MEANWHILE

The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of

741.5

THE MYSTERIES OF THE

MARCHENOIR

LIBRARY

PLUS... CRAZY TALENTED

ASIANS

FEBRUARY 2021 - NO. 51

The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of

Lexington Public Library
Reading Is Just the Beginning!
Kuniko Tsurita was the only woman on the staff of *Garo*, a manga published during the 1960s dedicated to avant-garde forms of the medium. The Sky is Blue With A Single Cloud (*D & Q*) collects the best of her work for that influential monthly. Tales of Japanese bohemia give way to surreal visions of dystopia and destruction followed by a maturity born of mortality. Get it at Central, Northside and Tates Creek.

Brit Tom Gauld is the author of the graphic novels *Goliath* and *Mooncop*, and the compilations *Baking with Kafka* and *You’re All Just Jealous of My Jetpack*, all still available from LPL. His newest collection from Drawn & Quarterly gathers his cartoons from England’s New Scientist magazine. Find "The Lepidopterist’s Nightmare," "Science Gang Tattoos" and other science funnies at lexpublib.org!

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"Strong, smart, brave, beautiful, MARCHENOIR defends reality from interdimensional invaders and nightmare monsters." The Marchenoir Library (Secret Acres) tells her story—or stories, actually, 46 of them. Such intriguing tales as Marchenoir’s Lunatic Love and Marchenoir and the Doom Equation are made up of only their covers, the backs outlining the plots for the reader to infer and imagine the narratives thereof. It’s a collaboration built on the common experience of fandom.

As part of Mao Zedong’s “Cultural Revolution”, China’s urban schools were shut down and city students shipped off “Up to the Mountains and Down to the Countryside”. Artist Emei Burell’s mom was one of those kids. *We Served the People* (Archaia) is her story. This heroic tale of coping and hoping is available at all LPL locations under 951.056 B899w.

A. Degen (the “A” is for “Alexander”) is one of the whiz kids from the brave new world of self-published cartooning. The Marchenoir Library is a perfect example of the New(est) School’s mash-up of global pop culture, combining French pulp tropes with rock’n’roll Gnosticism drawn in a Mighty Marvelous mix of manga and Peter Max. Go to lexpublib.org to reserve!

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Older readers of 741.5 may remember Classics Illustrated. From 1941 to 1969, the Gilberton Company provided lazy schoolkids the means to write that book report on Silas Marner or Faust or The Master of Ballantrae without having to crack an actual book by adapting works as comics. There have been several series since which attempted to corner that market, including a mid-1970s batch from Marvel. But this century has seen a mid-1970s explosion of graphic adaptations of modern literature, from The Handmaid’s Tale and Kindred to older works by HP Lovecraft and Robert Chambers, which you’ll find at LPL. The latest example of this trend is Simon & Schuster’s The Great Gatsby. Kept true to the text by Fred Fordham, this classic tale of the underhanded upper classes is rendered in a thin-lined deco style given a ghostly glaze by the chalky watercolors of Aya Morton. The Great Gatsby: The Graphic Novel is available at all locations. As is our next item, Kerry and the Knight of the Forest, which you’ll find in our Juvenile collections. RHKidsGraphic is responsible for this quirky fantasy by Andi Watson. Once a leader among Albion’s alternative cartoonists, Watson has achieved success with juvenile graphic novels such as Princess Decomposia and Count Spatula and the wonderful Glibber, both still available at LPL. His latest follows young Kerry as he gets lost in the forest seeking a shortcut back home to his fever-ridden family. It’s a tough way to go, even when our hero meets up with the titular “Knight of the Forest”, a floating one-eyed monolith called the Waystone. Though kind of a grouch, the Knight tries to guide Kerry home through the multitude of weird traps and snares that await within the darkling woods. Expert use of a limited color palette enlivens Watson’s trademark simplicity of line and composition to make the story move. In contrast, the art of Aquatlantic demands the reader stop and luxuriate in its richness of hues, its visual creativity. It lives up to the hype on the back cover: “Giorgio Carpenteri’s sheer graphic brilliance—fusing aspects of Futurism, Cubism, Russian Constructivism and German Expressionism with strong echoes of Bauhaus and Art Deco—brings to life this gorgeous allegorical fantasy.” I’d throw into that bubbling pot of influences the angular sensuality of Tamara De Limpicka and Boris Artzybasheff with the big box of crayons. Aquatlantic is your classic domed city under the sea. Life is pretty good in Aquatlantic. So why do strange dreams and bad thoughts haunt our hero Bho? An actor known for his comic character burlesquing surface dwellers, Bho has become so distraught, his guardian turtle tells him to write it out. We read as Bho sinks deeper into depression, even as an expedition of nefarious air-breathers loom above Aquatlantic. What will happen to Bho? What will happen to Aquatlantic? Go to lexpublib.org and reserve your copy of this lovely Oversize item to find out! Like Aquatlantic, Eight-lane Runaways is a large format graphic novel from Fantagraphics. Unlike Carpenteri, Henry McCausland eschews polychromatic effulgence for a blunt, bland gray-green color scheme. This is a very deliberate choice, since much of his work for the likes of The Guardian, Q and Omega Watches is quite colorful. McCausland also does without panel borders, enabling his pages to open up to the diverging stories told. Some pages are made up of panels following the typical reading order of comics; others are more like sheet music, the characters the notes racing across the page. A nice example of the new avant garde of comics, Eight-lane Runaways is available at all LPL locations. Beaumont and Central are home to the 2019 edition of The Best American Comics from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Jill (This One Summer) Tamaki is this year’s guest editor, with an eclectic sampling of contemporary comics from across the globe. There are some of the Usual Suspects: Joe Sacco, John Porcellino, Leslie Stein, Tamaki also excerpts novels like Nick Drnaso’s Sabrina and Be Prepared by Vera Brosgol (see 741.5 #19). But most of the tome highlights up’n’coming cartoonists like Jed McGowan, Laura Lannes and Angie Wang, each with an individualistic take on the Ninth Art. But as with previous volumes, Lale Westvind steals the show with her brash, flashy manhwa-esque art. It’s a thick and tasty stew available via lexpublib.org!