

# Mike Kaye Asks: "Can Other Comic Books Save Real People?"

By David Rolland

Published Thu., Nov. 21 2013 at 8:15 AM



Every big superhero has a secret identity. Local comic book author Mike Kaye claims his creation, the awkward frog man *Amphoman*'s alter ego is Dr. Ulrius Joules. But as *New Times* interviewed him, it turned out both Amphoman and Dr. Joules might actually be Kaye's own alter egos.

Kaye pours his own struggles, whether financial, family related or his own battle with cancer into each action-packed, family friendly volume of *Amphoman*, a saga that now spans nine colorful issues.

While *Amphoman* might battle super-powered costumed cretins, Kaye tries to fight his enemy by donating proceeds from each comic sold toward cancer research. After putting his three children to bed Kaye found time to answer our questions.

## **New Times: How did you come up with the idea of *Amphoman*?**

*Mike Kaye:* As a teen, I felt like I never fit in. I thought, if I have a character that is different and tries to fit in with society, it would be something I could relate to and write about. A smart, intricate, multi-faceted, unusual person who not everyone understands.

Before the comic book, I created a comic strip series called, *Amphoman Presents* which was published in my college paper, *The Observer*, from 1994 to 1996. It was the same Amphoman character, but in a classroom setting trying to fit in with students. I then decided to expand on the story and add new characters, which brought me to storyboarding where I wrote *Dr. Ulrius Joules is... Amphoman*.

Other gems fall to earth transforming those that come into contact. A trigger event transforms the fused people into something else for a few hours. As for Dr. Ulrius Joules, when you hear someone referred to as "Doctor" you think, smart, experienced, rich, and he is all the above except the riches. He has spent his wealth on finding a cure for his own cancer with no success. He studied marine biology and the nacreous concretion clams/oysters form, which makes a pearl. Pearls are a form of tumor and the closest thing to cancer in the underworld where he thought he'd find answers. If he removes his gem, his cancer will return.

## **What comic books have influenced *Amphoman*?**

I am embarrassed to say that I do not read comics. There was a time I had collected comics but solely for the beauty of the covers. I've been drawing since I was 3. I use my surroundings as reference. The stories take place in Florida. As I age, so does he with each issue. This is why he's realistic and believable as a person and "hero." In the comics, Ampho's family asks the same questions mine do. When you look at the most famous superheroes you'll find, for the most part, they don't have kids, they are tough, cool dudes in top shape that work alone. Amphoman is different. He's tired, out of shape, needs caffeine. Face it, he's in every one of us.

## **Proceeds toward each *Amphoman* comic bought will go towards cancer research. Can you go into the specifics?**

Every *Amphoman* book sold helps actual people! When you buy an Amphoman book, a quarter goes to Susan Komen of West Palm Beach. This December will be the first payment to them. For every 200 *Amphoman* comic books sold, enough quarters will be raised to give a mammogram which runs \$50 according to Susan Komen's site and can save a real life! Can other comic books save real people?

## **You had your own bout with cancer. How did that impact the comic?**

In my own life, I always try to have a positive attitude and don't stay down for long. After my scare, I brought more realism to the characters in *Amphoman*. You try to do your best in life, but it's never easy. *Amphoman* has matured, as have I, in life. He balances family, finances, and making Earth a better place the same way I try. I struggle financially to get by with my family living paycheck to paycheck, yet I still look to help others by donating to a good cause.

My wife smirked when she saw one headline that featured me and said, "Comic Book Creator Donates Portion of Proceeds." There are plenty of people that are more financially suited to donate to a cause than I could. In Sept 2006, I was front-page *SunSentinel* news when I lost my home and still struggle to get by to this day! So long as my struggles are only financial and not health related, then I am lucky, and I will continue to give what I could even if all my years of efforts only helps one person in the end!

## **As a father of young children are your kids helping contribute ideas for your comics?**

My kids like to recommend character ideas, and they like to see what I'm currently working on. I take everything into account because kids know today's world. My wife saw issue three and said, "Where are the women characters?" I created the Shadow Witch in issue four which I have her to thank for.

## **Since Hollywood has a love affair for adapting comics into movies, it's only a matter of time before we see *Amphoman* on the big screen. What would be your ideal cast?**

I'd love to see Amphoman played by Adam Sandler, Jeff GoldBlum or Mr. Bean. Bleash the Fair Feather Warrior could be Johnny Depp or Liam Neeson. Brain Demon: Sylvester Stallone, or Jonah Hill; Black Bull: Denzel Washington; and Shadow Witch by Lady GaGa.

To buy *Amphoman* comics visit [amphoman.com](http://amphoman.com). *Amphoman* comic books are also available at [Tate's Comics](http://Tate's Comics) in Lauderhill, [lunchboxcollector.com](http://lunchboxcollector.com), and online digital versions at [comicsmonkey.com](http://comicsmonkey.com). Mike Kaye will be signing *Amphoman* books on December 7, 2013, at [Thriftarellas](http://Thriftarellas) in Davie from 2 to 4 p.m.



VOTED BEST OF BROWARD #1 FUN SHOP

## Secret Moments

E-CIGARETTE AND VAPORIZER SUPER STORE  
WHOLESALE PRICING DIRECT TO THE PUBLIC

VAPORHOT.COM

- Wax Vaporizers
- Smoking Accessories
- Large Selection of Kratom Products
- Adult Novelties & Gifts

Largest selection of e-cigarettes and accessories

We have Better OTC than Cialis & Viagra Money Back Guaranteed  
2652 E. Oakland Park Blvd. Fort Lauderdale (954)566-4628