

741.5

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Reading Is Just the Beginning!



"The best comic book released this year." *Comic Book Revolution*

The first nepo baby in comic books, ZATANNA ZATARA is the daughter of Golden Age occult crimefighter ZATARA, who debuted with Superman in *Action Comics* #1. A perennial favorite of cosplayers, Zatanna has become an important character in 21st Century DC continuity. Written by Mariko (Roaming) Tamaki, *Bring Down the House* is a limited series about the early days of Zatanna's career. A neglected



daddy's girl still haunted by Zatarra's death, Zatanna has no magical powers and rejects all attempts by sorcerous strangers (left) and bewitched bunnies (above) to tell her she does. So what does lover-boy John Constantine have to say about it? Zatanna needs to make a decision and fast, before a now demonic Daddy comes home! Artist Javier Rodriguez struts his street-wise, surrealistic stuff at Central, Marksbury and Tates Creek!



YOU EVER HAVE ONE OF THOSE DAYS WHEN YOUR ENTIRE TRAUMATIC CHILDHOOD IS CALLED INTO QUESTION AND— EVEN THOUGH IT'S ALREADY IN SHREDS— GETS RIPPED APART BY PEOPLE WHO WANT TO ACCUSE YOU OF DOING EVEN MORE HORRIBLE THINGS?

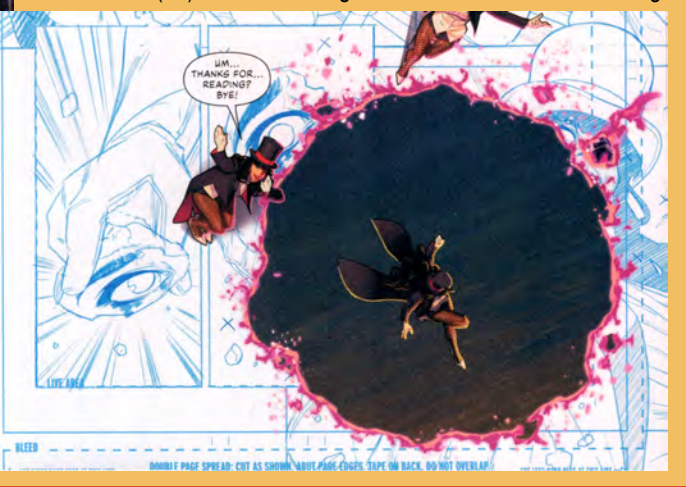
AND THEN SOME BUNNIES TELL YOU YOU'RE A POWERFUL WIZARD? I DON'T THINK YOU'RE A WIZARD, PER SE.



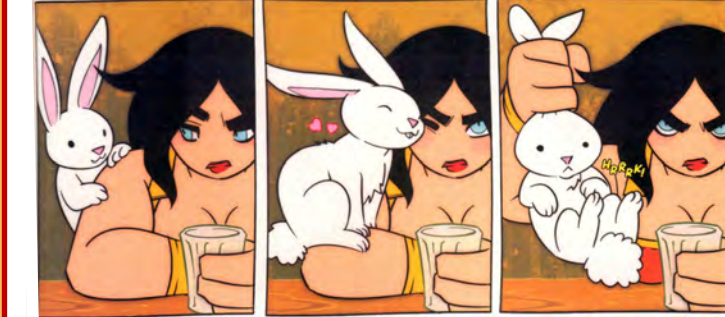
One-man-band Jamal Campbell authors the latest regular series for DC. The Canadian master of mixed media uses the illusory nature of art to explicate the illusory nature of magic, both staged and real (above middle). He uses deep-depth painted panels for "real world" scenes while warping the image for the "magical" action, like penciled comics pages (below) or the monochrome palette of the Basil Karlo bit. As hinted by that drop of a name, *It's Showtime* is a Hollywood production. A great power from the silver screen's past, the White Lady, conspires with Z's nemesis Brother Dark (left) to steal the limelight-- and life --from the Mistress of Magic!



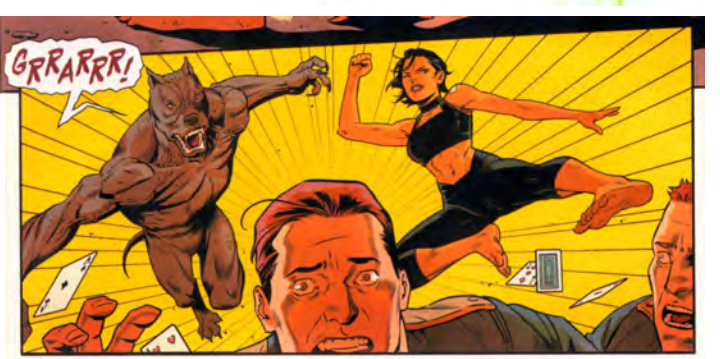
Behold, two sorcerous sagas starring ZATANNA: in one, the newly-minted magician, in the other the experienced enchantress!



There's more hot bunny action in Volume 2 of *Birds of Prey*. Already worn out from a hard night of beating ass while barely dressed in *haute couture*, DC's manic mob of distaff daredevils chases a swept-away Barbara Gordon AKA Batgirl I through a portal. Among the pocket dimensions they encounter is a cartoon universe in which Big Barda (below) manages to antagonize the local bunny bund. After doppelgangers and dinosaurs, you'd think wascally wabbits would be



The new BIRDS OF PREY 2 & 3 are available at your local LPL location!



the least of the Birds' problems. But that's the fun and tury writer Kelly Thompson brings to this long-running title. Like most monthlies, *BoP* has multiple artists; this book takes advantage of all those different styles, maintaining the tension while still having a good time. Volume 2 an undercover Cassandra Cain AKA Batgirl II makes a new friend (above) as she spearheads the rescue of Amazons kidnapped by some especially schizy schemers. As usual, *Birds of Prey* entertains with its two-fisted mix of characterization and crazy superheroics!

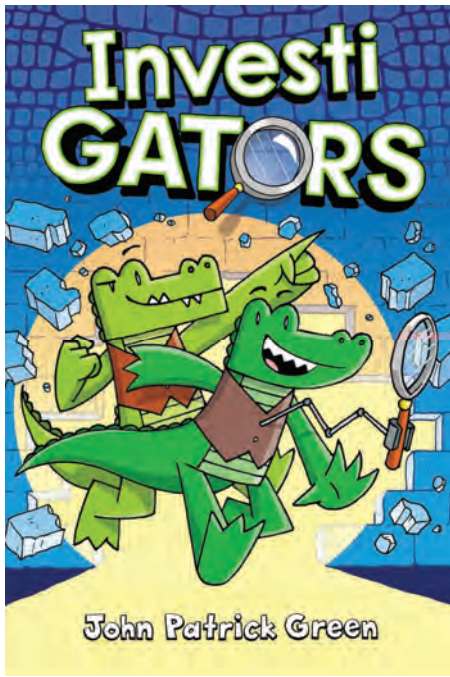


It's a showdown, a throwdown, an intergalactic hoedown as the baddest of the good girls BLACK CANARY goes toe to toe with the Assassin of Assassins LADY SHIVA to determine who is truly *BEST of the BEST* in the DC Universe! There's big money riding on the outcome. But the biggest money is old money, indeed, as OG BC enemy Vandal Savage pulls the strings beyond the ropes! Tom King's flair for characterization meets Ryan Sook's gift for gorgeously painful realism in this one-and-done masterpiece of comic book violence!





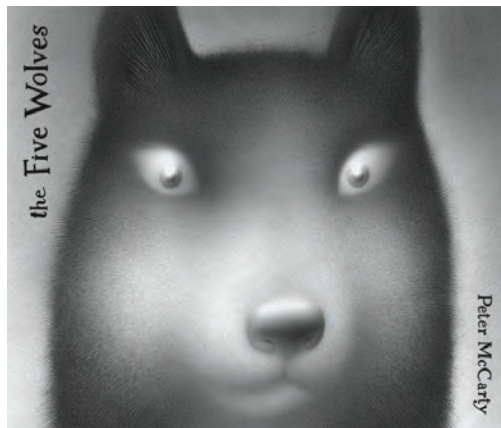
Speaking of unique and delightful art styles, **Brenna Thummler's** *Gumshoe* is eye-catching in its careful balance between stylization and realism, but moreso for its gorgeous bright color palette (bubblegum pink, anyone?). The story follows Willa, a socially anxious girl with a passion for mail. Through a series of sticky situations, she joins a band of quirky runaways to stop notorious outlaw Two-Gum Tilly from stealing kids' birthday cards. As they learn to trust one another and themselves, the girls soon discover that envelopes aren't the only things that can open up. As a lifelong weird girl and a sucker for the found-family trope, I have to give *Gumshoe* my stamp of approval. If you're in the market for finger puppets, pink boots, and plot twists, reserve this read now at any LPL branch.



MEANWHILE

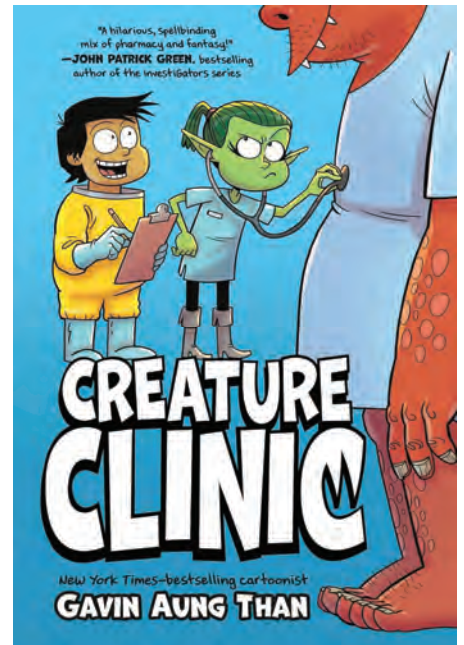
Is proud to present **NEW CONTRIBUTOR Shelby Stuart** of Beaumont! Ms. Stuart will be reviewing YP and YA graphic novels for future issues of 741.5, asking questions like What is art? Are scribbles art? Do people actually eat pie? In **Peter McCarty's** visually stunning and cognitively baffling *The Five Wolves*, these questions are not answered, but they certainly are asked! Five wolves aspiring to be great painters traverse a surreal world, encountering a clever rabbit, a princess riding a fat pony, and cake they will not eat. The story here is not as important as the drawings—which, come to think of it, may be **McCarty's** point. Simple monochromatic sketches contrast flowing masses of freeform text, which seem to come from a disembodied narrator, several characters, and possibly the imagined reader.

On most pages, there is so much humorously conflicting narration that it is difficult to determine what is important to read. If you'd like to be confused and amused, find *The Five Wolves* at Beaumont, Central, and Tates Creek.



Just watch where you step! If you thought that last review had too many puns, then you may not be interested in *InvestiGators V1* by **John Patrick Green**. But for those of you who don't think it had enough puns (my people!), you'll want to snap up *InvestiGators* immediately. Though not a new release, I'm a fan of comics that make me ask "Why did that stupid joke make me laugh so much?" and this one did it for me more than once. The plot is exactly as it sounds: a classic buddy-cop (buddy-spy?) story. This one just happens to feature two alligators going undercover to solve the disappearance of a mustachioed celebrity baker. Tale as old as time, right? Despite the traveling-through-sewers gimmick, most of the jokes don't rely on potty humor. That would be too obvious. I won't get into the details, but there is a brain surgeon who occasionally morphs into a news helicopter. Interpret that bit as you will, but feel free to experience it yourself at Beaumont, Central, and Marksbury.

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FYI, when I say I'm a fantasy lover, I don't mean Harry Potter or ACOTAR—I mean *Creature Clinic* by **Gavin Aung Than** (all branches). When a human (the horror!) shows up injured at a hospital solely for mythical creatures, an orc doctor-in-training must choose between impressing her mother and doing what's right. The pages are packed with magical medical maladies and surprisingly insightful moments. Turns out, humans are great at giving talk therapy. Who knew? Finally, **Mari Costa's** teen romance *Belle of the Ball* features high school senior Hawkins. Conned into tutoring her crush's girlfriend for free, she still ends up with the perfect payout—a sweet romantic ending for all three characters! Perfect for stressed-out prodigies, jocks with hearts of gold, and anyone who wishes they could still wear a princess dress all the time. Reserve it at any branch for an adorably drawn, feel-good read.



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