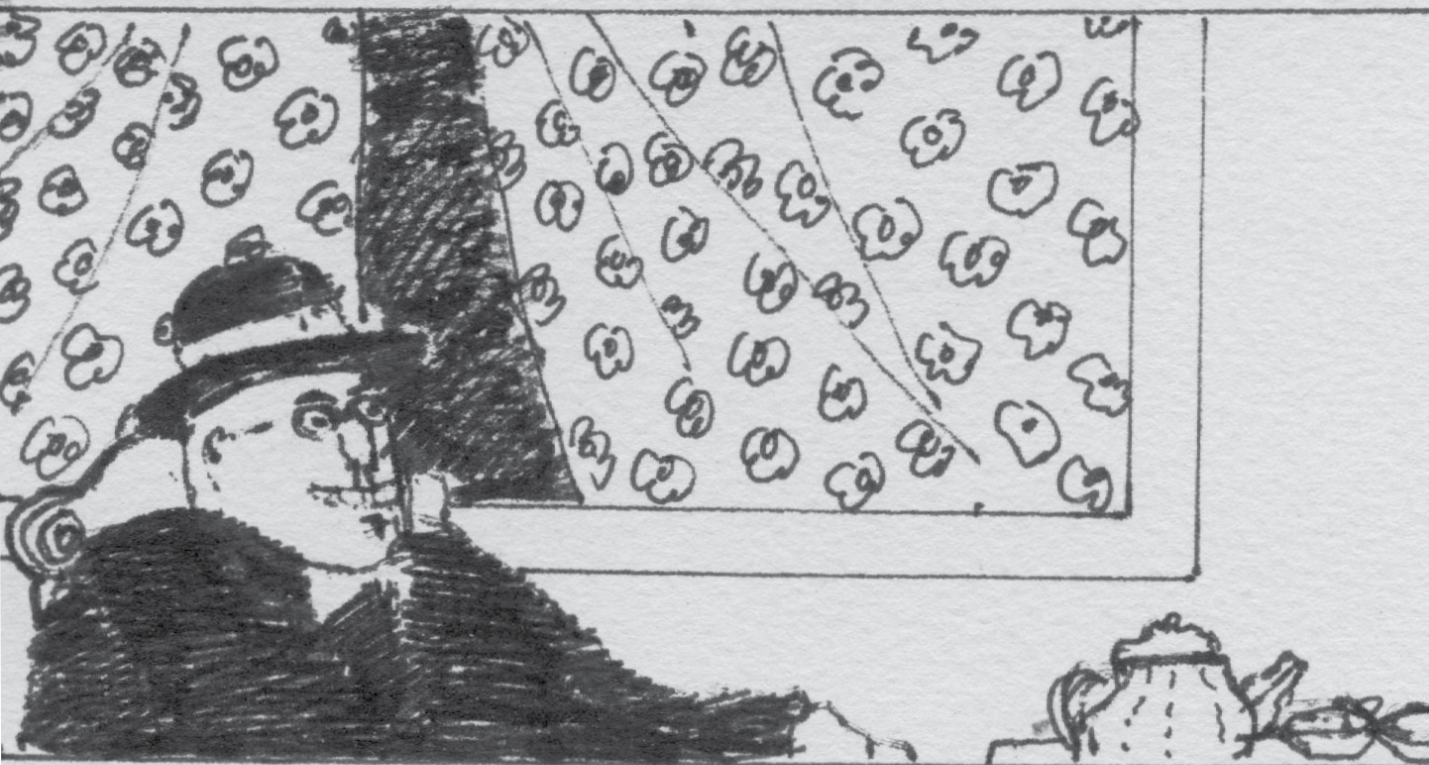
There was nothing to do but come up with another idea for the art I had produced. This was 1989. I decided to cut up the sheets and lay out the drawings in what would become what you see here, a graphic novel, but with a new title, “Mr. Abobaziz & The Nancy.” There was no idea at the time of mass producing the work. It was simply for me in 1989 an experiment to see if it would work as a book. Happy with the result I put the drawings in a box and back on the shelf. It remained in a box until 2014 when Mark Givens visited my studio to see what I had. To my surprise he expressed interest in my little book with a view toward publication.

As for the change in the title I was never happy with “Magic Man.” It put the focus on the man. The girl, The Nancy (who gets her name from a mischievous spirit in old folk tales), needed to be more prominent, hence the new title, “Mr. Abobaziz & The Nancy.” The name “Abobaziz” simply has a sound I liked, suggestive of flimflam and chicanery.

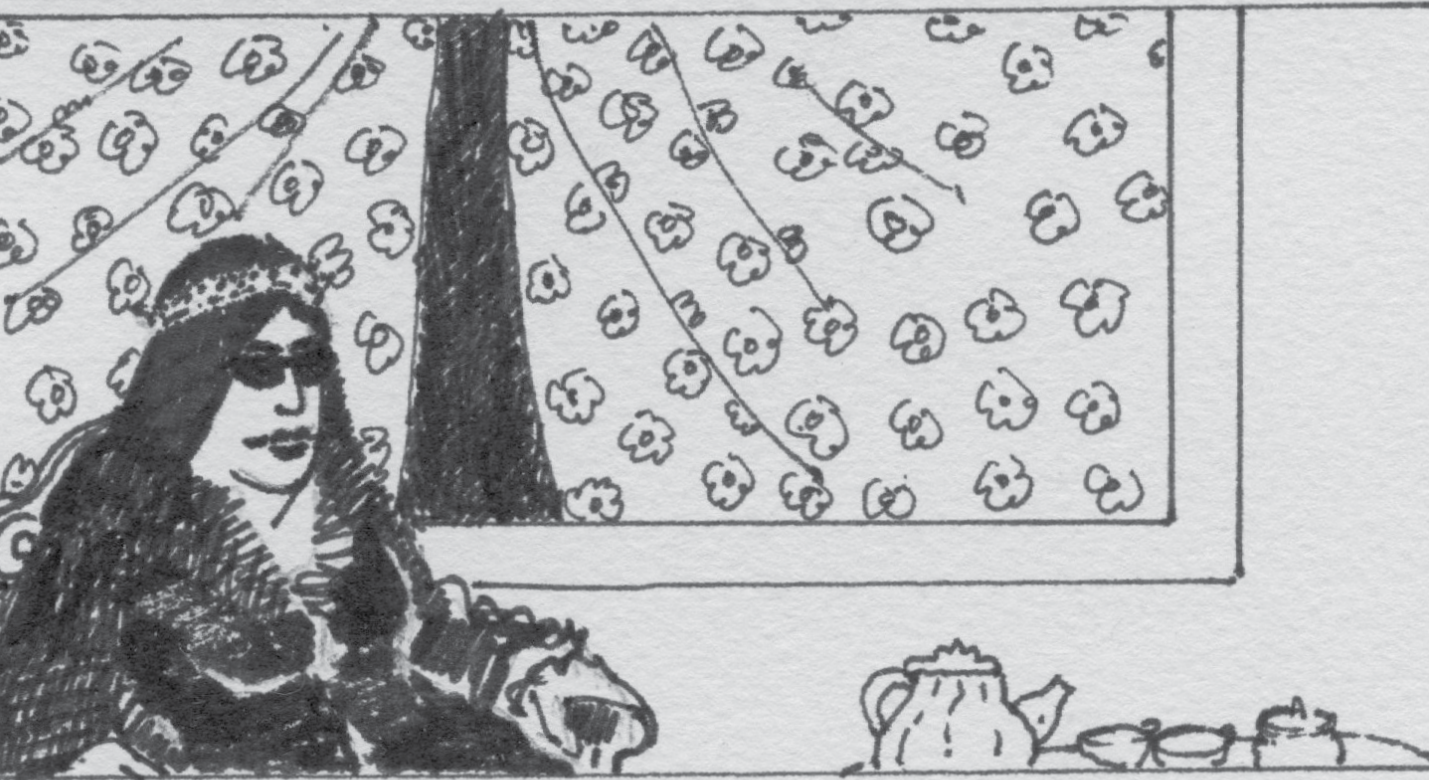
– Edward R. Beardsley, June 2014



27 (NEXT DAY)



(RED FLASH)







“American cowboy meets French decadence: Ed Beardsley’s work presents a way of thinking that brings together the American Myth with a decadent approach to history, a fantastic combination of his cowboy mentality influenced by European decadence: a perfect mix of innocence and corruption. His paintings tell us mythical human stories far from being just narratives. His seemingly ‘stories from everyday life’ deal with human fate, often grotesque, but deeply inside, soaked with fear and death.”

Dr. Georgij Paro, former Intendant, Croatian National Theatre, Zagreb

Edward R. Beardsley is a California artist known for his sardonic, sometimes caustic imagery critiquing the human condition.

Beardsley has enjoyed a long and varied career including teaching stints at several prominent universities, serving as a staff writer for a paper in Oregon, and designing theatrical posters, scenery, and promotions for stage productions. Beardsley holds an MFA in painting and printmaking from the Claremont Graduate University. After serving three years in the U.S. Army in Europe he spent a year studying painting and drawing at Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles.

He served as Dean of the Division of Fine Arts at the University of California, Riverside where he was the founder and first director of the internationally renowned UCR/California Museum of Photography. In 1994 he was invited to join the working group for the digital image at George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, for which he produced two important white papers on the evolving social consequences of digital technologies.

He is the author of three books: *Ecce Homo: the paintings of Edward Beardsley*, *Monsieur Souris*, and *Doings in the Department of Azusa*. His short fiction has appeared in online and print publications. His paintings have been featured on albums by Alice Cooper, Kaleidoscope, and Chris Darrow. His work has been exhibited across the country in various institutions and galleries.

Beardsley currently resides in the San Gabriel Mountains, east of Los Angeles.