

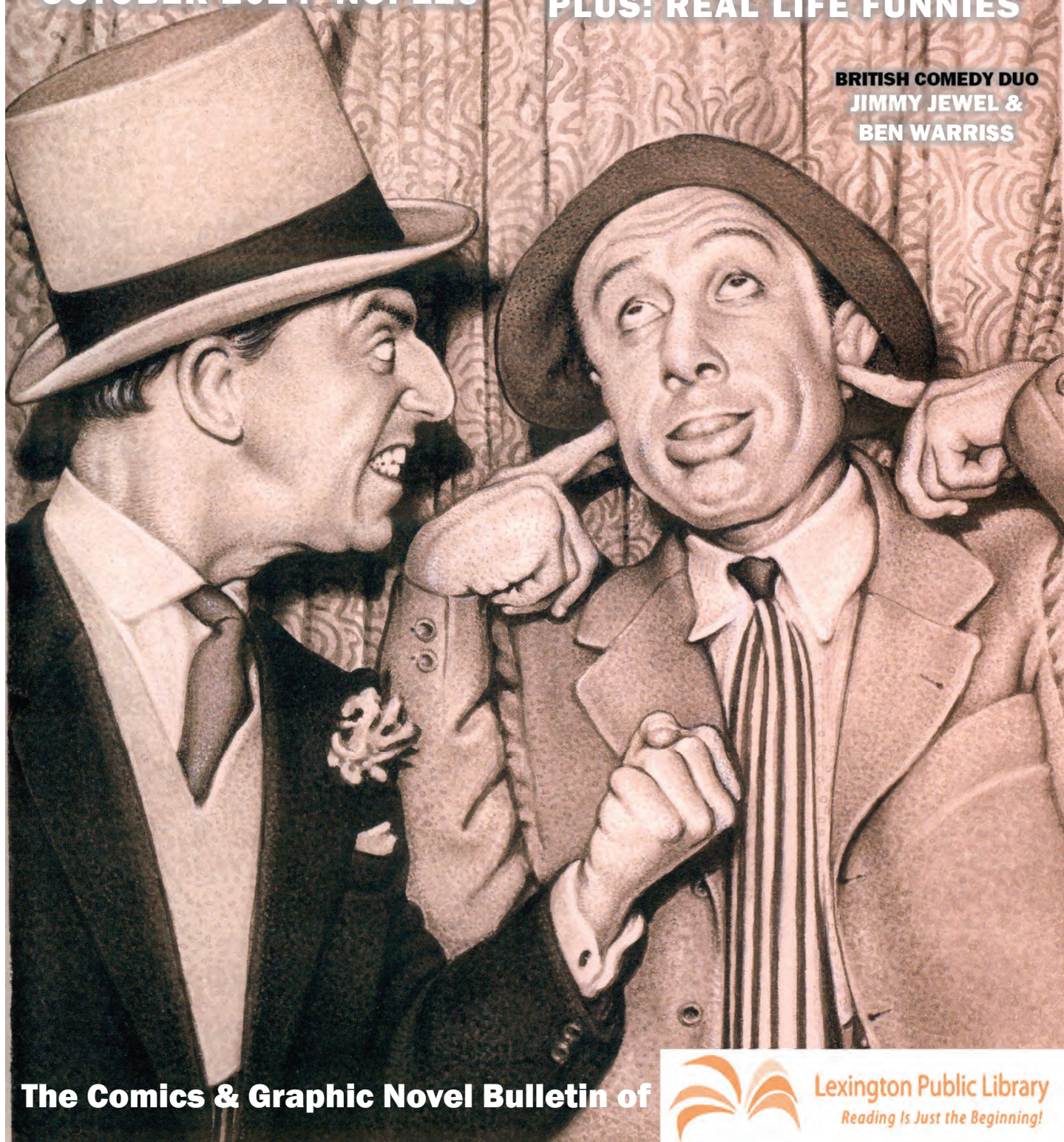
**741.5**

# AVERAGE CITIZENS

OCTOBER 2024 NO. 126

PLUS: REAL LIFE FUNNIES

BRITISH COMEDY DUO  
JIMMY JEWEL &  
BEN WARRISS

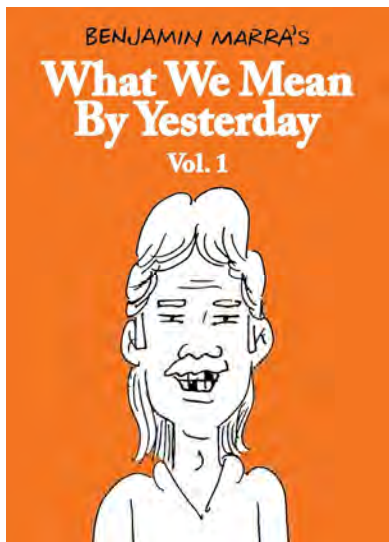


The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of

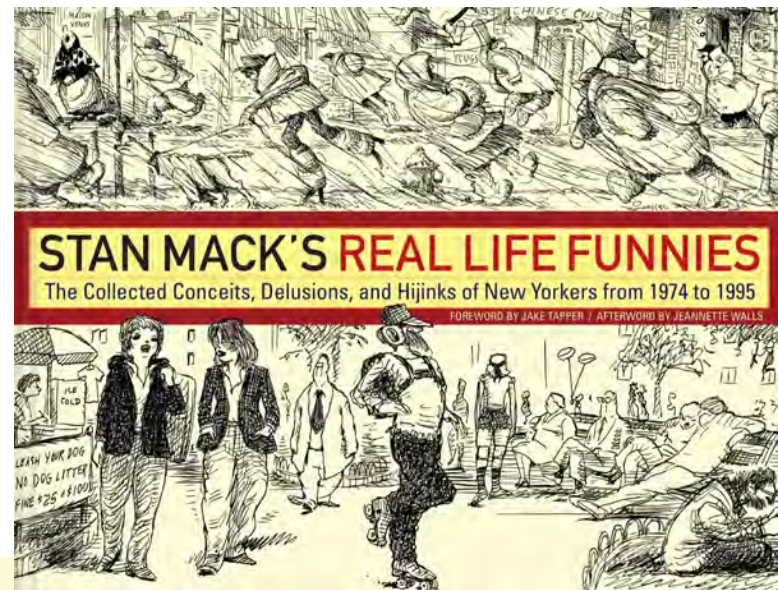


Lexington Public Library  
*Reading Is Just the Beginning!*

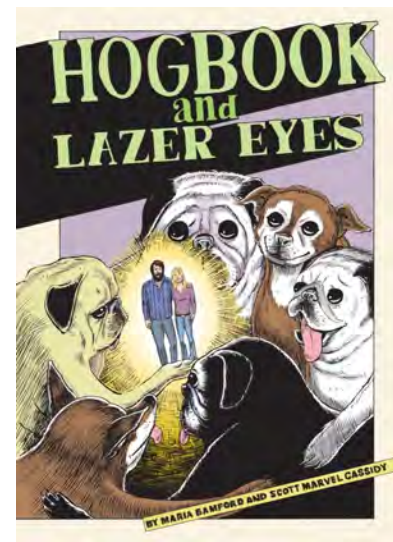




Another piece of art spawned by the long lonely months of the COVID-19 crisis, *What We Mean By Yesterday* falls upon we unworthy mortals like a chunk of frozen sewage spat from the bowels of an overstuffed, over worked airliner crammed full of people just like me, just like you, and just like our protagonist. Bruce Barnes has a bad day at his teaching job, and all he wants is to cop a smoke and chill. But the cigarette he borrows is laced with speed, and off we go on a hay-wire hayride meant to be read one page a day. Seriously. But I cheated, and so can you; just don't tell Benjamin (*Night Business*) Marra, author of this rabidly ridiculous datebook!



Maria Bamford is a stand-up comic best known for her confessional comedy dealing with the dark side of her life, as well as the Netflix TV series *Lady Dynamite*. Which co-stars Maria's husband, artist Scott Marvel Cassidy, known for his conceptual sculptures and naturalist paintings. *Hogbook and Lazer Eyes* is the story of how they met, mated and married, told by their pets, a group of loveable old pugs. That's the one drawback: the pair adopt elderly animals, so there's a lot of puppies crossing that Rainbow Bridge. If you can bear that, this sweet and funny romantic biography is available via [lexpublib.org](http://lexpublib.org).



The long panel center is a detail from Stan Mack's Real Life Funnies 11/7/1988. It's the penultimate panel, showing Mack losing the person he has spent the previous nine panels pursuing through the bustling streets of New York, trying to overhear the rest of the man's story. It's representative of two major aspects of Mack's popular, if not famous, strip: the mess of humanity forever surrounding Mack, and his dedication, singular as a bloodhound's, to getting the story as he hears it, whether in interview, in conversation, or, as in this case and so many others, overheard by chance.



Stan Mack's Real Life Funnies ran in the venerated Village Voice newspaper and did indeed foreground the Collected Conceits, Delusions and Hijinks of New Yorkers from 1974 to 1995. Mack had a front row seat to the changes wrought by the decades in the City That Never Sleeps. From Broadway to City Hall to Tompkins Square Park, with behind-the-scenes looks at Marvel Comics (far left), the Strand bookstore, and the Voice itself in between. The rock'n'roll strips, including a meeting with the Plasmatics, are personal faves, most of them studies in life lived, left and lost for the sake of the arts.

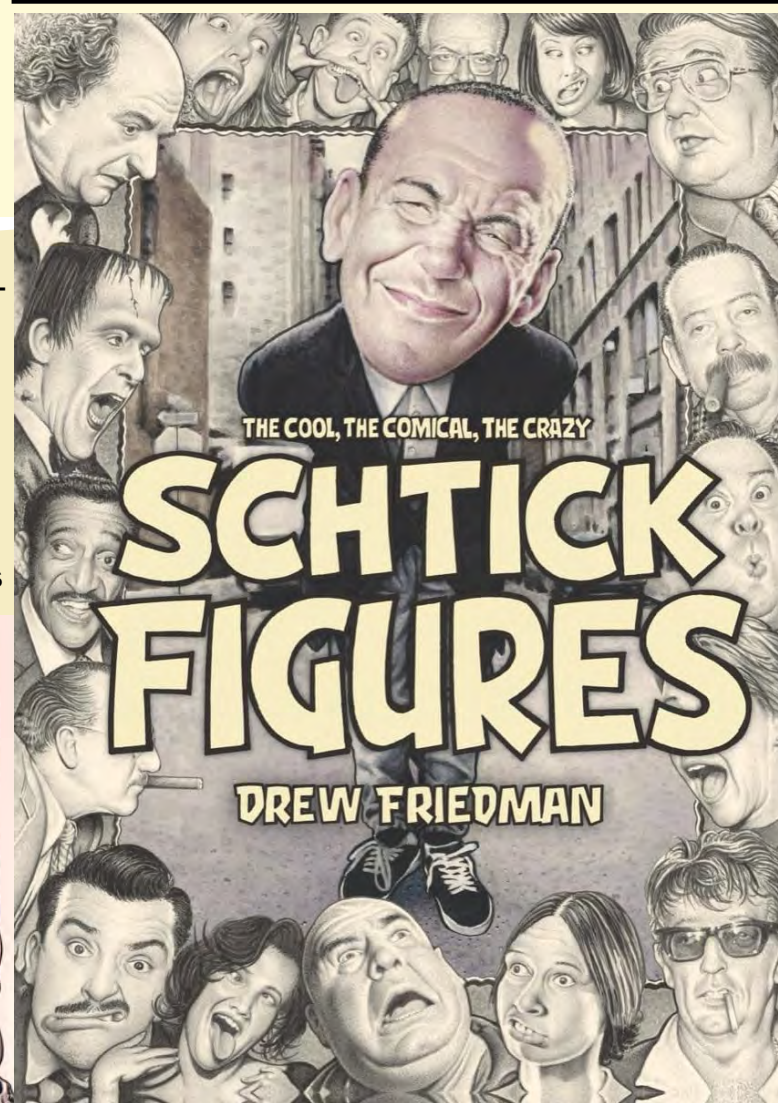


Below: Max Gaines, publisher, often credited with creating the American comic book; right: Shemp Howard of the Three Stooges; below right: groundbreaking comedian Moms Mabley.



of his generation. His immediately recognizable style is a semi-photographic realism embellished with the slightest flourish of exaggeration motivated by an eye that relishes the saggy, scratchy, homely humanity of its

From his punkish beginnings in outre funnybooks like *RAW* and *Weirdo* to slick mainstream magazines such as *New Yorker* and *Entertainment Weekly*, with *Spy* in between, DREW FRIEDMAN has become the premier caricaturist



subjects. Those include the famous, the infamous and the once-famous. Classic character actors, Borscht Belt comics, stars from the early days of television, underground cartoonists and Las Vegas crooners: all these and



more fill the Over-size pages of *Schtick Figures*. Many items come from Friedman's previous comps for Fantagraphics, others, previously uncollected, from the art magazine, *Mineshaft*. Go to [lexpublib.org](http://lexpublib.org) to reserve today!

Below: hard-boiled writer Iceberg Slim; left: stand-up comic and podcaster Marc Maron; below left: Maurice Tillet, a professional wrestler better known as the French Angel.







Ye Editor went looking to see if we had any other releases from Pow Pow Press, and it looks like *The Jellyfish* is the only one. We'll have to fix that, because this is a wonderful book, nicely formatted, with a paper stock perfect for the intricate artwork of **Boum**. The *nom de plume* of Canadian animator **Samantha Leriche-Gionet**, **Boum** has dedicated herself to comics since 2011. That's partly because of the issue at the heart of *The Jellyfish*: for the past fifteen years, **Boum** has suffered a number of eye conditions not unlike that described in the novel. Her stand-in Odette becomes visually haunted by "the jellyfish", a little black blob forever floating in the corner of Odette's eye. After a while, the first jellyfish gets a friend...then a family...then there's dozens of them mobbing Odette's line of sight, and there's not a damn thing the doctors can do about it. Odette's struggle against the inevitable is sometimes valiant, sometimes villainous, as her lover and her roomie get swept under the onslaught of *The Jellyfish*, available at Marksbury Family Branch.



## MEANWHILE

Every LPL location owns a copy of the new "Dawn of DC" title devoted to "that funny little man with the umbrella," *The Penguin*. But *The Prodigal Bird* isn't the familiar figure of fun from previous portrayals, oh, no. Harkening back to Oswald Cobblepot's very first appearance in the Forties, the Penguin is a murdering bastard. Lord knows he tried to walk away from it all, leaving his psycho son and daughter in charge while he pretended to be dead. But Amanda Waller and the Feds have other ideas. They think the Penguin should take back the throne as King of Crime of Gotham and run the whole thing for Uncle Sam. Thing is, as revealed by the astonishing backstory of this **Tom King** shocker, that's is how he got the job on the first place, with a lot of help from a certain Caped Crusader...This incredibly dark tale finds perfect expression in the shadow-smeared naturalism of **Rafael De Latorre**, who comes on like a European **Sean Phillips**. "European" could describe the artwork of **Atsushi Kaneko**. **Kaneko** favors a dominant brush line and much heavier use of spot blacks than the majority of manga artists. That gives his art



a physicality, a palpable quality of flesh and fur, all too fitting for this violent epic. Allegedly, *Search and Destroy* is based on the classic *Dororo* by the "God of Manga" himself, **Osamu Tezuka**. The one part **Kaneko** swiped whole was the idea of the hero being an amputee whose limbs are replaced by weapons. **Kaneko**, whose motto is "Bringing the punk in manga," puts those weapons to use in action scenes that revel in body horror like **Frank Quitely** adapting a **Lucio Fulci** flick. It gets nasty. Caveat lector. But dig that bear fight! Our next item is a re-release, in the smaller format of DC Graphic Novels for Young Adults, of *PREZ*, first reviewed way back in 741.5 #5 May 2017. Like I said then, **Mark Russell's** "mod reimagining of the cult Seventies series about America's 'First Teen President'...is set in a not very distant future where social media have completely taken over the American system of government. So much that a deadlocked election gets won by an outsider candidate known as 'CornDog Girl' because her video was trending on Youtube. Once in office, Beth Ross turns things upside down to the consternation of the corporate powers behind the American throne. The detailed but rubbery art of **Ben Caldwell** and **Mike Morales** brings to life this sci-fi burlesque of the issues roiling our nation, in which cat flu,



a cult that believes every microbe is sacred and a runaway warbot that decides it wants to be called 'Tina' further complicate our screen-addled descent into idiocracy." Unquote. Look for *PREZ* in *TEEN* at your favorite LPL location! Ye Editor almost included the latest from **Jade** (*Scout Is Not A Band Kid*) **Armstrong** among the comics concerning mental health in 741.5 #124, given its subject matter. *Food School* is what our protagonist Olive prefers to call the program she's joined devoted to "full-time adult outpatient eating disorder recovery". Olive's got issues with food, because Olive's got issues with life. But unlike the despondent items discussed in #124, *Food Bank* tells its story with an honest but hopeful tone. **Armstrong's** art is a lively mix of manga and clear line influences, bodies and backgrounds given weight and definition by an expert use of screen patterns, what we primitives living in pre-digital days called "Zipatone," all printed in a strong blue ink in a handy digest size. Another fine release from Canada's Conundrum Press, *Food School* is available at all LPL locations!



Back issues of 741.5 are available at [www.lexpublib.org](http://www.lexpublib.org) under the READING SERVICES tab!