

741.5

SANTA'S GRAB-BAG

DECEMBER 2023 NO. 110



**COMICS WE
OVERLOOKED**

**PLUS...
YOUTH!**

The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of



Lexington Public Library
Reading Is Just the Beginning!



Looking for that extra-special stocking stuffer for the comics-literate weirdo in your life? Try BLAB! now available at Beaumont, Central and Tates Creek. Beginning as a self-published digest devoted to EC comics, BLAB! became an oversize alternative art book for Fantagraphics. Now Dark Horse and Yoe! team up for a square-bound magazine once again devoted to comics history. The sordid saga of Bob "Crime Does Not Pay" Wood, the sad tale of Siegel & Shuster, the making of Murnau's "Nosferatu"—these are told in comics alongside articles about 19th Century atheist cartoons and GORILLAS (right)!!! Go to Beaumont, Central and Tates Creek for all the info!



Award-winning cartoonist Nina Bunjevac has a singular style that both repels and beguiles. Drawing with the same fetishistic attention to detail as Burns, Bolland and Friedman, her work expresses a physicality that jumps off the page. Given the sordid stories she tells, that's not always fun. Like her portraits of well-dressed side-show freaks, *Heartless* is both elegant and grotesque at Central.



The world's worst therapist is the central figure of *Work-Life Balance* by Berliner Aisha Franz. She is not the hero. Neither are her clients: the frustrated artist, the corporate apparatchik, the web developer. The only real difference between her and them is they know what kind of damage they're doing, in this mod satire drawn in a spontaneous bigfoot style that lightens the load.



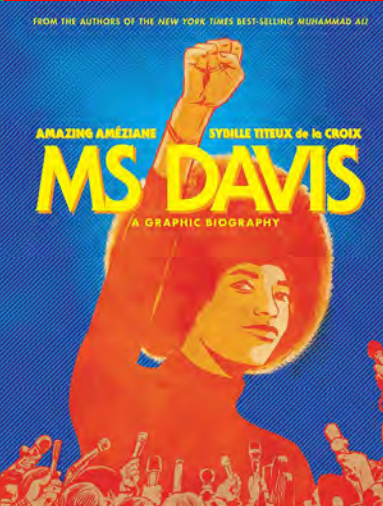
You've got the blues? Hayley Gold's blues live separately from her, always with a smart remark about everything. Especially Hayley's eating disorders; the ostensible subject of the graphically inventive *Nervosa*, Gold's issues are bigger than what's on her plate.



The ghost of her dog Rexy haunts young Miriam Katin (above). So does the ghost of God, "the dark and the light", who abandons the little girl and her mother during the darkest days of World War Two. *We Are On Our Own* (D&Q) is the harrowing tale of a mother and daughter on the run from the worst history had to offer. Rendered in a detailed swirl of smudgy pencils, ...*Our Own* shows the world endlessly obscured by the smoke of war. This all-too-relevant history is available at all LPL locations.



From Billie Holiday to the recent bio of Mingus, Europeans always do a better job rendering the lives of black American icons in comics form. Ms. Davis is no different. Sybille Titeux de la Croix & Amazing Amezi-ane use a variety of graphic styles to tell the complicated story of a complicated woman who fought injustice both outside and inside her community. Davis lived with a target on her back, one she's worn with pride and courage all her long life. Go to lexpublib.org to reserve!



Thank Central Library Associate Molly Stout for LPL's new complete run of *A Man and His Cat*. She's who hepped 741.5 to this hit manga. Creator Umi Sakurai introduced the series on Twitter until it was picked up by Square Enix. Now in its 9th volume, *A Man and His Cat* is about a lonely middle-aged musician and the unwanted kitten he gives a home. Together, Mr. Kanda and Fukumaru embark on a sweet and funny new adventure in life and love. Reserve copies of #1-9 at lexpublib.org!



"But you have friends" comes from an opera Emilia McKenzie sees while dealing with the crisis at the heart of her book *But You Have Friends* (Top Shelf). McKenzie's best friend Charlotte is increasingly overwhelmed by depression. Emily cares, deeply, but...she also has a life to live. That conflict, between the necessities of everyday life and a disease that by its very nature distances the sufferer from everyday life, is realistically described in this breezily drawn but brutally frank memoir.

Grimms...Winchesters..Bloodstones..monster-hunting as a family gig has been strictly for the Caucasian persuasion. Meet the Sangerye Family. For generations, they fought the literal demons born of hate and racism. As a threat both new and ancient rises, can the Sangeryes survive long enough to save the world? Read this bigass Omnibus from Northside and see!



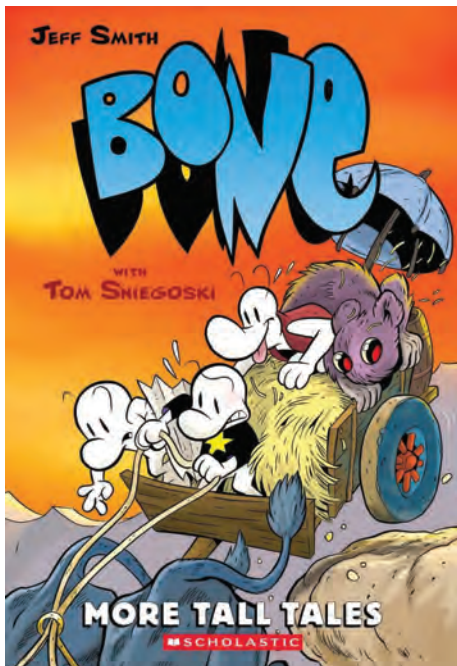
In a misty, musty Mitteleuropean landscape dominated by the Commanders and their misogynistic Doctrine, one girl dodges the certainty of slavery by acting like a boy. A fiercely feminist fairy tale, *The Heavy Bright* is Cathy Malkasian's raw but hopeful take on the war of the sexes!

Neil Gaiman's *Sandman Universe* continues under diverse hands, particularly DC's current BMOC, James Tynion IV. Tynion brings back the Dreaming's footloose psycho killer, the Corinthian. Unfortunately for heroine Madison Flynn, there are scarier things afoot than the man with teeth for eyes. Go to lexpublib.org!

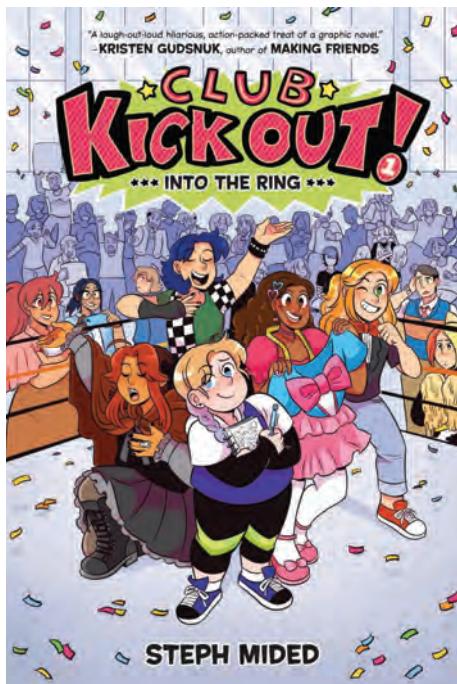


Admittedly, most items in this year's Grab-bag are on the serious side. For a psychic palate cleanser, read the delightful *Vern, Custodian of the Universe*. A summer job leads to cosmic adventure for our hero as Tyrell Waters draws him some sweet super-science kicks!

Perennial favorites among fans, Mike Mignola's HELLBOY comics and their myriad spin-offs flooded LPL shelves in 2023! Go to lexpublib.org for details!



Let's enjoy Christmas vacation with some fine new comics for kids! **Jeff Smith's Bone** is known for both its traditional yet inventive storytelling and its beautiful artwork. Drawn with the effortless expertise of Golden Age greats like **Walt Kelly** and **Carl Barks**, but with an animated spirit and visual freshness all its own, *Bone* is quite rightly one of the best-selling series for young readers. Smith gets together with some of his pals like **Stan Sakai**, **Tom Sniegoski**, **Katie Cook** and others to tell *More Tall Tales* (Graphix/Scholastic). "You have to have big ideas to wear the big hat," Smiley Bone so rightly says. So he passes that hat around and everybody around the campfire gets to spin a story, even Bartleby the rat creature kid. It's a fun



MEANWHILE

book that you oughta read just for the giant vulture. Our next item is somewhat more down-to-earth. No giant vultures, just vampires. And their opposition, sparkly girls from outer space. Or at least a bunch of tween chicks pretending to be these things as part of their new school club. See, Sasha's middle school has a new principal, a former pro football player and author of a best-selling book on self-improvement, and he's made some changes. Like cancelling home economics and cosplay club and pretty much any school group that isn't attached to the sports program. That leaves Sasha and her fellow nerds high and dry, until one night, they are introduced to the King of Sports, professional wrestling! Inspired by the glories of the squared circle, Sasha and gang form *Club Kick Out!* Blending athletics, theatre and costuming, *Club Kick Out!* gets a tentative okay from the principal, and then the real work



begins. The rest of Volume 1, *Into the Ring*, involves not just the blood, sweat and tears of physical training and stagecraft. Author **Steph Mided** also understands the ins and outs of school politics, especially the ups and downs involved with any group run for and by kids, much less one with the potential for disaster as a professional wrestling club. Good luck getting our next comics superstar anywhere near that kind of action. It's **Melanie Watt's** charmingly chicken-hearted Scaredy Squirrel! *Scaredy Squirrel Gets Festive* in his latest Steeping Stone Book from Random House. Scaredy has the perfect Christmas party all planned out. Now all he needs is help to put it together. Unfortunately, his pals don't seem to get where Scaredy's coming from— I mean, seriously, yes, a toad is green, but not really Xmas green, you know? But the Christmas spirit prevails nad Scaredy, Ivy, Time and Rash have a good time after all. It's good to have friends. Especially when you're the Quenn of the Moon, and somebody's trying to poison you with *The Soup of Doom!* The



second novel starring the First Cat in Space finds that fearless feline and his galpal the Moon Queen on a quest for the cure. Meanwhile, their long-lost homie LOZ 4000 (the Toenail-clipping Robot) learns of his friends' struggle and looks to get the band back together. *The First Cat in Space and the Soup of Doom* is another bombastically Baumanian fantasy frolic from **Mac Barnett** and **Shawn Harris**. Unapologetic realism is the hallmark of *Layers* (First Second). This *Memoir* by Eisner Award winner **Penelope Bagieu** is made up of sixteen discrete but not discreet stories spanning the years from childhood to early adulthood. It's casually honest in that European way, especially about sex and all its complications, so caveat lector. With a natural flow and vivid personality, **Bagieu's** cartooning is a Xmas gift!

