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Contact LINDA ADAMS: 909-725-7337

Godfather of the American Graphic Novel, Phil Yeh, teams up with Simpsons Cartoonist Phil Ortiz, to create a new mural at Route 66 Rendezvous on September 18, and at KidsFaire in Phoenix, AZ, September 20-21, 2008

Phil Yeh, often called the *Godfather of the Modern American Graphic Novel*, will paint a new mural promoting literacy and the arts on the first night of the Route 66 Rendezvous in Meadowbrook Park in San Bernardino. Simpson's veteran artist Phil Ortiz will join him on Thursday, September 18, from 5 pm to 10 pm. The Route 66 Rendezvous mural is sponsored by the California Visitors & Convention Center and will travel through the community afterwards. Ortiz and Yeh both reside in the mountain communities of Cedar Glen and Running Springs in San Bernardino County and have done a number of local community events on this worldwide "two Phils" tour, which has taken them to China, Europe, and all over the United States in the last two years.

The artists then head for **Kidsfaire** in the University of Phoenix stadium in Glendale, Arizona, on Saturday and Sunday, September 20 and 21. Special guest artist Spill will join the two Phil's and hundreds of kids who will help create another work of art. The mural in Arizona is sponsored by Kidsfaire and by the Renaissance Glendale Hotel and Spa and will be donated to the Ronald McDonald House or the Phoenix Children's Hospital after the event.

Yeh, who founded *Cartoonists Across America & The World* in 1985, is now in the 23rd year of his 25 year long world tour promoting literacy and the arts with humor and cartoons. Since the band was founded, they have painted more than 1800 murals in 49 states and over a dozen countries with hundreds of artists and thousands of kids of all ages.

Yeh's partner on the new "Two Phils Tour" is five time Emmy award-winning cartoonist Phil Ortiz,

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who joined the *Cartoonists Across America* tour in the summer of 2006 at a big library mural painting event in San Bernardino, California. Ortiz designed more than 100 characters for *The Simpsons*, the longest running comedy series in television history, during the first two seasons of the show. He then went on to draw *The Simpsons* for various comic book titles published by Bongo Comics to the present day. The two artists have appeared throughout the world since they first teamed up, including being guests of the third annual Chinese animation festival in Hangzhou, China in the spring of 2007. Yeh's new *Dinosaurs Across Route 66* comic book covers the old mother road from Chicago to Santa Monica. It is a book for all ages and continues Yeh's popular Dinosaur series. The artists always sign their books at all their public events and are ready to do custom drawings, too.

Yeh's best-selling comic book *Dinosaurs Across America* was published last fall by NBM publishing in New York City and was named one of 25 outstanding graphic novels by *School Library Journal* in their March 2008 cover story on graphic novels. *Dinosaurs Across America* is a full color hardcover graphic novel suitable for all ages and is perfect for home, school, and public libraries. Yeh's colorist and art director, Lieve Jerger, spent many weeks making sure that the colors in this new edition are perfect. *Dinosaurs Across America* has been reprinted eight times as a black and white comic book with over 180,000 copies sold throughout the country since 1990. In 2006, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History had a five-month exhibition of Yeh's oil paintings from his classic children's book *Theo the Dinosaur* and commissioned him to create a special Cleveland edition of *Dinosaurs Across America* for the show. That led to this new full color NBM edition in 2007, which has just about sold out, with a new printing coming this fall.

Yeh will also showcase new limited edition fine-art prints being produced by his partner

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Geoff Bevington's company, The Checkered Giant, in Illinois. The subject of these fine art prints include images from Yeh's *Winged Tiger in China* cartoons (currently running in the Chinese *Little Star* Magazine in Beijing and Shanghai); and *Steve the Dog and the Winged Tiger*, a book featuring art by Yeh, Bevington and Jerger. *Steve the Dog and The Winged Tiger* is set in Yeh's birthplace of Chicago and will debut in spring of 2009. Bevington created the character of Steve the Dog and even though he was born in Los Angeles, he has made his home in the Chicago area for most of his life. This is a fun story for all ages about how a couch potato dog was transformed into a renaissance dog.

Also on display in the *Cartoonists Across America* booth are two custom made guitars signed by many notable creators, musicians, and artists from all fields in support of the band's ongoing tour for literacy and the arts. These guitars were handcrafted by Patrick Bubien of Guitarification in Fallbrook, California. Patrick's instruments have since been signed with artwork and signatures including; Ray Bradbury, Cheech and Chong, Alan Alda, Marilu Henner, Gary Owens, Donovan's drummer Candy John, *The Joker's* creator Jerry Robinson, both *Ninja Turtles* co-creators Eastman and Laird, *Mutts'* Patrick McDonnell, *Dinotopia's* James Gurney, *Hellboy's* Mike Mignola, *Groo* creator Sergio Aragones, *Bone's* Jeff Smith, *Road to Perdition* and *Dick Tracy* author Max Allan Collins, *Foxtrot's* Bill Amend,

Luann's Greg Evans, *For Better or For Worse* creator Lynn Johnston, *Aquaman* artist Ramona Fradon, *Bat Lash* artist Nick Cardy, *Mulan's* Alex Nino, *Fantastic Four's* Joe Sinnott, *Flaming Carrot's* Bob Burden, *One Bad Rat* artist and writer Brian Talbot, *Close to Home's* John McPherson, *Dragons of Hawaii* creator Jon J. Murakami, *Family Circus* artist Jeff Keane, *Ziggy's* Tom Wilson, Tony Hawk artist Matt Lorentz, *Cheech Wizard's* Mark Bode,

Elephantman's Moritat, *Archie* writer and the creator of *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* George

Gladir, *Star Wars'* artist Steve Leialoha, *Superman* artist Murphy Anderson, *Flash* artist Carmine

Infantino, *Nick Fury* and *Indiana Jones* artist Jim Steranko, editorial cartoonists Pat Oliphant and

many others.



"The whole idea of this guitar project is to call attention to the people who create so many of our pop culture icons, but who often do not have the name recognition among the general audience. Our entire campaign has been to put a spotlight on the creative people who actually write and draw so many of the creations that are later made into film and TV series, " said Yeh from his Running Springs studio in the mountains near Lake Arrowhead.

Yeh continues to speak in schools, libraries and conventions around the world. For more information about Cartoonists Across America & The World's ongoing campaign to promote literacy please check out our website at: www.wingedtiger.com

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