MEANWHILE

The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of

JUNE 2019 - NO. 30

PLUS...MASTERS OF DISASTER

741.5 BLACK

WHITE

SERGEL TOPPI STEINBERG AND LINDSAY BRECCIA XAIME

Vivek Shraya

Ness Lee

Kelsey Wroten

Victor Lavalle's

BLACK

WHITE

AND

SERGEL TOPPI STEINBERG

LINDSAY BRECCIA

XAIME
Sergio Toppi (1932-2012) was one of the leading illustrators in Italy. Admired around the globe for his playful yet eerie imagination, Toppi also wowed the world with his old school skill with pen and brush. Now American audiences can appreciate his work via the series, The Collected Toppi (Lion Forge). Volume 1 can be found at Beaumont and Village.

A book report on an infamous gang of masked vigilantes becomes the blueprint for tween rebellion in Robert Sergio Bald Knobber (Secret Acres). Caught between his poignant and sorry father and his nagging yet neglectful mother, hero Cole struggles to make sense of his dull but chaotic life. Sergio’s art deftly draws and simple but precise line work brings to life his enormous cast of characters past and present. Get It This How You See Me? at Central and Village!

Rachel Lindsay is a full-grown woman who ends up locked in the living room of an old man who is childless. Her parents and her doctors think she’s lost it after she quits a good job at an ad agency. But the job was shilling phar-sites and her doctors think she’s lost it, too. Sick of playing the Judas goat, Lindsay forsakes stability for freedom and is made to pay the price.

Jaime Hernandez is this? How You See Me? is a mysterious man who cannot be held by any grasp. Immortal, Cinder has lived since the building of the Tower of Babel. Back in the day, me and my fellow punk rockers thought the world was going to end—most likely by nuclear war—before we turned 30. We actually took a kind of solace in this belief... only because it spared us the pressure of planning for the future. GOOD! Now most of those pals—the ones still breathing and not in jail, that is—have grown old, if not up, with families and careers and house and all that. It’s been a weird thing to witness, in fiction as well as in life. Readers of the long-lived alternative comic Love & Rockets have watched Maggie Chas-cardio and Hoppy Glass grow up together. The stars of Jaime Hernandez’s Locas series deal with the exigencies of adulthood in the latest collection of L&R. Introduced in the first issue back in 1981, SFF punkettes Maggie and Hoppy have been through a lot in their lives, some of it good, some of it very much not. This How You See Me? is our hero Cole struggles to make sense of his dull but chaotic life. Sergio’s art deftly draws and simple but precise line work brings to life his enormous cast of characters past and present. Get It This How You See Me? at Central and Village!

All those and more are born anew in Steinberg’s vivid scroll, so visceral yet intelligent. This new edition of The Labyrinth features an intro by novelist Nicholson Baker and an afterward from art critic Harold Rosenberg. It is available from Beaumont.
Meanwhile

more singular nature befall writer Vivek Shraya in *Death Threat* (Arsenal Pulp Press). A trans woman, the author of *I’m Afraid of Men* gets one more reason for fear when she begins to receive threatening emails. Said emails criticize Shraya in a weirdly calm but florid style of writing that refers to the Hindu background the hater shares with his target. The painful effects of the emails are cumulative as Shraya begins to spend her days looking over her shoulder, waiting for her stalker to make his move IRL. Finally, the fed-up musician, writer and artist seizes control of her narrative and teams up with fellow Canadian cartoonist Ness Lee to produce this bold and vivid graphic novel, available at Beaumont and Central. Another writer is the protagonist of *Cannonball* by Kelsey Wroten (Uncivilized). One hesitates to call Caroline Bertram a “heroine”. She’s a hot mess who always keeps a match lit in case she needs to burn a bridge. Broke and bed-hopping, the art school grad seethes with envy as her friends and foes get ahead in life, love and literature despite their obvious inferiority. But whatever her hurts and hang-ups, Caroline Bertram prevails when her much-mocked Young Adult novel becomes a huge hit. Of course, success is as much a burden as failure for the spiky Bertram. Even at the height of glory, she keeps that match aflame. Wroten’s script really captures the subtext of savage competition that underlies the artistic life, especially the compulsive one-upmanship of contemporary bohemians. Her art is as light and playful as her story is sharp and plaintive. A good eye for body language and hipster style is expressed through lively line work and bright colors. Go to lexpublib.org to reserve your copy of *Cannonball*. Meanwhile, one of Western culture’s seminal stories of creation is reconfigured by a leading African-American fantasist in Victor LaValle’s *Destroyer* (Boom). Frankenstein was real. So is the monster that bears his name. Roused from his exile in Antarctica, the creature crushes and kills his way to the super-secret American agency which seeks to exploit his creator’s secrets. But another scientist has built her own Frankenstein. It’s her son, another black child shot down by police, remade and resurrected with astounding abilities. Both creations are on a collision course of vengeance. A moody cyberpunk horror story that confronts our nation’s systemic racism, *Destroyer* is available at Beaumont, Central and Eastside. Elsewhere, in Ethiopia, a young European girl teams up with her new friend from around the block to hunt down whatever is leaving corpses all over their village. Sam and Lielet get their Nancy Drew on and discover the culprit is more than they can handle…but handle it they do in *Little Girls* (Image). Sarah Delaine’s art is a sweet, creepy mix of Frank Quitely and Philip Bond in this fine book available at lexpublib.org!

“On Monday, my house disappeared.” So begins *A Fire Story* (Abrams ComicArts) by Brian Fies, non-fiction cartoonist and author of *Mom’s Cancer* and *Whatever Happened to the World of Tomorrow?*. Fies’s reportorial comics have won numerous awards around the world and *A Fire Story* will win him more. He and his wife (and pets) were among the thousands displaced by the California wildfires of October 2017. Fies describes the harrowing events of the fire and the heartbreak and struggle that followed, not just for his family, but his neighbors, too. Plainly drawn, bluntly written, *A Fire Story* is not just the story of one family or one disaster, but a warning to the rest of us in what is shaping up to be the Century of Catastrophe. Find *A Fire Story* at Beaumont, Central and Tates Creek. Tribulations of a

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