

741.5

SANTA'S GRAB BAG!

COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS WE OVERLOOKED

DECEMBER 2018 - NO. 24 PLUS...SUPER WEIRD & MAGNIFIQUE



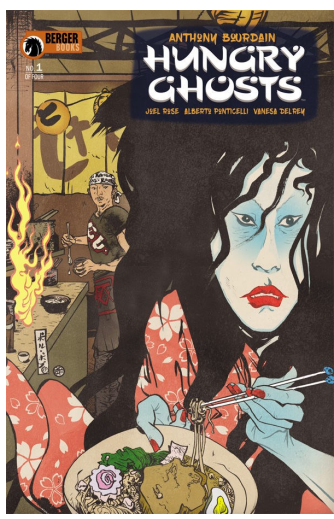
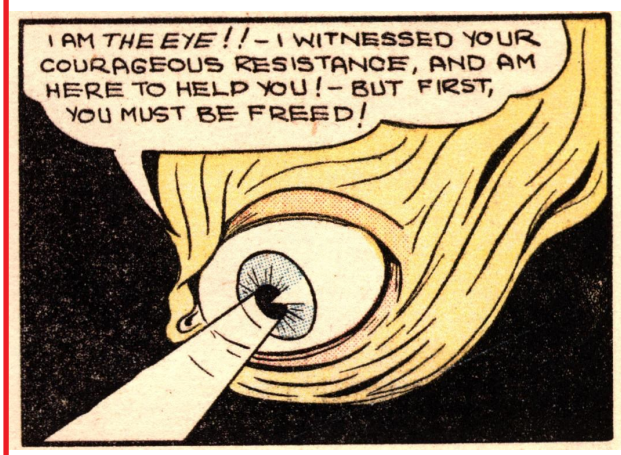
The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of



Lexington Public Library
Reading Is Just the Beginning!



Spark Man! Airmale! The Black Dwarf! These are the heroes whose names...would be utterly and deservedly forgotten if not for the efforts of Yoe! Books. The second in the *Super Weird Heroes* series, *Preposterous But True* pans for fool's gold in the moldering pages of off-brand Golden Age comics. Midcard publisher Hillman was the home of such weirdos as Rackman and the dumb-founding duo of Twilight and Snoopy. Pre-war imprints such as Centaur and Fox gambled on the likes of the fur-booted Samson and the King of Darkness, while Tomboy and Mr. Muscles cluttered the stands in the 1950s. Most of the stories are generic punch-em-ups, even that starring my fave aureate oddball, the Eye (below). But the weird fairy tale background of Mother Hubbard and the Pied Piper's rumble with the Green Vampire stand out. Not all the characters reprinted herein were losers. Pat Parker lasted as long as the War she Nursed, while Doll Man outlived the original Flash and Captain America and still pops up in DC comics and cartoons. Of course, no edition of SWH would be complete without Fletcher Hanks (see 741.5 #1 Jan 2017), whose Stardust foils a plot to invade Fort Knox. If you liked Yoe's *Haunted Horror* series, grab this from Eastside!

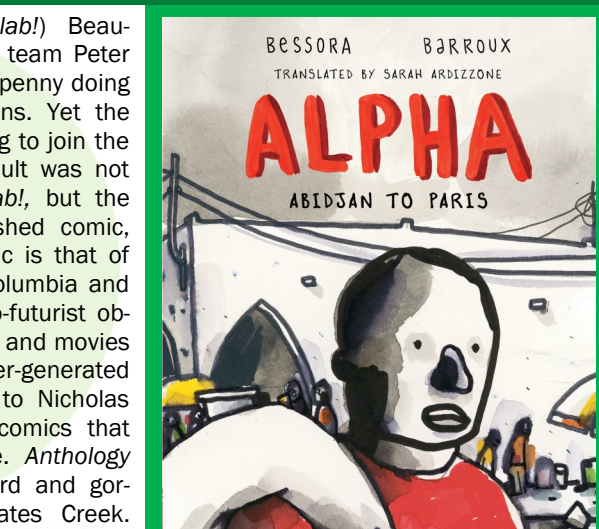


"Weegee" was the working name of a photographer whose pix of New York City at its brightest and its darkest have come to define his era. Now writer Max De Radigues (see *Meanwhile*) and artist Wauter Mannaert give the legendary picture snatcher a pictorial biography in *Weegee: Serial Photographer* (Conundrum). Mannaert's scrawly inks and smudgy washes capture the gritty reality of pre-war Manhattan. De Radigues' script describes a man being swallowed alive by his art. Get this fable of the lawless days of journalism at lexpublib.org.

As described in Monte (*Blab!*) Beauchamp's intro, illustration tag team Peter and Mary Hoey make a pretty penny doing spot art for major publications. Yet the siblings followed his siren song to join the comics underground. The result was not only impressive work for *Blab!*, but the start of their own self-published comic, *COIN-OP*. The Hoey's aesthetic is that of contemporaries such as Al Columbia and especially Chris Ware. A retro-futurist obsession with old cartoons, ads and movies aided and mutated by computer-generated art results in visual paeans to Nicholas Ray and Fats Navarro and comics that break down space and time. *Anthology 1997-2017* (TopShelf) is weird and gorgeous and at [Tates Creek](http://TatesCreek.com).



Globe-trotting gastronome Anthony Bourdain's legacy of erasing borders between cultures lives on with *Hungry Ghosts*. Co-written with Joel (Get Jiro!) Rose, this anthology of horror stories is based on *kaidan*, a story-telling contest used by samurai to test one another's bravery. As 100 candles burned out one by one, the warriors would spin evermore terrifying tales of ghosts and monsters. Bourdain and Rose give a modern spin to this ancient tradition. Each story is about food and dining, cooking and hunger. And the contest is between a crew of cooks and servers and their hideously rich clients. The strong but subtle coloring of Jose Villarrubia accentuates the nine artists, including Paul Pope and Francesco (*Black Beetle*) Francavilla, whose gloriously gruesome works stand as a testimony to the brilliance of the bold but haunted Bourdain.



With a visa, Alpha could follow his family from the Ivory Coast to Paris in a matter of hours. Without a visa, he drifts across northern Africa for over a year. Alpha encounters drunken soldiers, sober bandits, humane innkeepers and refugees so beaten down, they shrug off a baby's death without a tear. Barroux's loose line and child-like watercolors rendered in big, often full-page panels capture the dusty hardship and insurmountable vastness of the African landscape. Get *Alpha* at [Central](http://Central.com), [Eastside](http://Eastside.com) and [Northside](http://Northside.com).

Sabrina is dead. Murdered by yet another lonely, stupid white boy made a monster by the internet. Her death becomes a viral sensation that sweeps her friends and loved ones into the online vortex. Already broken by the tragedy, her boyfriend Teddy becomes a target of the hordes of virtual hell, even as he is seduced by the radio radicals who built the public gallows on which he hangs. It's sounds like utter chaos, but reads as quiet as the hum of HVAC due to Nick Drsono's cool, contemplative approach to art and story. Get the first graphic novel nominated for England's prestigious Man Booker Prize from [Central](http://Central.com), [Eastside](http://Eastside.com) and [Tates Creek](http://TatesCreek.com).

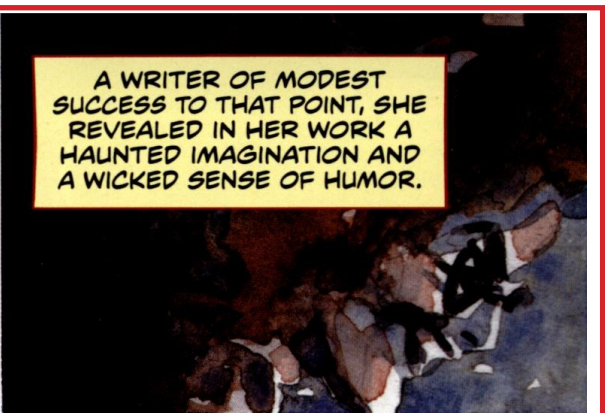
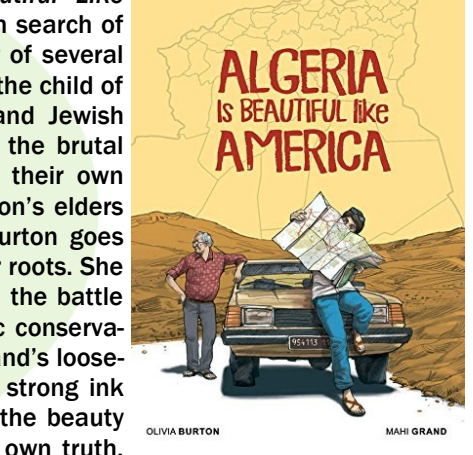


Available from [Central](http://Central.com), *Algeria is Beautiful Like America* is autobiography as travelogue in search of history. Writer Olivia Burton is the author of several supernatural romance novels. She is also the child of Black Fooths (*pled noirs*), the Christian and Jewish settlers of French Algeria who fled after the brutal War of Independence. Once colonists in their own country, now exiles in other nations, Burton's elders keep their histories to themselves. So Burton goes back to the long-lost homeland to find her roots. She finds a unrooted people still caught up in the battle between European modernity and Islamic conservatism that sparked the revolution. Mahi Grand's loose-limbed lines are given heft and heart by strong ink washes, with spots of color that capture the beauty and sorrow of Burton's quest to find her own truth.



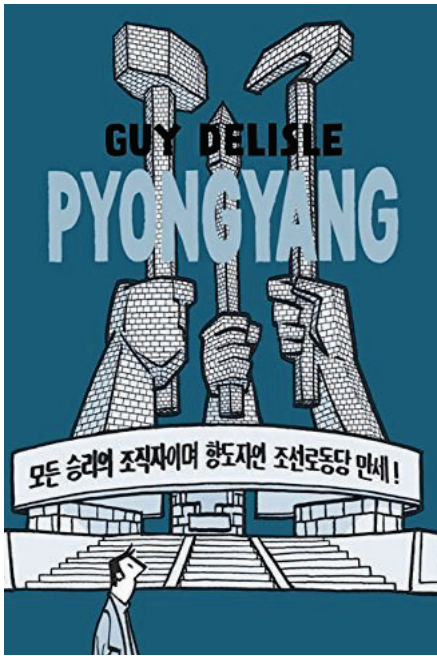
FAB 4 Mania is the latest from cartoonist Carol Tyler, whose autobiographical works have netted her eleven Eisner nominations and the Master Cartoonist award from the prestigious Cartoon Crossroads Columbus. Like many girls of her day, Tyler was obsessed with the Beatles. This book follows teen Carol as she battles nuns and moms and "Woolly Bully"-singing boys to maintain her love for the Mersey Moptops. The story climaxes at the Beatles' performance in Cominsky Park, 8/20/65. Based on a diary from Tyler's youth, *Fab 4 Mania* is half comics, half scrapbook. That format actually delayed its publication due to its similarity to *My Favorite Thing Is Monsters*, also from Fantagraphics. You'll find *Fab 4 Mania* at various branches under 784.54 T971f or go to lexpublib.org to place a reserve.

Farel Dalrymple's *It Will All Hurt* (Image) is set in the same raw, ragged fantasy dreamscape as his book *The Wrenchies* (still available from [Northside](http://Northside.com)). More Leone than *Lord of the Rings*, this quest to overthrow an evil wizard gets pretty gnarly. Hornwolf-headed heroine Aleन्द्रa Clementine swings a mean axe as she and her ragtag band of misfits—including little Robot Tod and a talking cat—fight across a blasted landscape of flesh and phantasms. Originally a web-comic based on a drawing exercise, *...Hurt* reads like a dream put on paper. This Eisner-winning collection is available from [Eastside](http://Eastside.com) and [Tates Creek](http://TatesCreek.com).



The above description of writer Shirley ("The Lottery") Jackson could be used to describe most of the 50 *Magnificent Women Who Changed the World* who get their graphic due in *Femme Magnifique* (IDW). Most of the women lauded herein were just trying to live their lives as they saw fit, but that was enough to make them rebels, pioneers, troublemakers. *Femme Magnifique* celebrates the lives of writers such as Jackson, Lois Fitzhugh and Octavia Butler; musicians Kate Bush, Laurie Anderson and Beth Ditto; scientists like Sylvia Earle, Kristy Miller and software engineer Margaret Hamilton, as well as Ada Lovelace and the unsung mother of paleontology, Mary Anning. Comedians and cartoonists, actresses and agitators share the pages with modern gender benders like Kat Blaque and ancient Amazons such as Judith and Hatshepsut, their stories rendered in a brilliant variety of styles. Stand-out contributions include Gilbert Hernandez on Hedy Lamarr, Rafael Albuquerque's raw riff on insurgent Maria Bonita and Zarcone & Hi-fi's luminous art for Joan of Arc. Find *Femme Magnifique* at [Northside](http://Northside.com) and [Tates Creek](http://TatesCreek.com)!



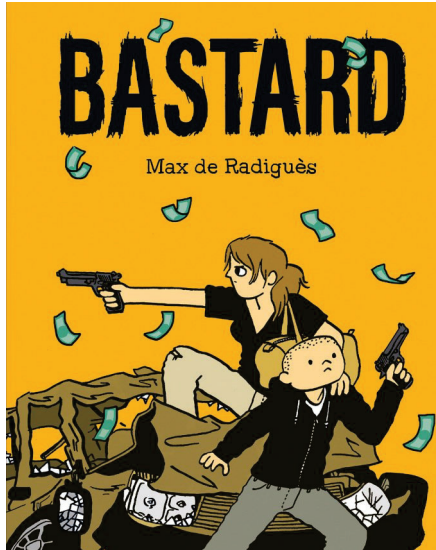


'Tis the season to be jolly, so what better way to celebrate than to read a bunch of comics about despots, vampires, hoodlums and addicts? Start with Drawn & Quarterly's new edition of **Guy** (*Hostage*) **Delisle's** *Pyongyang*, available from Eastside. The French cartoonist's day job as an animator lands him a gig in North Korea, overseeing his studio's outsourced production. **Delisle's** *Journey in North Korea* back in 2001 revealed a nation making necessary overtures to the outside world while straining to maintain the totalitarian system that controls every aspect of its citizens' lives. The North Koreans live in a twilight world of loud, colorful lies and unspoken truths. **Delisle** gently tries to undermine the all-encompassing personality cult of the regime, even as he catches himself humming the worshipful ditties devoted to Dear Leader, Senior and Junior. Such monstrous narcissism is a key feature of the truly villainous, in both real life and fiction. Take *Dracula*, for instance. Or the Mighty Marvel version of

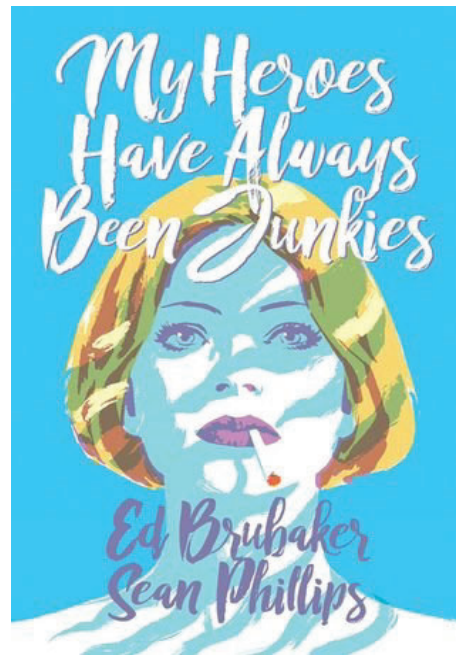


MEANWHILE

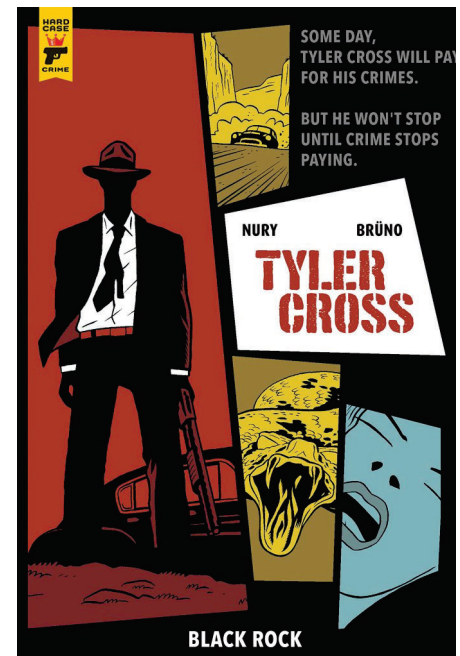
same, anyway. That guy constantly talks about what a supreme badass he is, and always in the third person, every other sentence beginning with "You dare!?" Marvel's *Tomb of Dracula* was the best-seller of Marvel's horror hero titles, thanks to the dynamic scripts of **Marv Wolfman**, **Gene Colan's** shadowy expressionism and the sleek physicality of **Tom Palmer's** inks. Volume 2 of the *Complete Collection* finds the ever-irascible Lord of Vampires tussling with murderous skeletons, mad scientist Dr. Sun, and his own dearly damned daughter Lilith. Drac also crosses paths and throws fists with Spider-Man, Jack Russell AKA Werewolf By Night, and Marvel's rather lackluster take on the Frankenstein Monster. Like the first volume, V2 is available from Beaumont. And like the first volume, there's some lovely monochrome art along with the four-color comics, as this series also reprints work from *Dracula Lives*, the flagship of Marvel's mid-70s line of black & white comic magazines. But there's black & white, and there's black & white. The suave



stylings of **Dick Giordano** hardly resemble the manic scrawlings of **Max de Radiguès**. But some would argue, and convincingly, that mad **Max's** work is a purer form of comics than slick **Dick**. "I loved to draw but wasn't especially good at it," says **de Radiguès**. "I quickly stopped trying to draw in a realistic way and went for an efficient one." Originally released as a series of DIY minicomics, *Bastard* is what you'd get if **Quentin Tarentino** developed a series for Cartoon Network. The mother and son team of May and Eugene are on the lam, carrying some of the proceeds of 52 simultaneous robberies in the same city. Pursued by other crooks, the pair hitch a ride with ex-yuppie trucker Augustus McCrae. McCrae and his friends are a stark contrast to May's fellow mobsters. That's why May leaves her boy with them while she gets her revenge on her former partners. It's a sweet, savage tale of love and violence, available for reserve at lexpublib.org. More hi-jinx of the criminal kind can be found at Beaumont and Central, the homes of *My Heroes Have Always Been Junkies* (Image). Or of the *Criminal* kind, since this is a stand-alone spin-off from that *noir* series by **Ed Brubaker** and **Sean Phillips**, whose son **Jacob**



provides the psychedelic pastel colors that enliven his father's ink-splotted photorealism. Heroin-obsessed heroine Ellie worships all the druggie idols: Morrison, Reed, Burroughs. Not just an user but actively pro-drug, she undermines the doctors at the ritzy rehab clinic where she's cooling her heels. Ellie also snuggles up to another patient, Skip, and slowly, sweetly leads him down the primrose path. But what seems like a twisted CW soap opera turns ugly by the end. Not like *Black River*, which starts off rough and just gets rougher. The latest from *Hard Case Crime*, this album is as hard-boiled as it is hardbacked. It's 1950, and professional hood Tyler Cross has lived down to his name by crossing his boss and swiping a briefcase full of smack. Cross ends up in Black Rock, Texas, a dead end town with its own dark and dirty secrets. In the Euro-cartoony vein of **Daniel Torres** and **Rich Tommaso**, the art by **Bruno** comes on like *Dick Tracy* drunk on absinthe. Nab your copy from Central and Northside now!



Back issues of 741.5 are available at lexpublib.org under the COLLECTIONS tab!