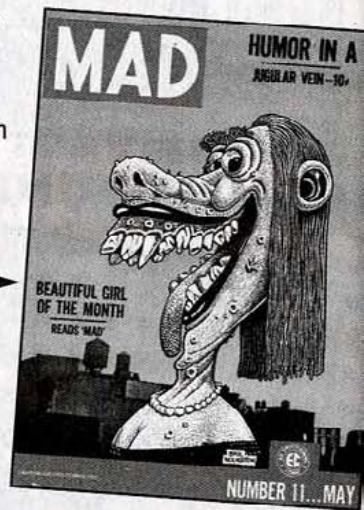


MAD's IDIOT OF THE ISSUE!

II GROSSLY-ACCURATE BASIL WOLVERTON FACTOIDS



- Basil was born 95 years ago this month in Central Point, Oregon, but lived most of his life in Washington.
- As his picture shows, unlike the characters he drew, he was neither sinister-looking nor grotesque.
- In 1946, Basil beat out half a million other artists in a competition to draw the never-seen (and hideously ugly) *Li'l Abner* character, "Lena the Hyena."
- Basil's winning submission was printed not only in the strip, but was featured in *Life* magazine — and led to him illustrating the cover of MAD #11.
- A self-taught artist, Basil's style of drawing is often referred to as the "spaghetti and meatball" school of design.
- Roy Crane, a popular cartoonist, supposedly said he felt physically ill after seeing one of Basil's severe portraits.



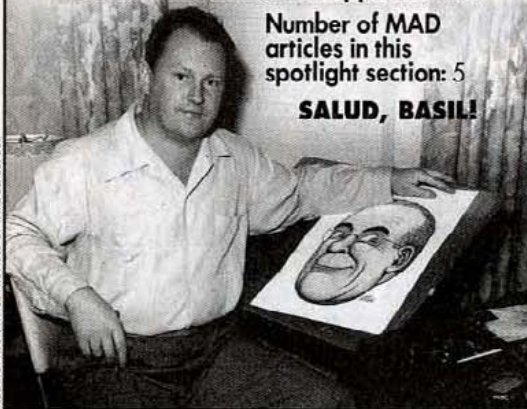
THE STATS:

First MAD article: "The Face Upon the Floor!"
— final panel (MAD #10, April 1954)

Number of MAD issues appeared in: 9

Number of MAD articles in this spotlight section: 5

SALUD, BASIL!



- Basil described himself as a "Producer of Preposterous Pictures of Peculiar People Who Prowl This Perplexing Planet."
- Apart from MAD, Basil did a great deal of work in radio, greeting cards, sci-fi and horror comics. He even wrote and illustrated a six-volume version of the Bible.
- After Basil passed away in 1978, his son Monte felt his father's unique style needed to be kept alive. Over the years, he's illustrated several articles in a similar fashion for MAD.
- Basil's contribution to comic books was marked by his election to the Jack Kirby Hall of Fame in 1991 and the Will Eisner Hall of Fame in 2000.
- Although he's only illustrated one cover and a handful of articles for MAD, Basil remains one of the magazine's most influential and memorable artists!

