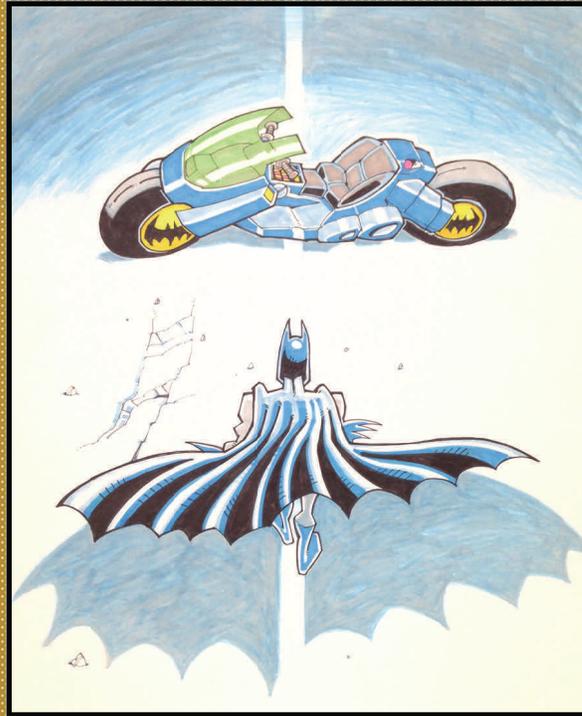
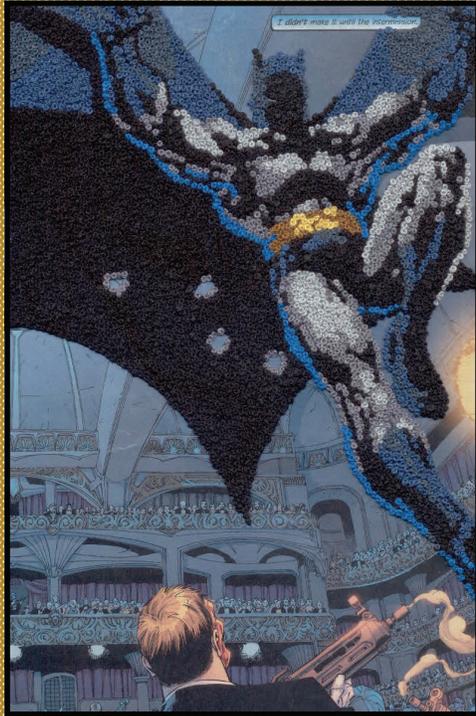


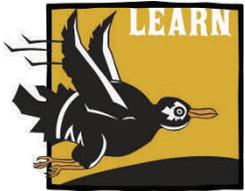
Mark Newport, detail *Zack Bedcover*, embroidery on comic book pages



Ryan Huna Smith, *Akira Batman*, marker and colored pencil

QUESTOR QUESTIONS

New Takes on a Familiar Superhero



LEARN that Ryan Huna Smith and Mark Newport come from very different backgrounds. Smith is from the southwest, a Native American who grew up in Arizona; Newport is from upstate New York. Smith first studied at the American Indian Art Institute in Santa Fe, New Mexico; Newport, at the Kansas City Art Institute.

What childhood *popular culture* experiences did the artists share? Which artist do you think invented the superhero, Sweaterman? Frybreadman? Why?



LOOK closely at the art *materials* and *processes* each artist used. Mark Newport's *Freedom* bedcover is made of many pieces of actual Batman comic book pages. The image on this page is just a small detail of a much larger bedcover. Ryan Huna Smith drew his version of Batman using pencil and markers.

What other materials did the artists use to *enhance* the drawings? Which artist added color with colored markers? Which artist altered the character's image by adding *embroidered* knots?



COMPARE Smith and Newport's use of *cropping*, a *stylistic* feature of many comic book *illustrations*. Which artist *reinforced* his *symmetrical composition* by cropping his image so Batman's cape just touches the right and left edges? Which artist chose a more *close-up* image of Batman with his cape dramatically cropped on three edges of the image (as well as his foot)?

Try drawing crop lines on this Questor drawing to focus attention on a close-up part of the image.

Or draw your own comic strip image using your favorite Superhero on the back of this page. Try cropping your own drawing to increase excitement.



Use what you've learned about Newport's or Smith's backgrounds to help you **INTERPRET** his artwork. John D. Spiak, former curator at the Arizona State University art museum, wrote of Newport's work: "Superheroes suggest strength, but knitting or covering them with embroidery provides a softness that is *contradicting* to the image. "[Newport's superheroes suggest] the common male who plays his role in life with *integrity*, *gentility* and *reliable consistency*-- *characteristics* of *masculinity* often *undervalued* in our society."

What might Smith want to suggest by *transplanting* his Batman from Gotham City to another *landscape*? What action story might Smith be telling?