



Classic Pin-Up Art of Jack Cole

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This beautifully reproduced selection of quirkily elegant, sensual pin-up art from Jack Cole's 1950s career as the premier *Playboy* cartoonist shows that there was far more to Cole than his brilliant Plastic Man.

In the rarefied realm of classic cartoon pin-up art, nobody did it better than Jack Cole. With his quirky line drawings and sensual watercolors, Cole, under Hugh Hefner's guiding hand, catapulted to stardom in the 1950s as *Playboy's* marquee cartoonist, a position he held until his untimely death at the age of 43.

Jack Cole has been justly celebrated as the creator of Plastic Man and an innovative comic book artist of the 1940s (especially in Art Spiegelman and Chip Kidd's *Jack Cole and Plastic Man: Forms Stretched to Their Limits*). After finishing his 14-year run on *Plastic Man*, he found himself looking for something new. According to Cole, his savior was the Humorama line of down-market digest magazines. This girls and gags magazine circuit proved to be the perfect training ground to regain his footing and develop his craft at single panel "gag" cartoons. His ability to render the female form was already without peer. Though he signed his cartoons "Jake," Cole's exquisite line drawings and masterful use of ink-wash ? a skill he carried over to *Playboy* ? betrayed his pseudonym. In comparison to his contemporaries, however, Cole was probably Humorama's least prolific artist. Though his images were frequently used for covers, Cole's cartoons were few and far between, with scarcely a single drawing appearing every five issues.

Along with a foreword by editor Alex Chun, this volume (originally released in a now out-of-print hardcover edition that now fetches high prices on the secondhand market) collects the best of these hidden gems, including several shot from Cole's stunning original art. Most of these drawings have not seen print elsewhere since their original publication.

Illustrated throughout in color and black-and-white

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Patrick Pond:

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