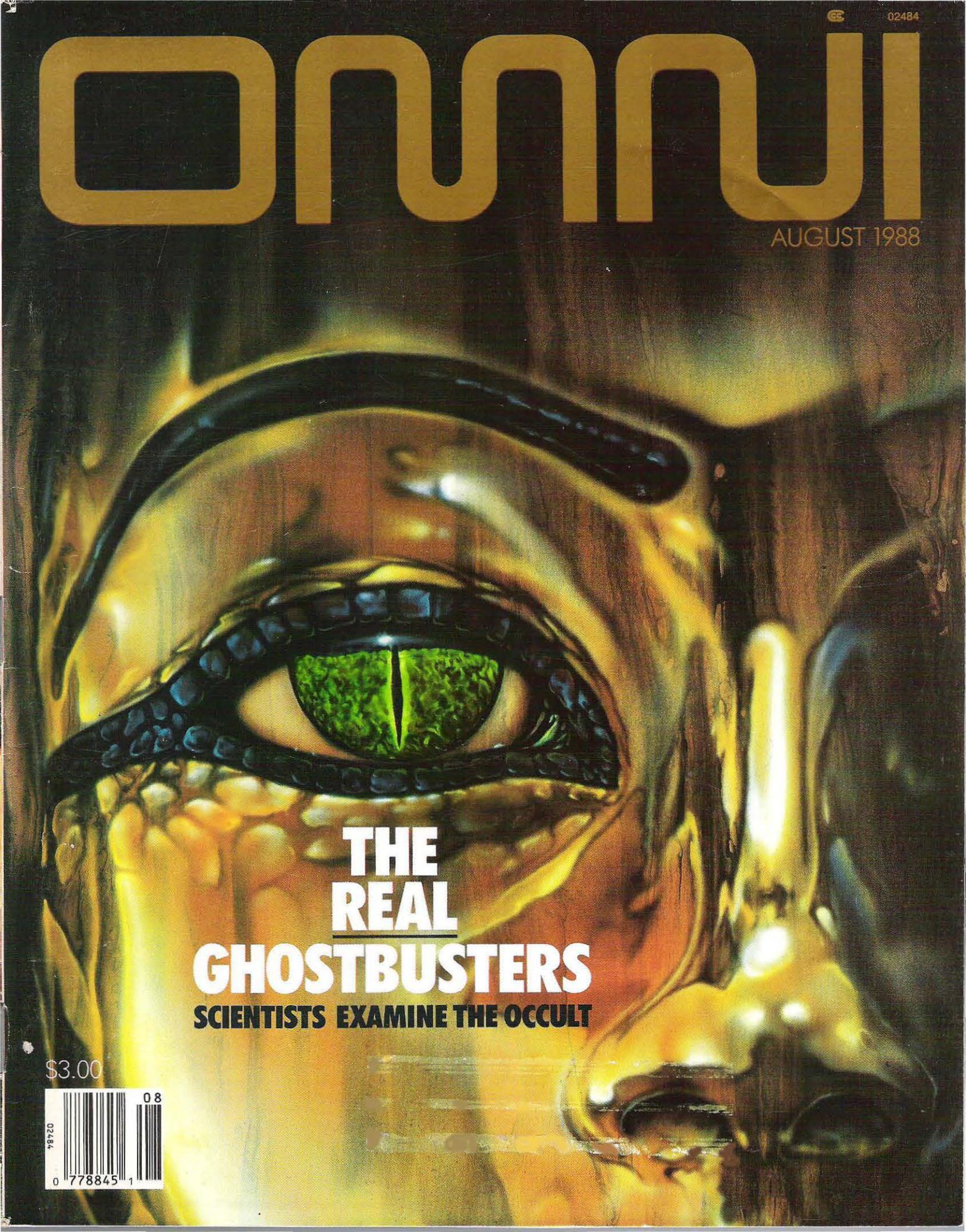


ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

AUGUST 1988



**THE
REAL
GHOSTBUSTERS**
SCIENTISTS EXAMINE THE OCCULT

\$3.00



“With everything from close encounters to book contracts, the case has saucer enthusiasts drooling in their cups.”

ANTI MATTER

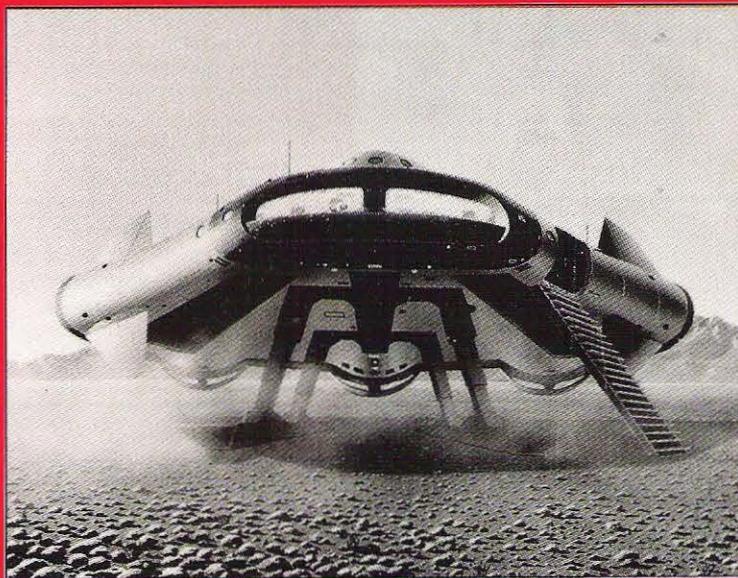
On November 16, 1987, a Florida businessman walked into the offices of the Gulf Breeze *Sentinel* and placed five color Polaroid photographs on the desk of editor and publisher Duane Cook. The pictures all portrayed a squat, portholed, teapot-shaped UFO in startling clarity.

According to an accompanying letter the photos had been taken on the afternoon of November 11, during which time a beam of blue light coming from the craft had literally lifted the photographer three feet in the air. “I wish to remain anonymous,” wrote the photographer, who signed his letter simply “Mr. Ed.” Thus began the case that has flying saucer enthusiasts drooling in their cups. As one investigator gushes, “It has it all.”

And indeed it does. From videos and close encounters to book offers and inquiries from *The National Enquirer*, the Gulf Breeze story has become one of the most controversial UFO cases to emerge in years.

That’s no surprise. For apparently Mr. Ed is not alone. Indeed, about a month after Cook published Mr. Ed’s photos, another set of prints purporting to show the same object turned up in the *Sentinel*’s night drop. These pictures were accompanied by a note from someone who called himself Believer Bill. In the months that followed, more than 100 *Sentinel* subscribers corroborated Mr. Ed’s account.

As for Mr. Ed, his encounters continued as well. On the night of December 2, he claimed, he surprised an alien near his bedroom. Mr. Ed said he chased the creature but was paralyzed by the same blue light beam that had been used



to levitate him earlier. A circle of dead grass was later discovered in the vicinity of the hovering craft.

Finally, last January, Mr. Ed was driving his pickup about eight miles east of Gulf Breeze when the familiar UFO landed, depositing five more aliens on the road. The photograph he took through his windshield is widely regarded as the best of the lot.

UFOlogists are divided as to the merits of this case. Walt Andrus, director of the Mutual UFO Network in Seguin, Texas, traveled to Florida to view the Polaroids as well as Mr. Ed’s video of

the sightings. “I had been expecting some kind of hoax, but I don’t know what to think now,” Andrus says. “If these pictures stand up under scrutiny, they’re the best I’ve seen in more than thirty years of personal investigation.”

Laser physicist Bruce Maccabee of Silver Spring, Maryland, agrees with Andrus. “If it’s a hoax,” he says, “it’s an extremely sophisticated one in terms of the psychological and physical evidence involved.”

James Oberg, a NASA engineer and UFO skeptic, is not so sure, however. “This is a classic example of a case that’s simply too good to be true,” he says. “In UFOlogy, as in business, if something seems too good to be true, it might be wise not to believe it at all.”

As for Cook, who first broke the story, he says he never would have used the photographs in the first place except that they were local news. “If it had happened in the next county over,” he claims, “it would have been their problem!” —DENNIS STACY

UFO UPDATE