Happy Holidays!

The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of Lexington Public Library

Reading Is Just The Beginning!
One of the seminal comic books, so important its publisher took on its initial as the company name. Detective Comics has lasted 80 years and nearly 1000 issues. This tome pays tribute to not only Batman, the headliner since 1937, but to the back-up features across the decades: Stann Bradley, the Boy Commander; Air Wave, Howie Smith, and more. From the Golden Age to the future, DC 80 Years of Batman takes you on a journey into mystery and adventure!

How about you? What does your fantasy home look like? Cartoonist Debbie Tung replies "A Swamp Thing...at the request of the client. This Jack Chick cartoonist Michael DeForge, a mash-up of the myths of Faust and Daedalus, this graphic novel shifts between modernity and antiquity. Our heroine Sylvia knows for sure that Fausto the architect, but his devilish doctor has his own ideas. So does King Minos of Crete. The story winds around itself like the labyrinth that ends up a prison for its builder, while Fior’s fierce red-in-black art provides drive, heart, and even joy.

American cartoonist UXoru is a modern woman in a modern society. Her relationship to the men around her mirrors Alice and love her older gypsy Georig. She blinks and blinks for her new friend Kanius. As Fio-fi, Kanius, an immigrant from Nigeria, is real with all of this. But he isn’t. Instead it’s UXoru’s strictly naturalized. Now I Need To Be A Good Person is a raw, honest account of racial discrimination and cultural conflict.

A family trip to the seaside is broken down to its smallest parts in Kingdom by British cartoonist Ian McNaught. Andy and his little sister Suzie are dragged hours away from home to visit their mum’s childhood getaway. McNaught follows the kids on their separate journeys, the ebb and flow of time matching the waves of the sea (right). His use of color, simple yet rich, is as impressive as that of Ware or Seth. This lovely graphic novel is available at Beaumont and Central.

French superhero Jacques Tardi continues his graphic odyssey of his father’s misadventures during WW2 in volume 2 of I, Rene Tardi, Prisoner of War: The Return Home. After Rene and his comrade fly Stirling J.I.B ahead of the Red Army through the deserts and prison, take matters into their own hands.

Decades before the popularity of the cinematic genre called “screwball comedies”, the funny pages were wracked with riotous ribaldry thanks to screwball comics. Paul C. Tumy’s Screwball! exposes and explores—and explodes—the Cartoonists Who Made the Funnies Funny. This gorgeous book from IDW’s Library of American Comics covers the work of screwball cartoonists both celebrated and forgotten. George (Krazy Kat) Her- nandez and C. (Pogo) Segar are represented, as are Milt (Count Screwloose) Gross and Rube Goldberg, with examples of the over-complicated machines that bear his name. More obscure inkslingers like Virgil Fuller and monkey-loving Gus Mager get their due, as do such wonderfully inked and artistically farcical strips as Jerry the Job and my favorite, George Swanson’s antic Salesman Sales (below). From Zim and Dwig to the origin of Major Hople to how “foo fighters” were inspired by the long-lived firehouse farce Smokey Stover (image beneath). Screwball! is a zany treasure available at Central. Nov shmoop k Yap?
American comics are about bodies: the pratfall-powered ruckus of the funnies, the lithe, muscular physicality of superhero comics, the curvaceous pulchritude of teen and romance comics, the grisly, gory flesh and blood of horror comics. Japanese comics are about faces: panel after panel, page after page of close-ups, even in the action-oriented manga, so much of the story told by the sparkle of an eye, the curl of a lip. And European comics are about places: the roofs of wartime Paris, the sights and sounds of TinTin’s travels, the bustling, steaming alien worlds of Valerian. Lucas Harari’s Swimming in Darkness could be a thesis on the subject. The plot—a young man with telekinetic powers explores the origin of his wild talents while being pursued by wicked men—could be told in a six-page back-up story in a Silver Age issue of X-Men. It’s the hero’s architectural obsessions that transform the tale into something more mysterious, more European. The mucklands and villages, bathhouses and bedrooms through which our hero pursues his quest are characters in themselves. Drawn in a schematic take on the clean line (clair ligne) style, colored in the bright, flat, subtly grainy look of lithographs, this Oversize release from Arsenal Pulp Press is a lovely thing indeed. As is Bowie: An Illustrated Life (University of Texas Press). Translated from the Spanish by cult musician Ned Sublette, Bowie is more like a picture book than a comic book. But the expressionistic watercolor drawings of Maria (Frida Kahlo: An Illustrated Life) Hesse are so intrinsic to the first-person story told by Fran Ruiz that it becomes a kind of comics. And David Bowie’s lifelong quest to unleash the alien within is a kind of sci-fi superhero epic. This artful—and honest, so reader beware—delight can be found in Biographies under B679he at Central, Eastside and Tate Creek. Next we go from from the Man Who Fell to Earth to a woman falling through forever. “I was dreaming I was falling,” says Amelia Eichenwald in the opening pages of Plummet (Conundrum Press). “You know those dreams...you’re falling, but then you wake up before you hit the ground. And I did wake up. But I was still falling.”

For days, in fact; Mel falls and falls, surrounded by the detritus of modern civilization. Notebooks, egg cartons, park benches, entire apartment buildings: all are falling like Mel. She lives off candy liberated from a vending machine thanks to a random high-heeled shoe. She deals with bodily functions complicated by the fact of falling. She “climbs” a tree—“Trees fall faster than anything else.” Mel discovers—and finds a treehouse. Then the tree hits the first sign of human society...which immediately endangers her. Eventually Mel allies with Kenichi, as the pair fall into further peril. Award-winning Canadian cartoonist Sherwin Tjia draws in a rough-n-tumble variation on the clair ligne style that grounds this surrealistic saga, available at Beaumont, Central and Tates Creek. Meanwhile, Los Hermanos Hernandez are justly adored for their seminal indie comic Love and Rockets. The most prolific of the pair, Gilbert, alias Beto, has finally released the complete edition of Maria M. (Fantagraphics). Originally promised for the summer of 2018 (see 741.5 #18), it’s worth the wait. As noted in the previous review, Maria M. is one of Beto’s “movie novels”—that is, graphic adaptations of the B-films made by his character, the buxom bombshell “Fritz” Martinez. Like previous “adaptations” such as King Vampire and The Troublemakers, Maria M. features the cast of regulars that work with Fritz. And to make matters even more meta, Maria M. is based on the violent life of Fritz’s grandmoth-er...whose “real” story was told in Gilbert’s “Palomar” novel, Poison River. As sordid and brutal as a great cult film should be, Maria M. is definitely “Rated M” for Mature. Kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell). Drawing on work from the 1950s, kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell). Drawing on work from the 1950s, kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell). Drawing on work from the 1950s, kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell). Drawing on work from the 1950s, kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell). Drawing on work from the 1950s, kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell). Drawing on work from the 1950s, kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell). Drawing on work from the 1950s, kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell). Drawing on work from the 1950s, kids of all ages should revive the old tradition of telling ghost stories during the Christmas holidays with Ghosts (Yoell).