

741.5

IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO, IT TAKES
TWO TO TANGLE
DRACULA VS. DRACULA...GEEZERS VS. GODZILLA
HARLEEN VS. JOKER...WATCHMEN VS. DC UNIVERSE

MARCH 2021 - NO. 53

JONAH HEX VS. EVERYBODY
PLUS...THE PARTY

COOL CAT CRUSHES CRIME CASES!

BLACKSAD

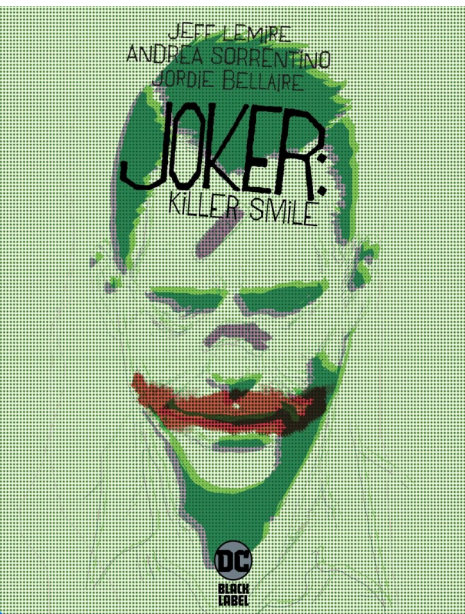
DIAZ CANALES & GUARNIDO'S
INTERNATIONAL NEO-NOIR HIT!



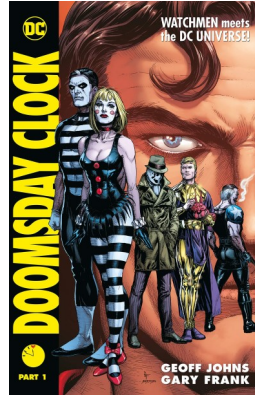
The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of



Lexington Public Library
Reading Is Just the Beginning!



Although one of the few medical professions to get its own title (see 741.5 #38), psychiatry and comics have had a fraught relationship. Little wonder, given a psychiatrist nearly killed the industry, that most funnybook shrinks are bad guys like Doctor Faustus or Hugo Strange. Then there's the beleaguered staff of Arkham Asylum. Gotham City's infamous madhouse for super-villains is the locus of two new large hardbacks from DC's Black Label for mature readers. *Killer Smile* is about the Joker, but stars Dr. Ben Arnell, a well-meaning therapist who is sure he's going to be the one to cure the Man Who Laughs. Arnell should have heeded the life lesson taught by his former colleague, Dr. Harleen Quinzel. The most famous headshrinker in comics tells her story yet again in *Harleen*. A first person narrative reveals the troubled past and broken heart that led to the twisted love affair with her patient, the Joker. Adapting aspects of *shoujo* romance manga, creator Stjepan Sejic draws the swooniest Clown Prince of Crime you've ever seen!



DC Comics is haunted. Haunted by the specter of Alan Moore and *Watchmen*. Haunted by the Crises upon Crises and all the ghosts of continuities past. Haunted by the sheer volume of history that looms behind every word balloon, every panel. And DC knows this. Has known it for years. But every attempt at exorcism has failed. Every reboot, revamp and relaunch has made things worse. Just more ghosts fighting each other for space on an ever-more crowded page. And not just DC ghosts, but those of all the companies DC absorbed. Take, for instance, Charlton's Silver Age heels Punch & Jewelee, who are recast as Mime & Marionette in the mini-series *Doomsday Clock*. They're young, they're in love, and they kill people. And they're



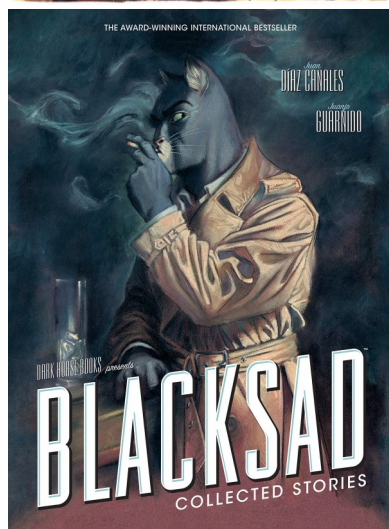
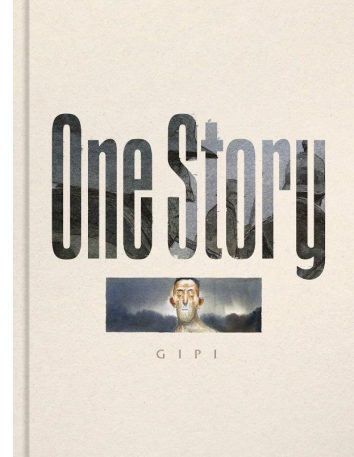
from the same Moore-warped, Charlton-based universe as Ozymandias, Doctor Manhattan and a new Rorschach. Driven by hubris and vengeance, these refugees from *Watchmen* stick their noses into the very busy business of the DC Universe and nearly trigger another apocalyptic replay of that other Great Ghost haunting DC, *Kingdom Come*. *Doomsday Clock* is a doppelganger, narrative and graphics a replication of *Watchmen*, Gary Frank an uncanny echo of Dave Gibbons. But it is also a deliverance. By using the form of *Watchmen* to address the differences between that saga and those of the DC Universe, writer Geoff John ultimately beats the Clock to reveal the true blue heart of DC. Find *Doomsday Clock* at lexpublib.org.



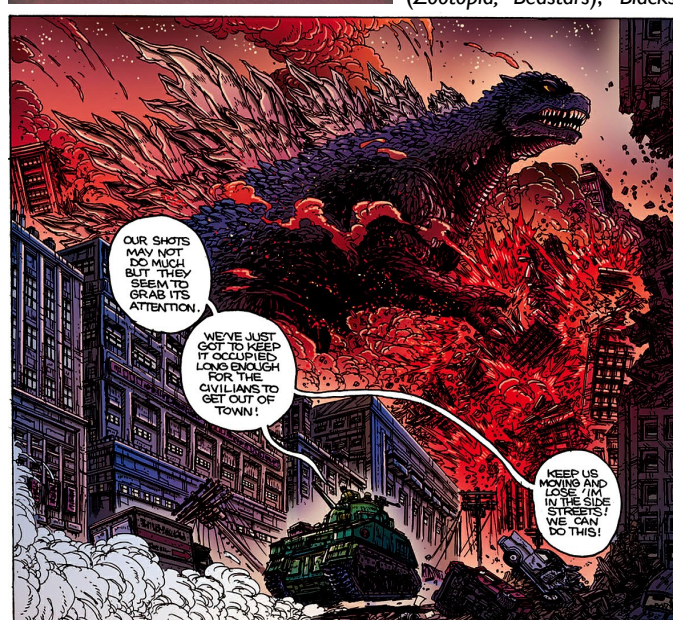
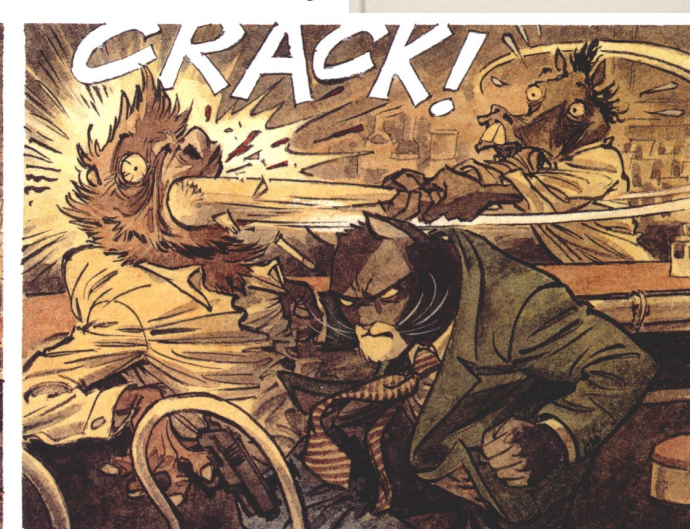
Los Angeles, 1974: Dracula has risen from the grave. Now the Lord of the Undead is gathering a new troika of brides...and only ambulance-chasing paparazzi Quincy Harker stands against him. Or does he? Those who put Drac in the dirt the last time around are back to finish the job in *Dracula, Motherf*cker!* This madly polychromatic blaxploitational image release is a stark contrast to *Bram Stoker's Dracula Starring Bela Lugosi* (Legendary). An unabridged adaptation of the novel, obnoxious American and all, is finally given the star turn it's deserved by having Bela Lugosi play the part he made an international icon. El Garing's art is an exquisite mix of ink and wash that makes the undead come alive at lexpublib.org!



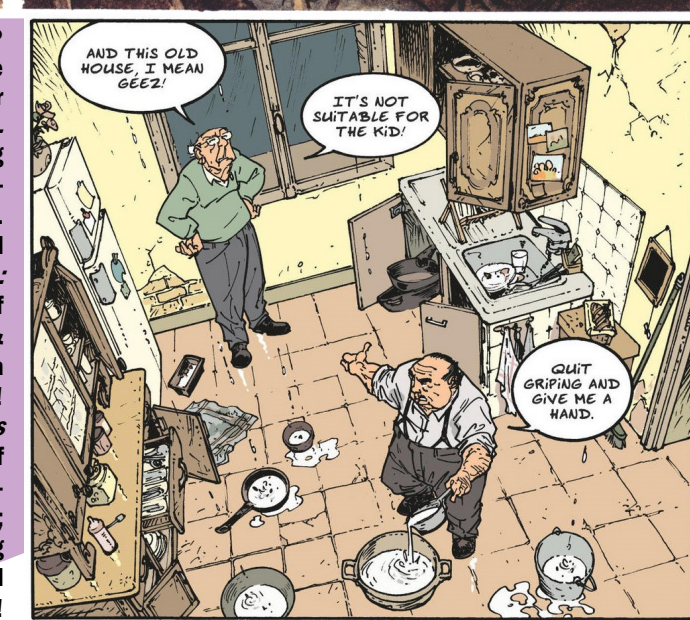
European comics are the prettiest comics in the world. Whether it's the influence of classical culture, the openness to modernism or the simple fact that Euro cartoonists don't learn their craft swiping from old copies of X-Force, Euro-comics provide superior draftsmanship, exquisite coloring and truly adult themes. Two recent arrivals exemplify the Continental mode. *One Story* is not just a big fancy funnybook, but a true graphic novel. Two men joined by blood fight for their lives in far different times and places. One is a writer unraveling in a contemporary psych ward, the other his grandfather trapped in the trenches of the Great War. Italian master **Gippi** jumps from year to year and mind to mind, from stark Feifferesque scrawls to watercolors drenched in rain or sunset (left), sometimes on the same page. Get *OneStory* at Beaumont, Central and Village.

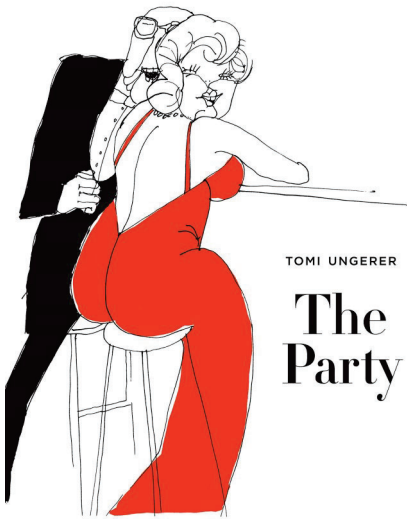


Comics in America always suffered from the perception they're just kids stuff. That's definitely true of the comics known as "funny animal" or "animated", due to the stars and style being adapted from theatrical cartoons. But in Europe, where Mickey & Donald still rule the roost, funny animals are treated with the same respect as any other genre. Such as mysteries: its tropes worked over like a shamus at the hands of the DA's goons, the private eye tale finds fresh expression in *Blacksad* (Dark Horse). **Juanjo Guardino's** exceptional art brings to life the naked city crowded with talking animals of all kinds, each with their own story. **Juan Diaz Canales'** tough-minded but good-hearted hero John Blacksad thinks and thumps his way through a postwar maze of crimes and conspiracies. A global influence on film and comics (*Zootopia*, *Beastars*), *Blacksad* is a must-read!



"We argued over the importance of detail. Must every button on a suit be shown? Some argued yes. The magic realists of the business. Others argued no: what one wanted, after all, is effect. The expressionists of the business." So wrote Jules Feiffer about the inaugural generation of American artists in *The Great Comic Book Heroes*. It's an argument that continues among creators and fans, the majority choosing the side of Feiffer's "magic realists". And beyond the magic realists lie the hyper-realists, like the cartoonists who worked on the latest *Godzilla* comics from IDW. Every crushed building, every burning tank, every scale and tail and tooth and drill-bit hand is rendered in fetishistic detail. James Stokoe wrote and drew *Godzilla: The Half-Century War*, which follows a Japanese soldier as he pursues the King of Monsters through the years to their ultimate conflict in Antarctica. Matt Frank & Jeff Zornow continue the saga in *Rulers of Earth*. ALL the Toho terrors rip it up in a monster rally so massive, even that crappy American *Godzilla* shows up to party! Meanwhile, back in the real world, Antoine, Emile and Pierrot are *The Old Geezers* (Ablaze) who have broken international sales records. The septuagenarian trio of life-long friends meet up at the funeral of Antoine's wife, Lucette, who was beloved by everyone. Including Antoine's nemesis, rich and demented Garan-Servier; his meeting with Lucette's grand-daughter sets off a wild chain of events involving old loves, old grudges and old anarchists waging war with new weapons. Paul Cauuet's incredibly detailed warts-n'all art will mesmerize as it amuses you!

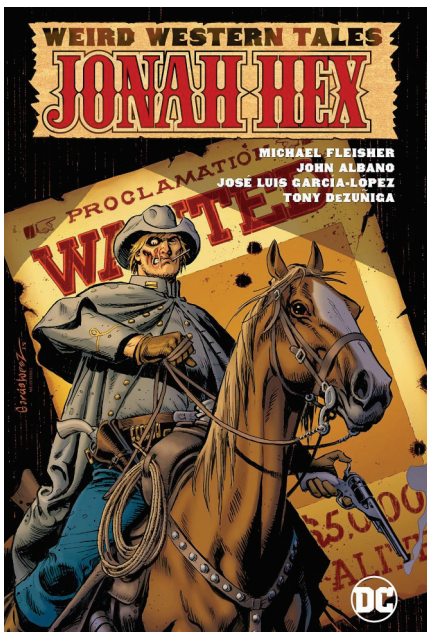




TOMI UNGERER

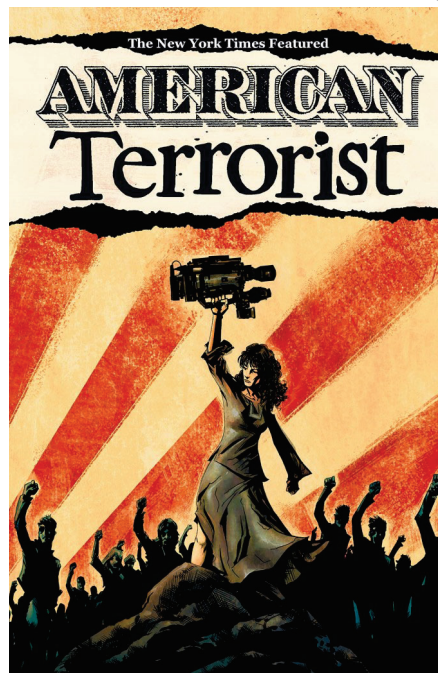
The Party

Fantagraphics has always been dedicated to bringing the best in comics past and present to discriminating readers. Lately it's been on a black and white kick, as with its wonderful series devoted to **Alberto Breccia**; the second and third of which, the political thriller *Perramus* and the sci-fi mindblower *The Eternaut 1969*, are already on LPL shelves. Now the spotlight turns to **Tomi Ungerer**. The long and often controversial career of the Alsatian artist and writer was covered in *Comics Journal* #303 (see 741.5 #31). As noted in the intro, *The Party* came out in 1966, at the cusp of the decade's change from the New Frontier to "the Sixties" of legend. *The Party* portends the overthrow of accepted hierarchies with its vicious satire of the East Coast upper crust still in power at the time. Like an *New Yorker* cartoon tripping on bad acid, full and double page scrawls of magnates and socialites begin to mutate as breasts grow teeth and eyes become sphincters and faces turn into fists and that's just the middle of the book. Strong minds with strong stomachs can find this Oversize item at all LPL locations. Our



MEANWHILE

next item is a big ol' hoss of a book, too. Fitting, given that it's *Weird Western Tales*, a compilation of the earliest adventures of DC's frontier anti-hero Jonah Hex. As the sales on superhero titles slipped in the early 1970s, DC turned to other genres, including Westerns. But Hex wasn't a trend-setter, but a trend-bucker, being the last man standing as other DC cowboys bit the dust. Partly that was thanks to the "Weird" attached to "Western", providing a lifeline to the "horror hero" trend rocking the industry. Mostly it was the talents attached to the grotesque gunslinger. After writer **John Albano** established the former Reb-turned-bounty-hunter as one mean SOB, **Michael Fleischer** continued the feature with an unblinking cynicism far closer to the sand-swept nihilism of spaghetti Westerns than the moral fables of American pulp. The art reflects the influx of international talent into DC during that time, with Filipino **Tony**



Dezuniga's shadowy figures and dynamic layouts like an **Ennio Morricone** soundtrack rendered in ink. *Weird Western Tales: Jonah Hex* is available at Central. Available at all locations, *Pulp* is the latest from the neo-noir team of **Ed Brubaker & Sean Phillips**. This Image hardback takes place in the pre-war 1930s. Former desperado Max Winters makes it through the Depression banging out tarted-up trash based on his own exploits for Western pulp magazines. But a new breed of real outlaws are loose in the streets of New York City: Nazis. Can an old owl-hoot take on the relentless forces of the fascist future? Meanwhile, sometime in our near future, journalist Owen Graham finds himself part of the story, labeled an *American Terrorist* (A Wave Blue World). He joins an idealistic school-teacher and an environmental activist in a race from a hostile state and its relentless agents. Originally published in 2010, this full-color edition is all the more relevant twenty years later. Find it at all LPL locations. Other sci-fi thrillers include the second volume of *Crowded*, in which bodyguard Vita and client Charlie dodge



dodge a continent full of would-be bounty killers, and *On the Stump*, the saga of an America where political contests are physical competitions: to the toughest go the spoils. Back in the real world, it's the summer between middle school and high school for Aiden Navarro. Aiden walks the tightrope between boyhood and manhood while at camp, trying not to fall...into the clutches of bullies new and old, away from the friends he's made, in love with fellow Boy Scout Elias. Author of numerous books for children, cartoonist **Mike Curato** knocks it out of the park with his first graphic novel, *Flamer* (GodwinBooks), available from LPL TEEN. The flames of Hell burn cold in the post-war milieu of the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense. The newest Dark Horse release devoted to the world of Hellboy, *BPRD 1946-1948* shows Professor Trevor Bruttenholm and his devilish young charge caught up in the secret history of vampires and an invasion from beyond Alamogordo. **Mike Mignola** and more lurk at lexpublib.org/



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