



# THE MIND'S EYE THE ART OF OMNI

EDITED BY JEREMY FROMMER AND RICK SCHWARTZ  
INTRODUCTION BY BEN BOVA



# THE MIND'S EYE: THE ART OF OMNI

Edited by Jeremy Frommer and Rick Schwartz

Introduction by Ben Bova

Published by



To be released: **June 2014**

This PDF of *The Mind's Eye*  
is only a preview and an uncorrected proof.  
**Lifting images from mechanical files is strictly prohibited.**

To see the complete version, please contact Nina Ventura,  
Publicist: [nina@powerHouseBooks.com](mailto:nina@powerHouseBooks.com)



# THE MIND'S EYE

THE ART OF OMNI

EDITED BY JEREMY FROMMER AND RICK SCHWARTZ

INTRODUCTION BY BEN BOVA



**powerHouse Books** Brooklyn, NY





## OMNI — A REMINISCENCE

For me, *Omni* was a dream come true: a big, slick, beautifully presented magazine dealing with the future.

Ever since I'd started my profession as a writer I'd longed for such a magazine. I never dreamed that I would become its executive editor!

I had achieved a respectable career writing science fiction and nonfiction books. I became a regular contributor to *Analog Science Fiction and Fact* magazine, the premier publication in the science fiction field. When *Analog's* longtime editor, John W. Campbell, Jr., died in 1971, I was asked to take the position.

I had a great time with *Analog*, but after seven fruitful years I decided to retire from editing and become a full-time writer.

My retirement lasted less than two weeks.

Just before leaving *Analog* I was invited by Bob Guccione and Kathy Keeton to see their plans for a magazine they called *Nova*. I was stunned. It was very similar to a proposal I had recently made to the management of Condé Nast Publications, Inc., the company that owned *Analog*—as well as much more profitable magazines such as *Vogue*, *Glamour*, *Mademoiselle*, *House & Garden*, etc.

My idea was to publish a big, slick magazine about the future. I called it *Tomorrow!* My dream magazine, it would feature both factual articles and fiction stories, all dealing with the future. Condé Nast's management considered the idea, but decided to bring out a different magazine, *Self*, aimed at the women's market that they knew quite well.

I was greatly impressed with Bob and Kathy's presentation of *Nova*, but I had retired from magazine editing. I told them I'd be happy to write for *Nova*, but I politely refused their offer of an editorial position.

They took my turndown graciously, and asked me to suggest someone who might serve as their fiction editor. I suggested a young woman who had worked for me earlier at *Analog*. She took the job.

Meanwhile, the producers of PBS's *Nova* TV series sued Guccione, claiming that he was using the name of their show to promote his own new endeavor. Over a frantic weekend, while *Nova's* first issue was being held on the press, Bob and his minions came up with the name *Omni*, which I thought was a much better title for the magazine.

(Besides, one of the reasons I hesitated to join Bob and Kathy's magazine was the silly reluctance to be known as "Bova from *Nova*.")

Well, the woman I had suggested to be *Omni's* fiction editor ran off and got married just after the first edition of the magazine hit the newsstands. Her husband would not let her work. I got a call from Bob, who told me he had no fiction editor for *Omni*, and it was at least partly my fault.

Thus ended my retirement. I told Bob I'd sit in at the fiction desk until he could find a replacement.

A year later I was still there, having the time of my life, when the magazine's editorial director abruptly quit.

Kathy asked me to step up to the job. With some inner qualms, I did.

And I loved every minute of it. Bob Guccione was the best publisher I had ever worked for. He backed *Omni* with millions of dollars worth of publicity and promotion. He stayed out of the editors' hair and allowed us to run the magazine pretty much as we chose. Kathy Keeton was in the office every day, but she too let the editorial staff "do its thing" without any troubling interference.

A large part of my job was to travel the nation, and Europe, to convince potential readers, advertisers, and circulation outlets that *Omni* was not "*Penthouse* in space," as many detractors snickered early on. I showed them that *Omni* was a serious magazine.

To the editorial staff I repeatedly pointed out that *Omni* was not a science magazine. A good deal of its content had to do with science, of course, but we were a magazine about the future, I emphasized, all aspects of the future.

My reasoning was that science magazines were like spinach, good for you but not terribly appetizing. *Omni* was more like lemon meringue pie: dig in, you'll enjoy yourself.

That was the difference between *Omni* and all the rest.

A good part of *Omni's* immediate success was the striking look of the magazine. That's where Bob made his greatest impact. Working with our art director, Frank Devino, Bob saw to it that every issue of *Omni* was a feast for the eye as well as the mind.

*Omni* quickly acquired a readership in the millions, ten times more than any science fiction magazine. We had a brilliant editorial staff, and obtained stories and articles from the world's top writers and thinkers. And illustrations, of course, from the top visual artists.

The scene that sticks in my mind, though, is from our first anniversary party, at Bob and Kathy's home a few blocks from the magazine's offices.

One of our editors, who had worked at several science magazines that had all gone broke, approached Bob in the midst of the party and thanked him for backing *Omni* so handsomely.

"I mean," the editor gushed, "I come to the office in the morning and there's the public bus coming up the avenue with a big advertisement for *Omni* on its side!"

Bob was noted for humor. Which made it all the funnier when he replied to the editor, completely straight-faced, "Well, it's only that one bus. We have it go around the block all day."

*Omni* was a joy. I miss it terribly. ☒

Ben Bova  
Naples, Florida

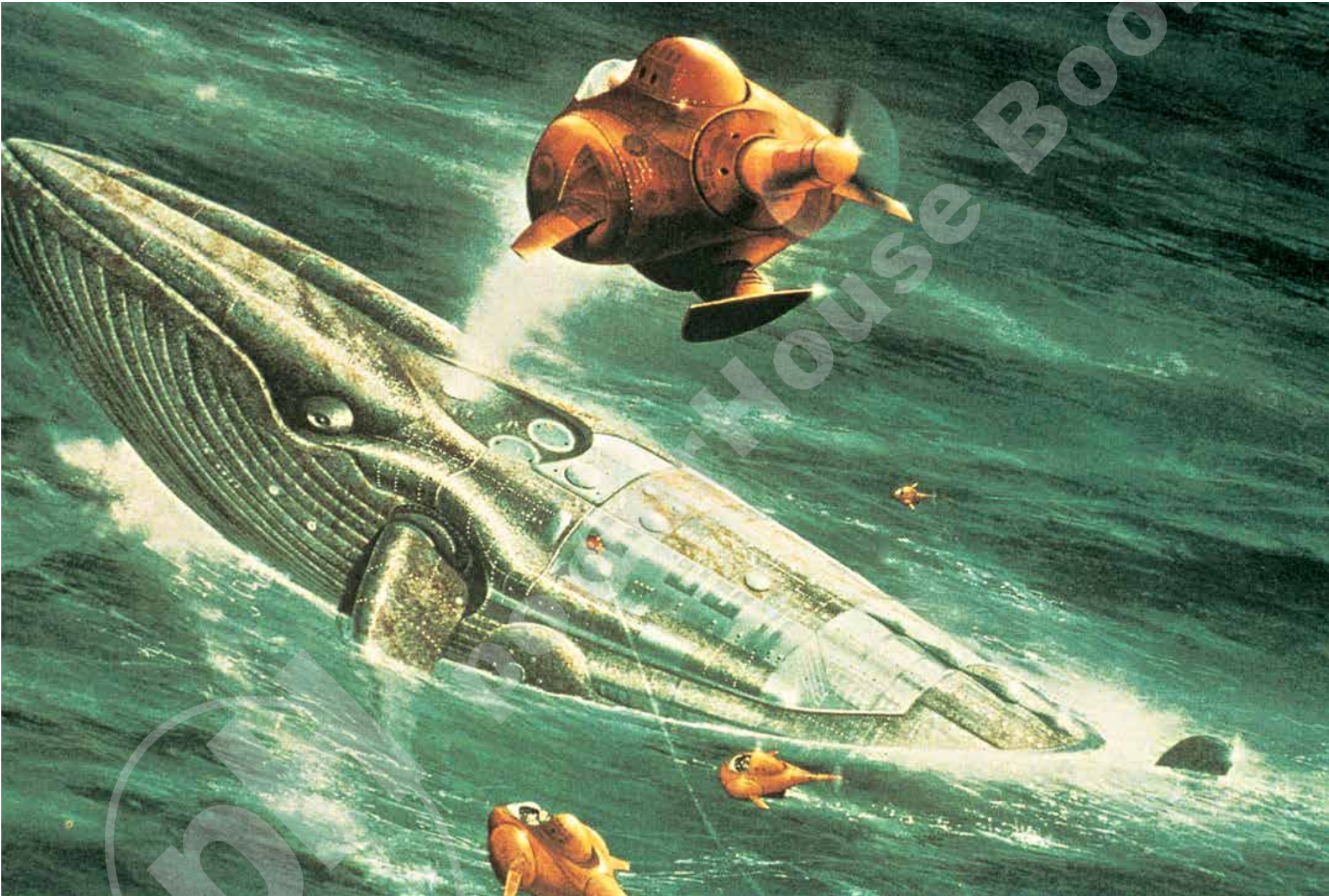


EDITOR'S NOTE

*Omni* lived in a time well before the digital revolution. The images you see on these pages have taken us years to track down and brought us in touch with esteemed artists, amazing photographers, and dusty storage lockers. Our quest is far from over; you'll notice an almost decade-long gap in the material, the contents of which were either lost or destroyed. We continue to search throughout the universe for any images we can find, and will share them with the world at our all-things-*Omni* website, [omnireboot.com](http://omnireboot.com). Stay tuned...







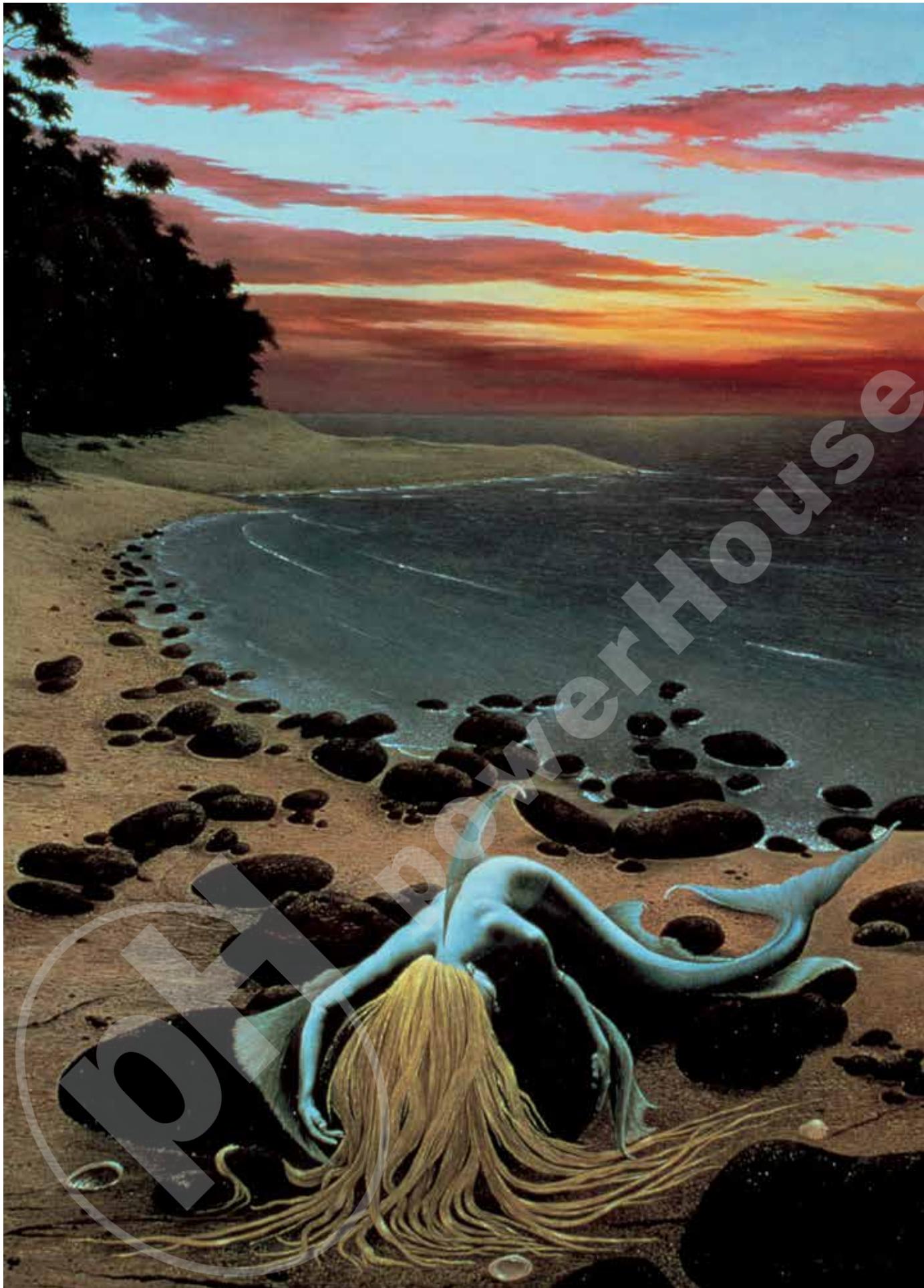




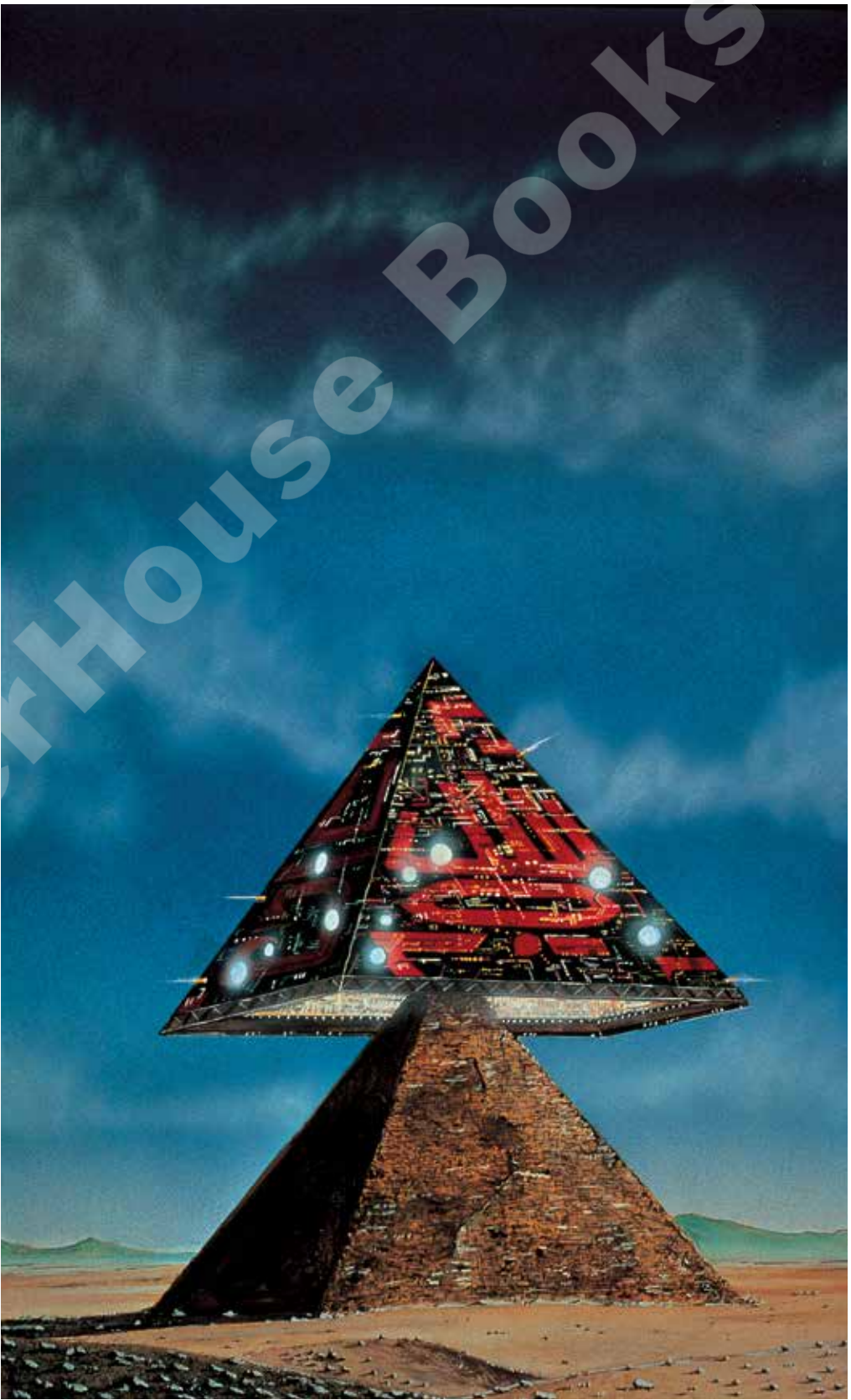








14 PIERRE LACOMBE, COVER, MAY 1980

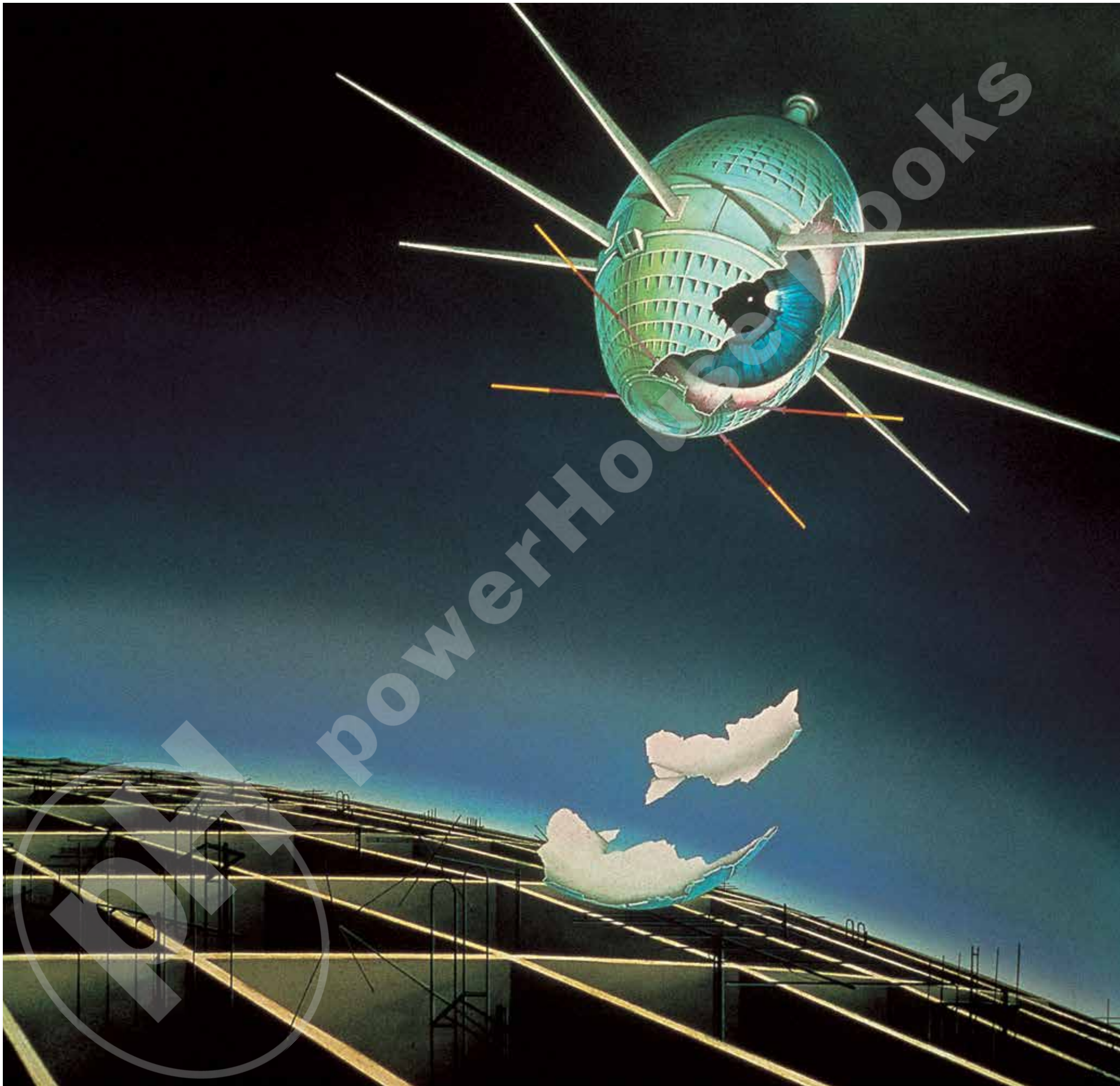


LEFT MICHAEL WHELAN, "TIME TRAVELERS," MAY 1980 RIGHT PETER KNIFTON "TIME TRAVELERS," MAY 1980 15







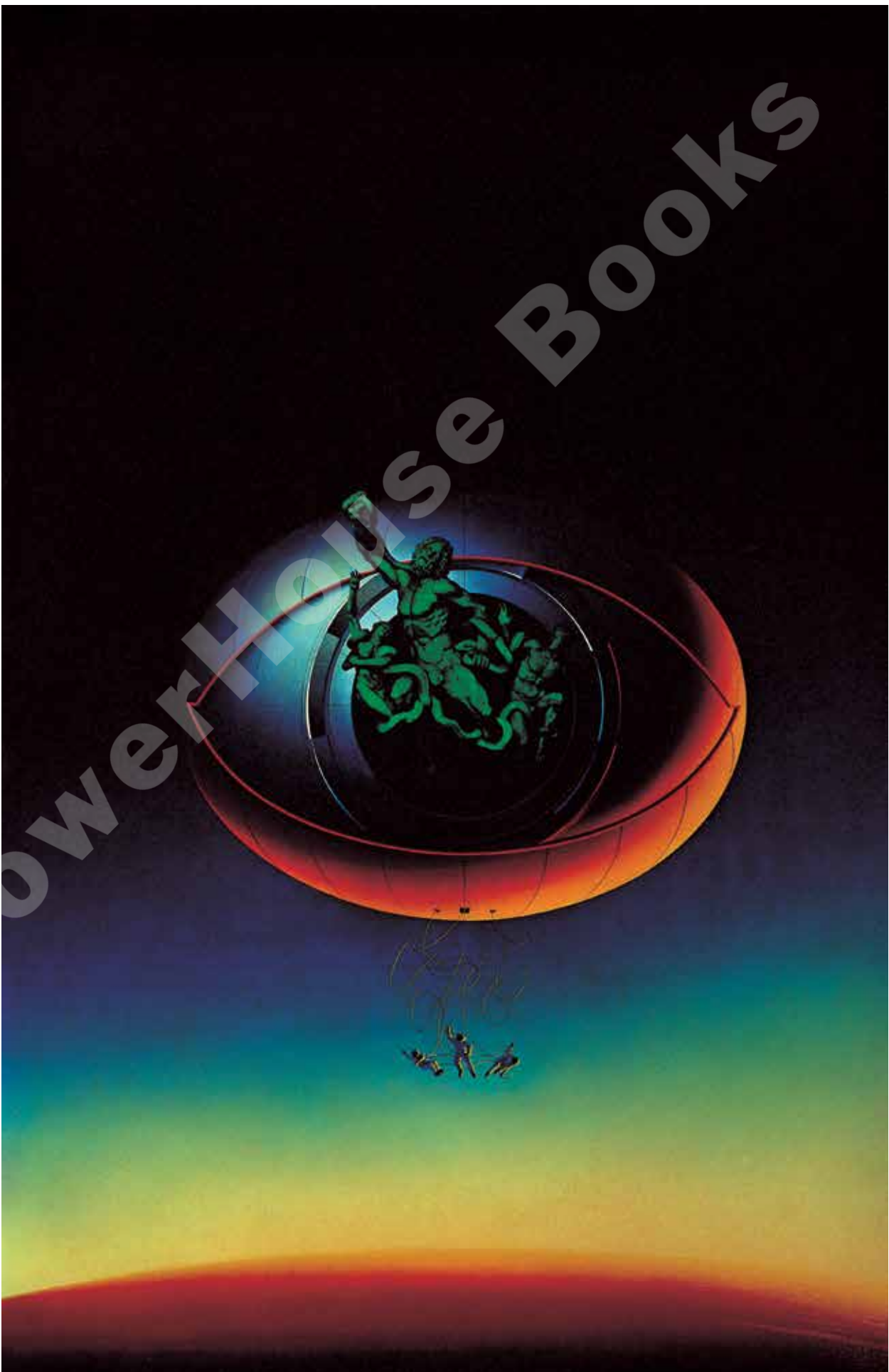


24 UTE OSTERWALD, COVER, JULY 1980

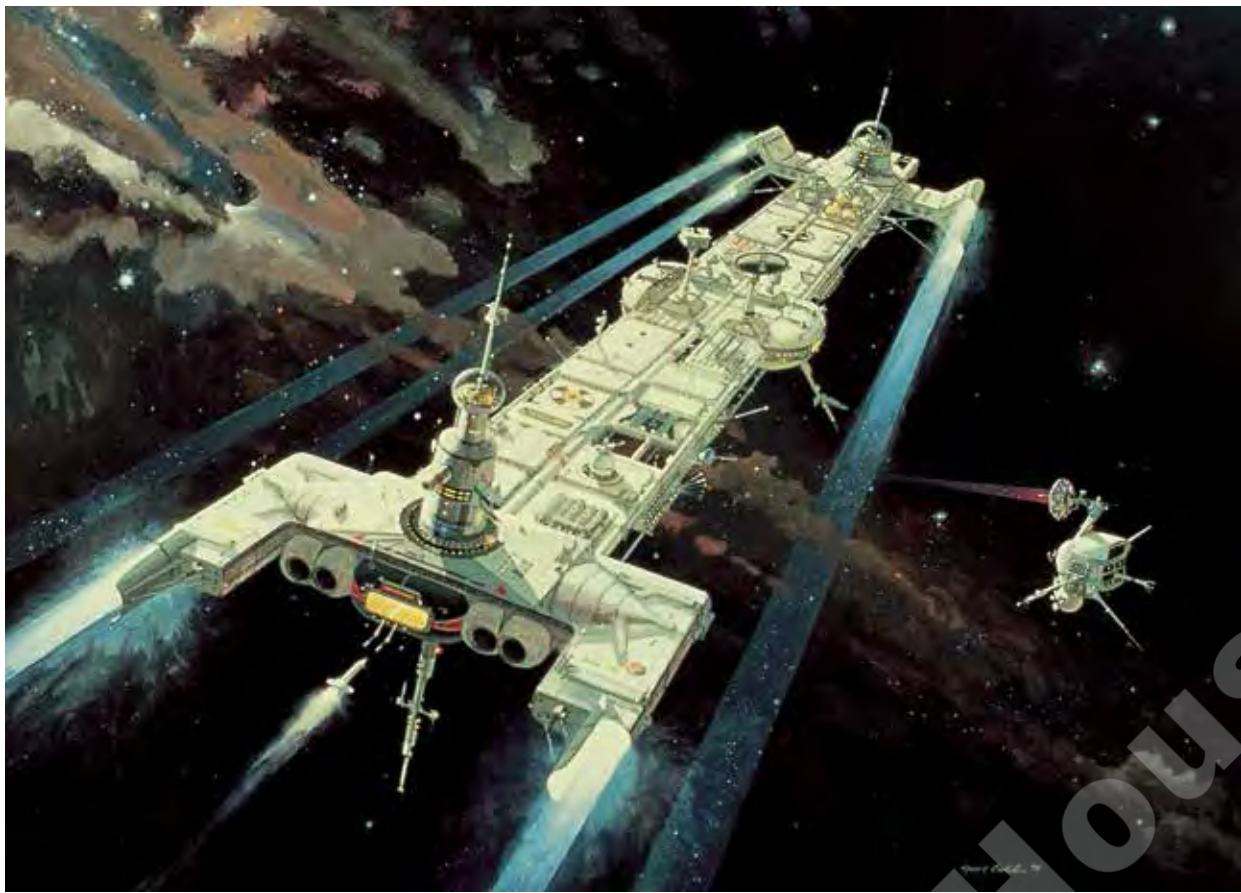


JOHN SCHOENHERR, "DUNE," JULY 1980 25











“FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS,  
OMNI COMBINED  
A FASCINATION  
WITH SCIENCE AND  
SPECULATION,  
LITERATURE AND ART,  
PHILOSOPHY AND  
QUIRKINESS, SERIOUS  
SPECULATION AND GONZO  
SPECULATION, THE  
HEALTH OF THE PLANET  
AND ITS CULTURES,  
OUR RELATIONSHIP TO  
THE UNIVERSE AND ITS  
(POSSIBLE) CULTURES,  
AND A SENSE THAT  
WHATEVER ELSE,  
TOMORROW WOULD BE  
DIFFERENT FROM TODAY.”

KEITH FERRELL



ERNST FUCHS, "FICTION: ONLY YOU FANZY," SEPTEMBER 1980 37





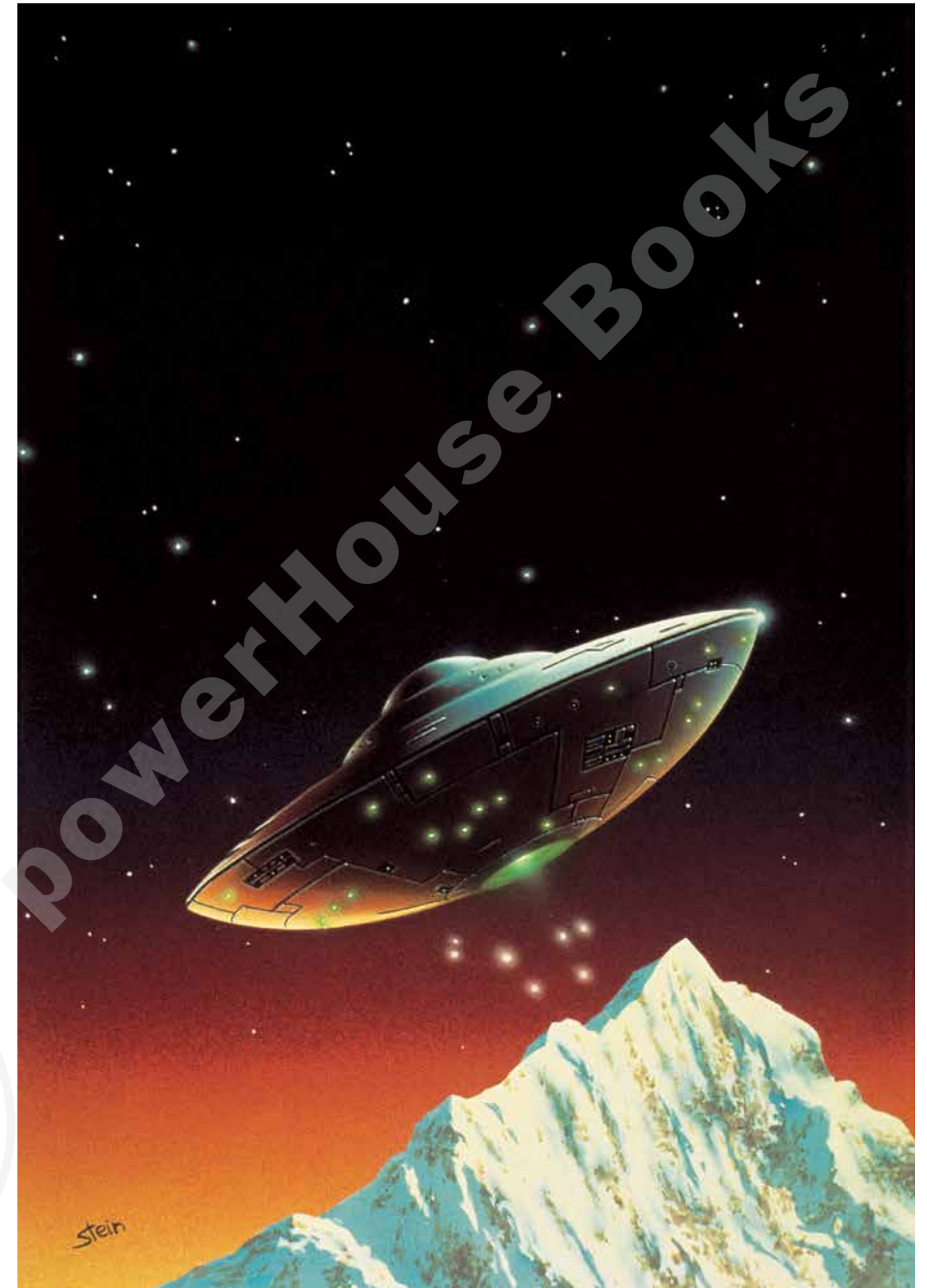
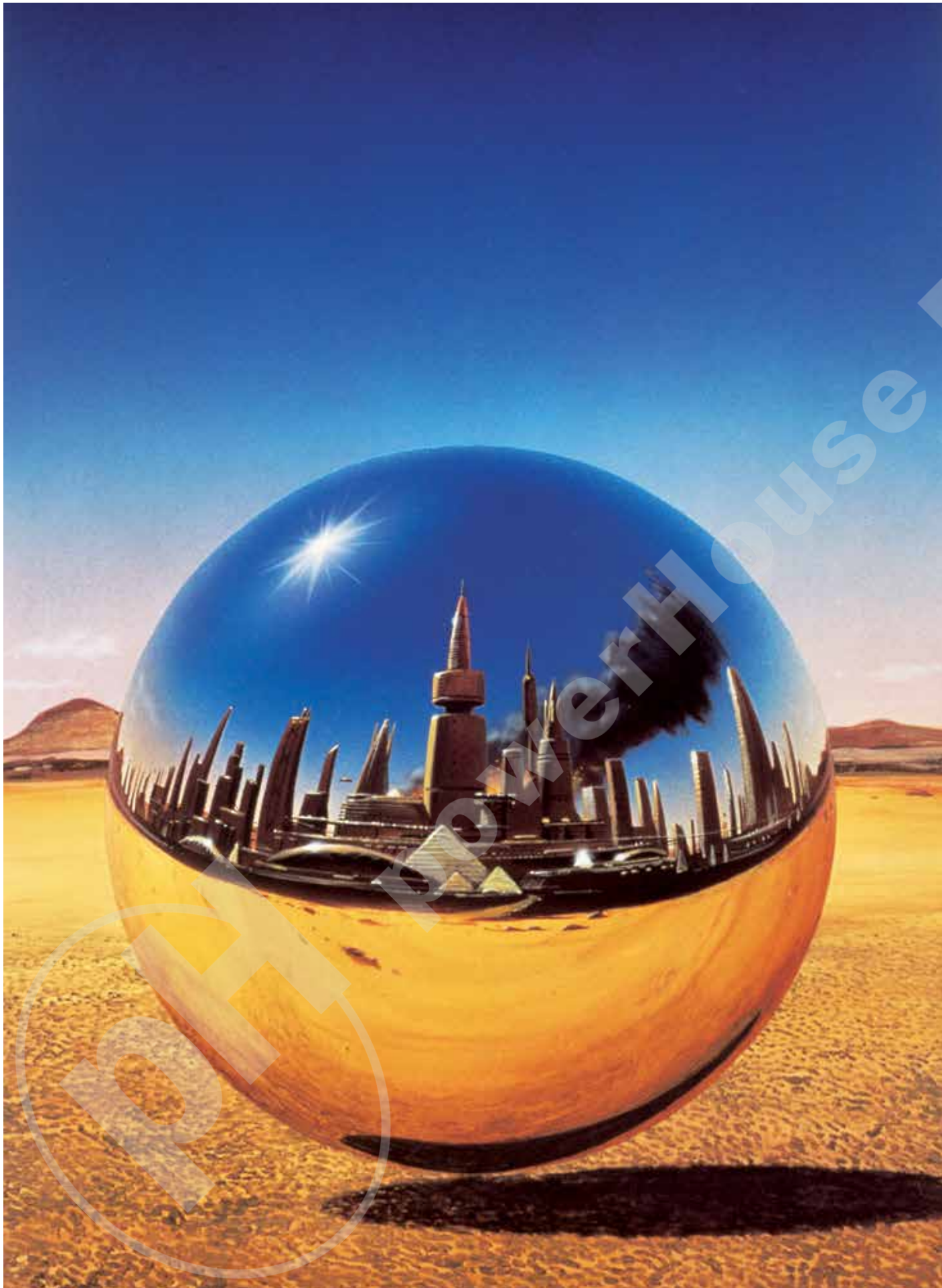














## THE MIND'S EYE THE ART OF OMNI

Compilation & Editing © 2014 Jeremy Frommer and Rick Schwartz

Introduction © 2014 Ben Bova

All images originally published by *OMNI* magazine and © OMNI

Images and Original Art provided by OmniReboot.com, a Jerrick Ventures Company

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any manner in any media, or transmitted by any means whatsoever, electronic or mechanical (including photocopy, film or video recording, Internet posting, or any other information storage and retrieval system), without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published in the United States by powerHouse Books,  
a division of powerHouse Cultural Entertainment, Inc.

37 Main Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201-1021  
telephone 212.604.9074, fax 212.366.5247  
e-mail: [info@powerHouseBooks.com](mailto:info@powerHouseBooks.com)  
website: [www.powerHouseBooks.com](http://www.powerHouseBooks.com)

First edition, 2014

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014930016

ISBN 978-1-57687-686-2

Book design by Krzysztof Poluchowicz

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in China through Pimlico Book International, Hong Kong.



# THE MIND'S EYE: THE ART OF OMNI

Edited by Jeremy Frommer and Rick Schwartz

Introduction by Ben Bova

Published by



To be released: **June 2014**

This PDF of *The Mind's Eye*  
is only a preview and an uncorrected proof.  
**Lifting images from mechanical files is strictly prohibited.**

To see the complete version, please contact Nina Ventura,  
Publicist: [nina@powerHouseBooks.com](mailto:nina@powerHouseBooks.com)