

# BOOKS

Yet another giant tome from Taschen, this book cannot be recommended highly enough to anyone with a penchant for illustrations of beautiful women.

Having discovered age 17 that he could support himself one summer on the beaches of Ocean City Maryland by painting cool pictures on other kids jackets he realised that illustration was something he wanted to do for the rest of his life, his motivation was simple "What a fantastic way to meet girls!"

He took little from attending the Pratt Institute, one of the best commercial art schools in the country and with war on the way he spent his time mostly concentrating on the female form. When he graduated in 1941 he was not, in his own opinion, a skilled artist.

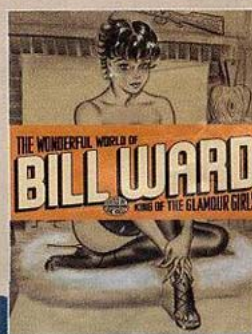
His first job, cleaning up other illustrators work, was a disappointment and it took little effort to get himself fired. He went to work drawing backgrounds for Fawcett comic books including Mr Scarlet, Bullet man and The Shadow. He credits his boss Jack Binder with teaching him the real skills he needed to become one of the best comic book artists of the time.

After being drafted Ward was assigned to communications for an anti-aircraft unit at the Quonset Point Naval Air Base, with plenty of spare time during his long night watches he started laying out comics for Fawcett. A naval officer noticed his work and

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suggested he do a strip for the base paper. Ward did, and created Ack-Ack Amy. That strip eventually evolved to become the character for which he is best known, Torchy, the blonde bombshell.

Ward's talent for drawing women meant that when he left the Army Torchy was picked up by Quality, the top comic producer of the time, and found success very quickly. Ward was put in charge of the cover art for Quality's very popular romance comics.

His women are beautiful, raunchy, bright, and usually very much in control and this wonderful book of his work is a great tribute to a man whose imagery boosted the morale of many a young man both in and out of active service. TIMON ..