

# BETWEEN THE LINES

JANUARY 2025

ISSUE 4

**CAROL ADLAM**

The story behind  
The Russian Detective

**WHAT YOU DIDN'T  
KNOW ABOUT...  
FILIPINO COMICS**

## ALL BARK WITH PLENTY OF BITE

**Lucy Sullivan,  
LICAF's latest patron  
Exclusive interview**

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## EDITOR'S LETTER

What a great time to be a fan of EC Comics. As well as reprints of MAD from #1 (\$3.99!), there is the beautifully produced Home to Stay, a complete reprint of ALL of EC's Ray Bradbury stories, illustrated by some of comics' finest: Wally Wood, Frank Frazette, Bernie Krigstein, etc. Fabulous introductory material, too. But also...

Check out the NEW EC comics: Epitaphs from the Abyss, Cruel Universe, and Shiver SuspenStories featuring, among many other talents, former LICAF guests Chris Condon and Leomacs. I don't want to get you too excited because (unless you read from the back) you haven't seen the treats we have for you in BTL #4 yet.

From across the Channel (actually, across Hadrian's Wall, in Leith) Anabelle Araujo brings us a unique Desert Island Comics. Anabelle and Benoit own La Belle Adventure - French & English language graphic novels, exhibitions, talks, signing sessions - what more could a serious student of the medium ask for (when LICAF is not on)? Have you heard of Senso, Buddha, Perramus? You are just about to.

And then we have an interview with Carol Adlam about her The Russian Detective. One of its subjects is visual languages and illusions and so, the very way in which this marvellous graphic novel is illustrated is part of its message.

In a similar way, Inside the Mind of Sherlock Holmes, by Cyril Liéron and Benoît Dahan, plays with its panel and page design as we learn how Sherlock, far from through sheer luck, follows the threads of his thought to solve the case. On the way, you can figure out some of the clues by - well, I won't spoil it for you. Get to your favourite shop and buy it.

And that's not all. Finn Miles interviews Mohammad Sabaaneh . And Lucy Sullivan tells us about her career and how she has become LICAF's latest patron. And... (Another "And" I hear you exclaim!). We learn how you should brush up your French in order to read Darryl Cunningham's latest book which has struggled to get an English language publisher. Its title? Elon Musk - Enquête sur un nouveau maître du monde. No need to tell you who the subject is.

Must dash. BTL #5 has even more delights. And I've still got some EC comics to read. Au revoir.

John McShane



# LUCY SULLIVAN

## LICAF PATRON



Lucy Sullivan is a writer and artist from London whose acclaimed debut graphic novel, *BARKING*, based on her own experience of a mental health crisis, was first published during the pandemic and quickly sold out. The new edition launched February 2024 with Avery Hill Publishing and is available for the first time in Canada and the United States.

Alongside her own comics and zines, Lucy has created a variety of commissions for titles including *Hey, Amateur!*, *The Department Of Truth: Wild Fictions* and *Black Hammer*, including the short comic *Betwixt, Between* for Jeff Lemire. She is the artist on *IND-XED* with Fraser Campbell, as well as creating stories with John Reppion for *Skrawl Magazine*, Jordan

Thomas for *Metallic Dynamite*, Peter Davison for *YOSHIN10*, and Dan Watters for *Razorblades*.

Her new Folk-Horror series, *SHELTER*, is currently in development, with support from Arts Council England. The first story, "Early Doors", which was winner of Broken Frontier's 'Best New Periodical Series' Award 2022, is out now.

This was followed by the research zine, *HAGBOUND*, self-published in 2023.



The second long-form story, "Mothers Ruin" is in development and currently scheduled for publication in 2026.

The Lakes International Comic Art Festival is developing a wide range of events and projects for 2025 and beyond, in addition to planning its annual weekend-long Festival, returning to Bowness-on-Windermere 26th - 28th September 2025, and Lucy, as well as promoting the Festival in general, will be involved in some of them, alongside other patrons.

With thanks to John Freeman and [downthetubes.net](http://downthetubes.net), we have the following interview with Lucy.

### What prompted you to become a Patron of the Lakes International Comic Art Festival?

I've been lucky to have been supported by LICAF from the start of my comics career. Since 2018, we've worked together on a variety of projects. From LICAF co-commissioning the first edition of *BARKING*, to delivering skills-based workshops for festival goers and talks on making comics. This year, I was involved in the Festival's British Comics Now scheme, moderating a panel at the Toronto Comic Arts Festival, as well as an incredible trip to the Philippines International Comics Festival, to teach local children, and share a table at the festival and talk about British comics with fellow creator Mollie Ray.

I value the International aspect of the festival greatly and love the intimacy of the event itself. When it comes to talks, fascinating guests and exhibitions, LICAF is the place. It will be a pleasure to be a part of that going forward.





**How do you see your role as a patron?**

I hope to bring another perspective to the LICAF team, from an exhibitor's point of view. To get the word out about the festival to creators far and wide, at every level, but especially those taking their early steps into the form. I'll try to look for opportunities to strengthen and widen engagement in comics from readers new and old, while supporting new creators and help by advising them about how to get their comics out there, through LICAF and their fantastic partners. In short, I'll have a multitude of roles!

Comics is an ever changing, widening industry, so I'd imagine my role will be somewhat flexible in what I can bring, but it will be always with an eye on how to help the festival move with the industry, across the broad range of comics and support creators.

**Aside from your groundbreaking work in comics and advocacy of the medium, what other skills will you apply to your new role?**

I'm hoping that my experience in the Small Press scene will be beneficial to LICAF. I've been lucky to be a part of what I believe to be the most enjoyable side of the industry. I've self-published a number of comics, as well as raising funds through Arts Council England alongside crowdfunding, and learnt much from every project that I would love to share.







I've got to know creators from across the industry from London self-publishers through LDComics and WIP Comics to Kickstarter and the crowdfunding scene, alongside small press creators in Canada, US, Asia and beyond. As well as all that, I have experience working with small press publishers like Avery Hill, and supportive comic shops such as Gosh, Travelling Man and Jam Bookshop.

I love zine culture and the accessibility of self-publishing, so it would be great to bring more of those creators to engage with LICAF, especially with the new International Rights Market. Giving creators the opportunity of access to international publishers is a brilliant move and one I will be very pleased to advocate for.

I think it's vital that creators understand their value and have options to grow, without having to jump through hoops. I've also been lucky to work with some incredible creators from mainstream titles and well-known publishers. I hope I can entice some of them to the festival to enjoy the gorgeous Lakeside vistas alongside one of the most unique festivals in the UK.

**What do you want from being a patron of the Festival?**

I'm seeing this more as a "giving-back" role, for all the support I've had from LICAF. I guess I would like to have a voice in conversations about looking after

exhibitors, bringing in newer voices, and looking at fresh ways to engage with readers. Honestly, just getting to be a more involved part of the festival is a fantastic opportunity and I will do what I can to advise, aid, and support the LICAF Team and festival as a whole. It will also be an invaluable chance to understand how the festival is run as I'm hoping to start a (much smaller) event when my family moves to Brighton soon.

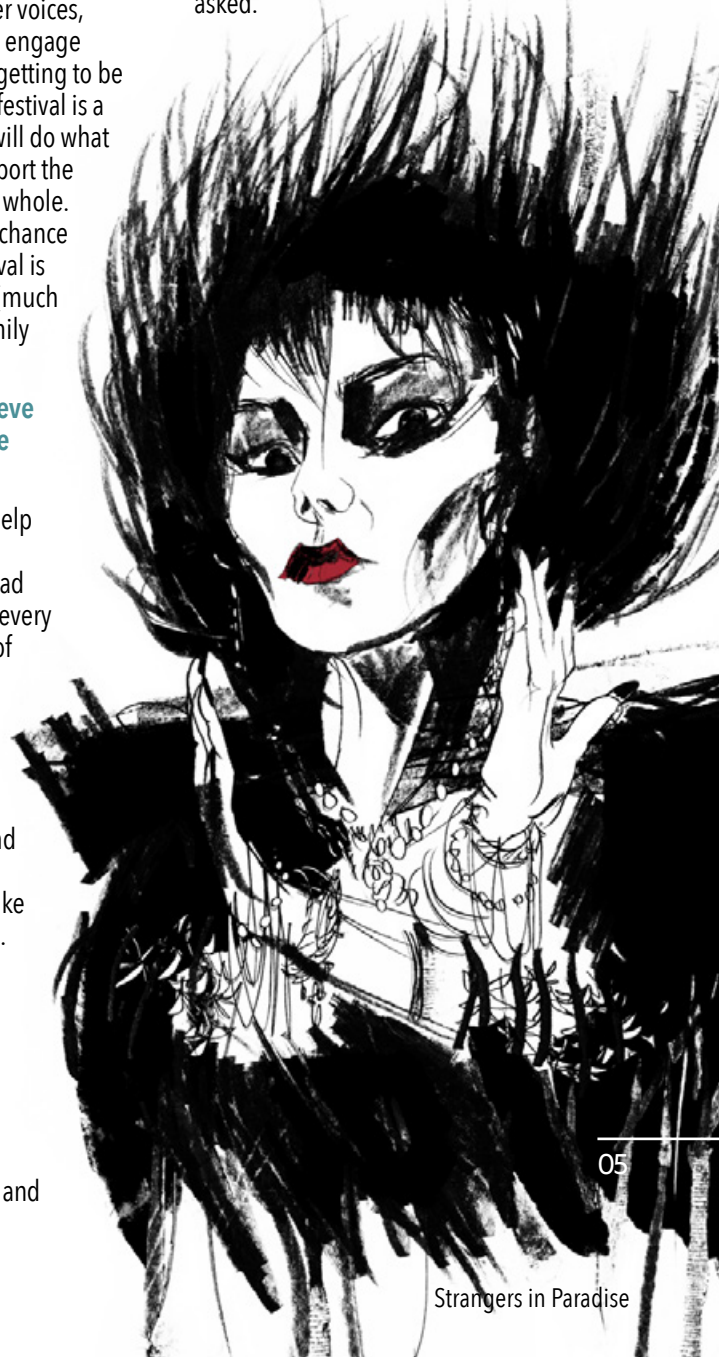
**What do you hope to achieve as a patron, in terms of the Festival's future?**

My greatest ambition is to help LICAF to continue to evolve and support comics as a broad industry, with creators from every stage and across the range of genres. I hope the pitfalls I've narrowly avoided can be put to good use in advising others. I would love to grow skill sharing opportunities around the business side of being a creator and help others to take control of their own projects. LICAF have an ambitious outlook for comics and one that, with their support. I believe can be achieved. Especially in collaborating with other brilliant festivals like Thought Bubble, TCAF (Toronto Comic Arts Festival), and

PICOF (Philippine International Comic Festival), alongside organisations such as the Comics Cultural Impact Collective and Broken Frontier. I hope I can be a part of bringing the various groups and sections together to work more collaboratively and benefit comics as a whole.

It's an exciting time and I think one that's going in the right direction. I'm lucky to get to be a small part of that and am very much looking forward to getting stuck in.

The coverage and validation I've garnered thanks to the support of Julie Tait, Carole Tait and the LICAF team has had a significantly positive impact on my career. So, it was without hesitation I said yes to being a patron when Julie asked.





# INSIDE THE MINDS OF...

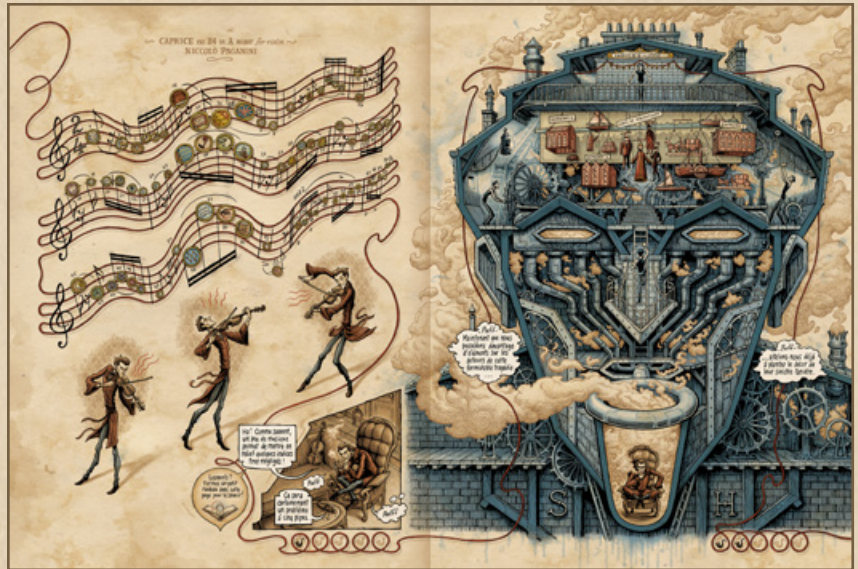
## CYRIL LIÉRON AND BENOÎT DAHAN

“SEEING WHAT OTHERS DO NOT IS THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF THE CRIMEFIGHTER - WHETHER SHERLOCK HOLMES OR DIRTY HARRY - THE MISSED CLUE, THE SUSPICIOUS IDLING CAR, THE GAP IN THE DRAGNET.”

I Am The Law, Michael Molcher, Rebellion, 2023

“I CONSIDER THAT A MAN’S BRAIN ORIGINALLY IS LIKE A LITTLE EMPTY ATTIC, AND YOU HAVE TO STOCK IT WITH SUCH FURNITURE AS YOU CHOOSE. THE SKILLFUL WORKMAN IS VERY CAREFUL INDEED AS TO WHAT HE TAKES INTO HIS BRAIN-ATTIC.”

A Study in Scarlet, Arthur Conan Doyle



Inside the Mind of Sherlock Holmes: The Case of the Scandalous Ticket is a graphic novel by French artists and writers Cyril Liéron and Benoît Dahan. Published originally in French as Dans la Tête de Sherlock Holmes, this unique stylized book offers an imaginative exploration of the famous detective’s inner workings as he solves a mystery.

Liéron and Dahan were friends at high school. Liéron was a colour artist for French comics for 12 years before deciding to concentrate on writing. On this side of the English Channel, both Alan Moore and Grant Morrison began as artist-writers before devoting all their energies to writing. (Alan Moore, sceptical of his own artistic ability, once advised me, “If you can’t draw, stipple.”) Dahan meanwhile studied Graphic Arts at ESAG (École supérieure de design, d’art graphique et d’architecture intérieure) in Paris. For years he did press illustration (for example in Le Monde) and created children’s books.

With a shared love of the Sherlock Holmes stories, it seems somehow destiny that, in 2018, they decided to collaborate on this unique and wonderful graphic novel.

The novel dives into Sherlock Holmes’ mind through visuals that evoke Victorian England’s atmosphere yet are mixed with modern surreal and intricate artwork. Each page resembles a blend of Holmes’ deductive pathways and flow charts that guide readers through his deductive reasoning process like an interactive map of his thoughts. (UK readers who remember The Numbskulls in The Beezer from 1962 will recall the inside of the man’s brain.)





"There's the scarlet thread of murder running through the colourless skein of life, and our duty is to unravel it, and isolate it, and expose every inch of it." Here that "scarlet thread of murder" leads us visually through the whole graphic novel.

Each page is characterised by detailed illustrations, unconventional panelling, and an almost maze-like design that brings Holmes' inner monologue and mental notes to life.

There is a clue on the cover for the attentive reader. Certain pages literally throw light on the case, especially when viewed through light.



The graphic novel follows an original story where Holmes and Dr Watson investigate a case involving an altered State of Consciousness - Holmes induced such while taking opium - potentially tied to an illicit substance. As Holmes observes, deduces, and pieces together clues readers see his mental processes visualised on the page. This story explores Holmes' mental clarity and his potential moments of doubt adding depth to the character.

The authors' approach gives readers a unique perspective on Sherlock Holmes focusing on how his mind operates under pressure and in the face of complex challenges. It's more than just a mystery, it's a psychological journey. The graphic novel invites readers to understand how Holmes interprets evidence, connects seemingly unrelated details and leverages his vast mental library - depicted as an actual library inside his head. Compare the Mind Palace of Hannibal Lecter, for example.

See Holmes' supernatural powers of deduction. Look into his brain-attic as he searches for the clues which will solve the case. And then reread this novel which repays multiple rereadings.



## DID YOU KNOW...

The brother of WB Yeats, Ireland's well-known poet, was Jack B Yeats (1871-1957). Hailed nowadays for his paintings, from 18th November 1893, he drew Chubb-Lock Homes for Comic Cuts (1890-1953). This Sherlock Holmes homage quickly became a popular comic strip serial. Yeats was a very talented cartoonist whose early work is worth searching for.



In 2024 LICAF worked with the British Council to create a landmark exhibition of Palestinian Comics curated by comic artist and expert, George Khoury. Enter the Mulberry Tree and Fly Free : Palestinian Comics Revealed featured the work of 12 diverse Palestinian artists. One of those featured, Mohammad Sabaaneh, was invited to LICAF to talk more about Palestinian comics, his own work and to participate in a discussion about freedom of expression. BTL took the opportunity to interview Mohammad before he left for a European tour about his new book '30 Seconds in Gaza'.

# MY STORY IS PALESTINE

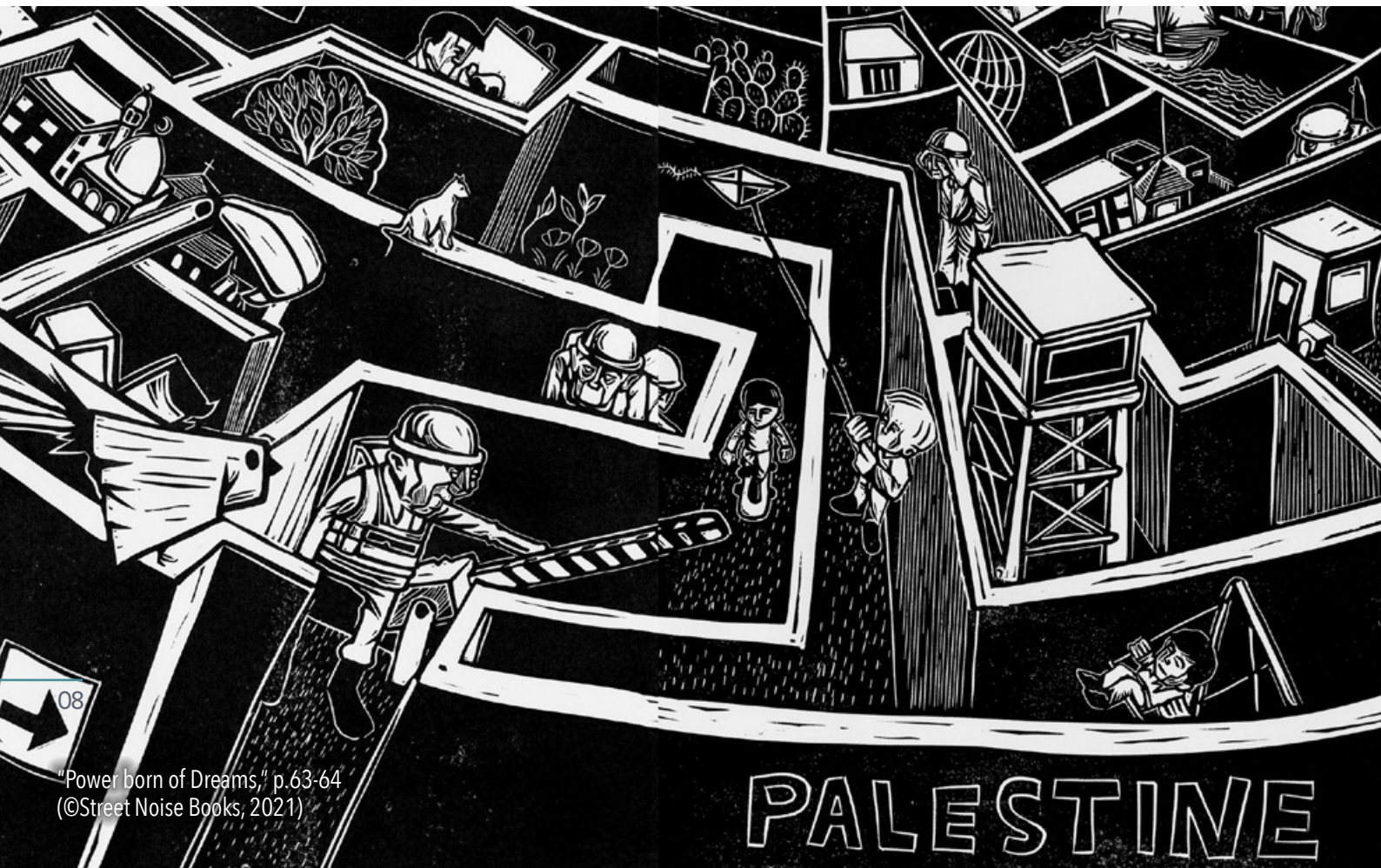
## A DIALOGUE AND INTERVIEW WITH POLITICAL CARTOONIST MOHAMMAD SABAANEH ON POWER, POLITICS AND PALESTINE

BY FINN MILES

Mohammad Sabaaneh has published numerous cartoons and graphic novels, including Palestine in Black and White (2017), Power Born of Dreams: My story is Palestine, (2021) and 30 Seconds from Gaza (2024). He lives in Palestine with his wife.

**Could you tell me where you were born, have lived and your generational connection to the current conflict?**

I was born in Kuwait in 1979. I moved to Jordan and then after finishing high school moved back to Palestine. My Palestinian parents had a nostalgia for Palestine and used to tell us about the situation as children. I have remained in Palestine until now.





**I'd like to ask you about some of your works. In 2013 you were unlawfully detained and imprisoned by Israeli forces for six months for possessing cartoons deemed inflammatory. The result, *Power Born of Dreams: My Story is Palestine*, details your experiences in detention. Could you elaborate on the circumstances surrounding your imprisonment and experiences in prison? As well as how you approached themes of generational trauma?**

If we are talking about Palestinian prisoners and conditions inside the Israeli prison I can tell you that the prisons are even worse than when I was imprisoned, making what I experienced look good in comparison. It is much harder now and much more brutal.

But in my time they isolated us and tortured prisoners through said isolation and threats. But again that is not comparable to now. I interviewed prisoners before I came to the UK. They were only given 250 grams to eat per day. They torture them, they beat them. It is now like hell.



Mohammad at LICAF 2024

In my time, I used my cartoons as a way to transcend my condition. I did many cartoons inside the prison. I wanted to publish my second book, *A Power born of Dreams*, to chronicle life inside the prison and compare it to the experiences of Palestinians outside.

There was a man with cancer inside the prison. The Israelis wouldn't give him his treatment and he suffered great pain. My brother has been inside the prison for 14 months now, at the beginning of the 7th of October, as his conditions changed the wardens smashed his glasses and stomped on them. We could not send replacements to him.

**What do you think specifically about general debates about "caricatures" and alleged subliminal bigotry and accusations of anti-semitism in the wider cartoon world? It seems to me that the childishness of our current political culture often eschews context and jumps to conclusions.**

Israeli political cartoonists use similar caricatures when they display Palestinian political factions or Iran. I can show these on my phone. Why don't Israelis see this as racist against Muslims?

I can find all sorts of cartoons that happen to have these caricatures. It's only when it's Israel it's assumed to be anti-semitic.

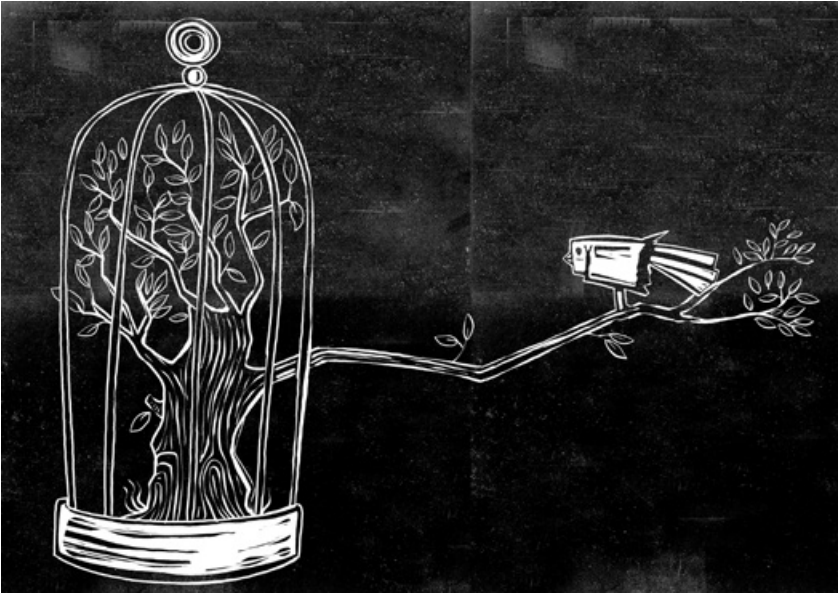
This sensitivity and over use of anti-semitism to commit censorship only undermines any of the legitimacy of this tool.

I know many cartoonists around the world who have lost their job over false accusations. Steven Bell lost his job at the Guardian, for instance. Even dissident Israeli cartoonists have lost their jobs.

That's why I'm telling you there's a big difference between attacking the Jewish religion and the behaviour and occupation at the hands of a state.



"Power born of Dreams," (©Street Noise Books, 2021)



Images: "Power born of Dreams," (©Street Noise Books, 2021)



As Palestinians we have Jews, Christians, Muslims in our communities.

During WWII anti-semitism emerged here in Europe whilst Palestinians were sheltering Jews. We had nothing to do with it.

**On a different and less political note going back to your background, you read extensively outside the relative bubble of political cartoons? What is your exposure to the comic heritage of other countries?**

You might be shocked that I haven't read many comics. I came into comics through my master degree reviewing academic journals surrounding comics. Inside Palestine we really didn't have comics. That's why I started doing it for the next generation, so my people could have their own comics industry and tell their stories.

**Who are your inspirations? Can you also speak on the Palestinian exhibition, its significance and upcoming Palestinian talent to keep an eye on?**

Most Palestinian comics artists are political cartoonists. Most Palestinian and Arab political cartoonists are inspired by Naja Ali. He was killed in London in 1987 because he was supporting a Palestinian Liberation

movement and we still do not know who killed him. He inspired many Palestinian cartoonists, including myself.

There are many talented future artists. Some of them weren't shown in the exhibition.

This exhibition, however, is the first of its kind outside Palestine and I think it is very important as a concrete step to establish the Palestinian comics generation and their art.

**What are your plans for the future in terms of your life and career?**

Right now I am working on my PhD. Because right now, I have my Masters from the UK. I hope my PhD will be about comics, their art, and their storytelling in relation to these fields.

I am planning to publish a new book next week about the war in Gaza. It's

called 30 Seconds from Gaza and I'm already thinking of working on a second edition, but I'd like to decide the details of my PhD and what I want to do with it first.

I'm hoping to show it during my tour in Italy at an event showing what is happening during the war in Gaza and document this through my art.

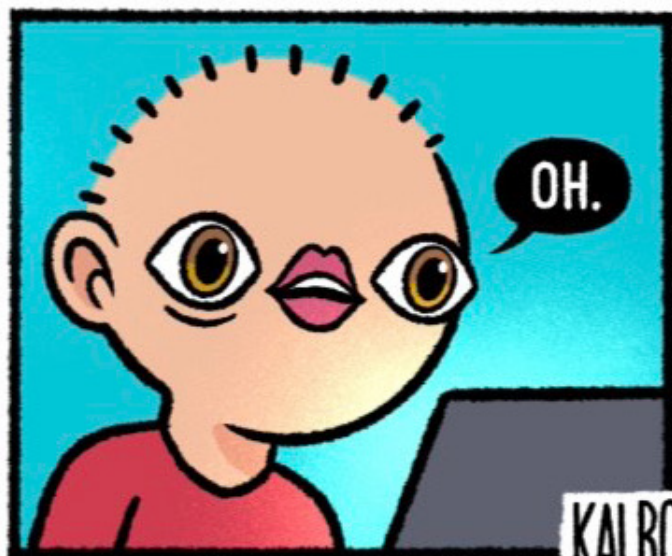
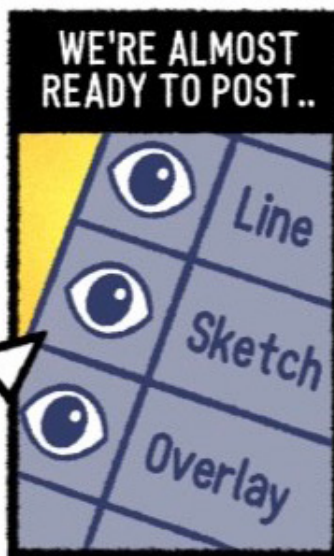
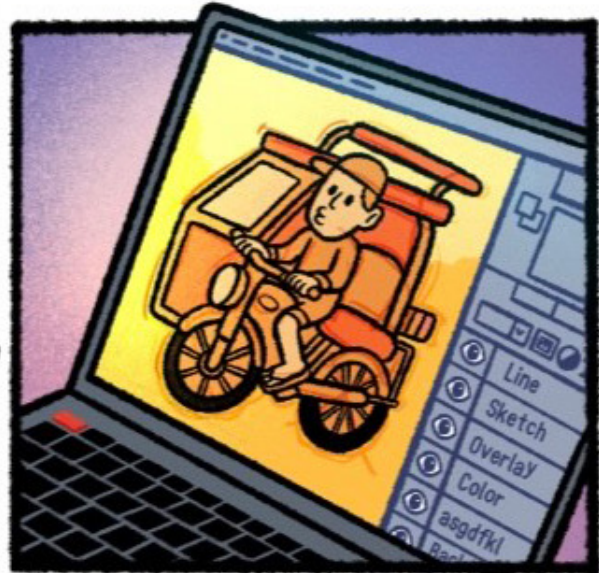
**“HERE ON THE SLOPES OF HILLS, FACING THE DUSK AND THE CANNON OF TIME  
CLOSE TO THE GARDENS OF BROKEN SHADOWS,  
WE DO WHAT PRISONERS DO,  
AND WHAT THE JOBLESS DO:  
WE CULTIVATE HOPE.”**

Under Siege, Mahmoud Darwish



BTL is delighted to present an exclusive strip from Kevin Raymundo.

# SKETCHY LAYER





# CAROL ADLAM AND THE RUSSIAN DETECTIVE



The Russian Detective is a highly original new graphic novel that you may not have heard about... Yet. We got together with its creator, Carol Adlam, at LICAF to learn about its creation.

"I grew up in Australia which is where I studied Russian as a youngster. Lots of people had emigrated there, including from the Soviet Union. I ended up teaching in Melbourne where I grew up. It's a really lovely, multicultural city. By sheer chance, nearly all of my teachers were Russian and offered Russian as a subject.

"I studied Russian from the age of about 11 and I carried on with it. So Russian has been an integral part of my life.

"When I was in my late teens I moved with my family to the UK. I went to university and studied Russian again. I ended up in Siberia and was there when the coup happened in 1991. Bad timing. I was in the middle of Siberia and was told that I wouldn't get back to the UK. So at that point I learned Russian properly! Something clicked in my mind that I might need it. Who knows what my parents thought! It

was before the days of mobile phones. Obviously, I did eventually get back to the UK and lectured in Russian.

"Then I left that behind because drawing was always my passion. So, I went and did an M.A. in illustration at the Cambridge School of Art about 12 years ago. and set myself up as a freelance illustrator and writer. And that's what I've been doing ever since.

"And one thing I've done all that time is make graphic novels, because I'm really interested in sequential narratives and visual storytelling. Books and comics are fantastic media.

"At that time I thought I'd finished with all things Russian. Then, a former colleague contacted me and asked me to do the cover of her book which was about 19th century Russian crime fiction. She had discovered about 40 crime novels which were really popular at that time. They had not been translated into English. And some of them had been written by women. There were actually a lot of female crimewriters at that time. so I went and researched this. We're talking here about Imperial Russia, of course.



"These works were all written about the same time as Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881). A lot of these works were in old script, so I slowly made my way through them. They were Pulp Fiction basically. So this developed into an adaptation project which was called Lost Detectives. It was based in Saint Andrews. I did this for four years with my colleague where I was adapting works. I did an audio play, a bit of a libretto, and this is when I started doing the graphic novel. Then I had an exhibition.

**"WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL, MY FATHER AND MOTHER USED TO GO TO FAIRS AND PERFORM ... AND I USED TO DO SALTO MORTALE AND ALL SORTS OF TRICKS ... BUT WHERE I COME FROM AND WHO I AM, I DO NOT KNOW ..."**

Charlotta Ivanova in *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov, [Translated by S. S. Koteliansky]



Cape became interested but everything was interrupted by the pandemic. Dan Franklin wrote to me to ask for the graphic novel to be sent to him. And Mary Talbot was very helpful. She contacted me through Stephen Holland. So there was a roundabout route to get to Jonathan Cape and it was really exciting.

"The story I based the graphic novel on was very monotonous, as most of them are. So I ended up really making my own story."

At this point Carol provided some spoilers which we shall gloss over...

"It's a locked room mystery, but I wasn't really interested in that, so I made a story about the actual circumstances and the crossover with the rise of journalism. Loads of periodicals sprang up at this time. At the time, women were used as undercover investigators. This is in the 1880s and 1890s. All these women were working in these early newspaper periodicals, but we don't know anything about them, so I made one up.

Charlotta Ivanova who's the name of the governess in Chekhov's Cherry Orchard. My Charlie is very mysterious. No one knows where she's from. She's a walking enigma. And she does magic tricks. Charlie Fox is sent to a place I made up called Nowheregrad between Moscow and Petersburg. She's been demoted from her job on the main newspaper. I based the newspaper on a real one, but I called it The Daily Balalaika.

"She has been sent to report on fashion rather than crime and because of the fashion angle, she is sent to a ball where the murder takes place. That bit is from the original text.



"One of the things I wanted to do was have an actual Peep Show from a model I made. What I was trying to do with this is focus on the visual culture of the time. So, there are woodcuts in my book too. I was trying to talk about the different ways to do things visually.

"Apart from the actual story about Charlie Fox, my book is also about all these different visual languages and different visual technologies. I take my characters to a magic lantern show which is also a way of retelling the murder. There's a Pepper's Ghost Illusion which I've done as a little instructional card: make your own Pepper's Ghost. And there's the Peep Show which I actually built which shows the actual moment of the murder as you're looking in through outside windows. At the end there's an anamorphic illusion, a magic mirror."

Jacobites used to make these to hide portraits of Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender.

"I'm really intrigued by all the different ways you can tell a story with secrets and illusions.

"The book is divided into five sections which are all about visual themes such as mirrors and reflections and projections. In the last section there's a reference to a Claud Mirror made of polished obsidian. Through a Glass Darkly, etc. The standard story is interrupted so that I can say, have a look at this. I invite you to go back and look again.

"There's even a joke about Shadows where Charlie's casting these shadows on the wall of the train but the shadows and her hands don't match up. This book is about: all is not what it seems."

If you don't already have this wonderful graphic novel, Carol has no doubt whetted your appetite. So, go and treat yourself to a highly original piece of sequential art.





# WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH FILIPINO COMICS?

Here at LICAF Central, one of our greatest friends and collaborators is Komiket in the Philippines. You may be unaware of the comics scene over there. In recent times, our eyes and minds have been opened to the incredible comics scene that flourishes in the Philippines and this article should hopefully give a flavour of that scene...

When the subject of comics around the world is under discussion, the Philippines is not the first country to come to mind. In fact, unless you know illustrators such as Francisco Coching, Nestor Redondo, or Alex Niño, Filipino comics are relatively unknown. Being an archipelago of islands makes it hard for Filipino creators to share their work to readers from other cities, and it's almost impossible to reach other Southeast Asian countries.



Despite its long and rich history since the 1920s, during its golden age Filipino komiks could be found on every street corner, until the sudden death of big newsprint publishers that couldn't compete with newer forms of foreign entertainment. And for the past two decades, Filipino komiks has been surviving through community events supported by independent creators and a handful of loyal readers.

Now, through the efforts of Komiket, a non-profit organization that advocates for Filipino komiks, Filipino komiks has been going beyond Manila to other provinces, breaking through in some Southeast Asian countries, and representing the Philippines in international book fairs and comics festivals around Europe.

## **Komiket's 10th Anniversary**

Since 2015, Komiket has been organizing comics art markets in the Philippines, growing its community of creators and readers, teaching Comic Book Creator's Workshops annually. During the pandemic, Komiket pivoted as a publisher with an online bookstore, and published comic books and graphic novels from its community.



## The Philippine International Comics Festival

Since 2020, the Philippine International Comics Festival (PICO) has been bridging international comics festivals, publishers, creators, critics, and scholars to the Philippines through its online festival. It's the only comics festival in the world with an Official Selection of ten graphic novel pitches, which are developed in a Creator's Lab with the authors, and then launched in time for the festival.

This 2024, it held its first festival in person, which had a comics market featuring Filipino and Southeast Asian creators, with Mollie Ray and Lucy Sullivan representing the UK, comics masterclasses led by international guests including Paul Gravett, and a comics exhibit featuring the Alamat Comics creators who started independent comics in the Philippines and inspired a whole new generation of creators today.

A few days prior to the festival, PICO held its first ever comics rights market, which is one of only three comics-specific rights markets in the world, the other two being at LICAF and Angoulême.

Next year, PICO will be held on July 5-6, 2025 in Manila, with its Comics Rights Market on July 3-4. PICO celebrates independent comics and its creators, and the Philippines is an English-speaking country, so many of the comics and graphic novels available are in English and others are available in Filipino languages. UK and International publishers interested in buying translation/publication rights of Filipino comics can avail themselves of a grant to attend the rights market, while British creators and publishers can apply for a free booth at the festival. Email [komiketinc@gmail.com](mailto:komiketinc@gmail.com) for inquiries.

## Guest of Honor at the Frankfurt Buchmesse 2025

One of the great things working in favor of Filipino komiks, is that the Philippines is the Guest of Honor at the Frankfurt Buchmesse in 2025, one of the biggest and most prestigious book fairs in the world. Prior to 2021, there was only Gerry Alanguilan's **Elmer** with an international edition in French and World English. In just three years of selling rights, there are now over 70 Filipino comics with international editions. Filipino comics with international editions will be displayed in the Philippine Pavilion, along with the newer titles for rights acquisition at the Philippine booth at the Comics Rights Center, and the National Stand.



Among the Filipino komiks about to be published around the world are:

**Sa Wala** (Nothing To Lose) is a story about a taxi driver who finds a mysterious chicken on the road. Due to the extraordinary strength of the chicken, the taxi driver wins in cockfights which helps keep him and his family out of debt. However, the chicken also shows a thirst for blood. The graphic novel is written and illustrated by 2024 Pulitzer Finalist Ten Galeno, will be available in French, German, Czech, Portuguese, Russian, Arabic, and Burmese.

**Alandal** by J. Philip Ignacio and 2022 Eisner Hall of Fame Awardee Alex Niño will be having World English, German, and Burmese editions. **Alandal** is set in the 1700s where the daughter of a Spanish conquistador gets kidnapped by pirates only to discover she's the granddaughter of the sultan of Sulu.

**Death Be Damned** by Mike Alcazaren, Noel Pascual, and AJ Bernardo is a horror-comedy where zombie farmers rise up from the dead and go on a killing spree with their exploitative landowners. It will have German, French, and World Arab editions.

**Strange Natives: The Forgotten Memories of a Forgetful Old Woman** by Paolo Herras and Jerico Marte is the story of Grasya, the last priestess of her bloodline, who can access memories that appear as butterflies. **Strange Natives** has French, Italian, and German editions.

**Tarantadong Kalbo: Nosebleed Edition** by Kevin Eric Raymundo. The LICAF Festival edition was launched at last September's festival in English. **Tarantadong Kalbo**, loosely translated as "Irreverent Baldy," is a collection of comics strips about Philippine and world politics, growing up in the 90s, and surviving as a creative in today's cut-throat industry. It's kiddie-version, **Baby TK** will be translated into Arabic.





# DARRYL CUNNINGHAM ON ELON MUSK

BY JOHN MCSHANE

Ask almost any American and they will say that Thomas Edison (1847-1931) was one of the greatest inventors of all time. Except that... He did not invent the lightbulb; that was based on the pioneering work of Warren de la Rue in 1840. Nor did he invent the Kinetograph/scope; most of that work was done by William Kennedy Laurie Dickson. And that it led to what we now call the cinema did not interest Edison until he realised it could make money. What Edison was good at was rushing to the patent office before any of his co-workers/employees. And he was good at one or two other things: he was a person who loved litigation and even intimidation.

"Edison muscle busted up shoots on New York City streets, shots were actually fired, actors fled, bullet holes were found in film magazines," according to Marc Norman in *What Happens Next: A History of American Screenwriting*. The "movie diaspora from the East Coast to the West was motivated chiefly to avoid Edison's goons."

Elon Musk did not build the Hyperlink; that was employees of Virgin. Nor was it even an original idea - on 18th August 1825, in *The Northern Looking Glass*, the Vacuum Tube Company announced their version. And Musk did not come up with the electric car, Twitter, or

spacecraft - all invented by other people who are given proper credit in Darryl Cunningham's new book. Take page 171, for example:

"For the general public, his fans, and the rather too naïve media, this billionaire is a real genius. Seeing the accomplishments of Space X and Tesla, some people imagine that he developed these enterprises by himself. But even a superficial study of the history of these businesses would allow you to discover the names of those who deserve as much praise as Musk or even more.

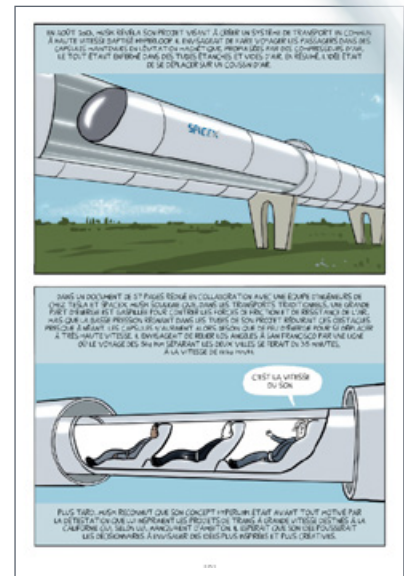
"Martin Eberhard and Mark Tarpenning, the founders of Tesla.

"J. B. Straudel, a founder of Tesla and its technical director.

"Franz von Holzhausen, chief designer of Tesla.

"Tom Mueller, the rocket engine designer of Space X." (You get the idea...)

But there's been a problem with this book. I do not know if what I have just quoted is an accurate account of what Darryl wrote for his latest book, *Elon Musk - Enquête sur un nouveau maître du monde*, Edition Delcourt 2024. Why is the title in French? Well, as of the composition of this article, no edition is available in English, either in the UK or USA.



Other books of his are readily available in English:

*Science Tales*, 2012, which debunks pseudoscience with clear explanations and illustrations.

*Supercrash: How to Hijack the Global Economy*, 2014, for those who want to learn about the philosophy of Ayn Rand and about what caused the 2008 financial crash.

*Graphic Science*, 2017, which investigates underappreciated scientists.

*Billionaires The Lives of the Rich and Powerful*, 2021, about Jeff Bezos, The Koch Brothers, and Rupert Murdoch.



**“DARRYL GIVES US THE AMMUNITION OF INFORMATION TO HELP US DECIDE HOW WE LIVE - HE IS MY OPEN UNIVERSITY.”**

Robin Ince

**“PUBLISH AND BE DAMNED!”**

as the Duke of Wellington said of his former mistress's blackmail attempt in 1824.

Putin's Russia, The Rise of a Dictator, 2021, about, eh, Putin's rise to become a dictator in Russia.

So, it comes as a bit of a shock to read in the Observer that "Darryl Cunningham blames fear of 'legal consequences' for reluctance to take on book, now only available in French."

Legal consequences? "Delcourt had lawyers go over every single word and picture to make sure there were no problems."

Do we really "live in a climate of fear"? When the publisher in the UK did not seem worried about Rupert Murdoch or even Putin?

The recent film The Apprentice, the Faustian tale of a young Donald Trump and his devilish mentor Roy Cohn, was taken up in the USA only by a very small

distributor, so that the very people who should have watched it were likely unable to do so.

All this goes to show that LICAF's International Comics Rights Market is a timely addition to the Festival. Can't find a publisher for your graphic novel in the UK? There are lots of other markets available.

Darryl's books are, however, available on Amazon; the Kindle edition of Elon Musk is currently £13.99. If you can't read French, there's Google Translate and many other translation apps available. And, if you haven't yet read this important graphic novelist, all his other books are available there also.

Is publishing really in a worse state than it was in the 1820s? Publish and be damned!



To discover how much more Elon Musk has in common with Thomas Edison, check out the following podcast: [Elon's Spies on Tortoise Media app.](#)



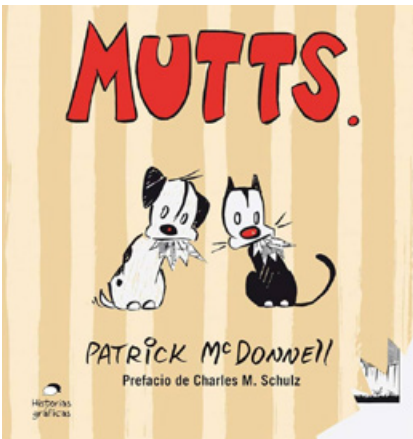
# DESERT ISLAND COMICS

WITH ANABELLE ARAUJO



Anabelle Araujo

Here are my Top Five artists and albums in reverse order:



### Number 5: *The Mutts* by Patrick McDonnell

I discovered Earl & Mooch in 1996, when Les Humanoids Associés published their adventures in French and I have remained a big fan ever since! I love following the adventures of the dog Earl and his cat friend Mooch, as well as their respective masters and mistresses. It's always very funny and witty. Patrick McDonnell is a true lover of animals and nature; he invites us, in each strip, to take a kind and amused look at our relationship with our furry and feathered companions. It's one of the rare series that I reread (even though I almost never reread) and which brought me a lot of joy and sweetness during confinement. An essential read on a desert island!



### Number 4: *Senso* by Alfred

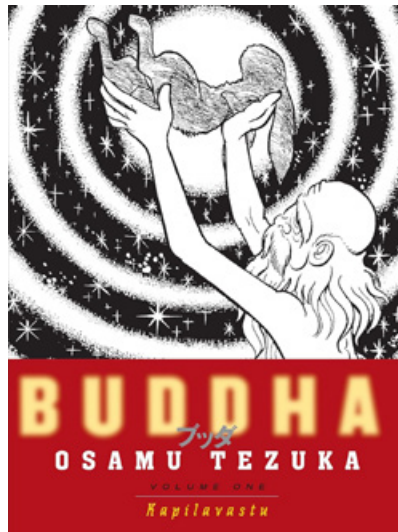
Alfred is a young French author who won, with the graphic novel *Come Prima*, the prize for best album – Fauve d'Or d'Angoulême 2014. I have had the pleasure of following his career from the very beginning and he is a special author in my heart.

The *Senso* album is part of what he calls his Italian Trilogy and is therefore the second opus of stories that have Italy in common. This comic strip talks about Love, the magical meeting of a man and a woman, and the chances of life. Alfred's line is elegant, sensitive and delicate, it is poetry in images, a waking dream.



**Number 3: We3** by Grant Morrison and Frank Quitely

We had the pleasure of welcoming Frank Quitely recently to La Belle Adventure for a talk and a signing on the occasion of We3's 20th anniversary. This album is a "must read" and marks, for me, the History of the 9th Art. Grant Morrison's story of these animals transformed into weapons of war who fight for their freedom, is brilliant in narrative construction. Frank Quitely knew how to transcribe the darkness and the glimmer of hope, by pushing the codes of Comics to the extreme and inventing his own language. I like this requirement, the audacity and the risk-taking of constantly challenging oneself to serve the story and the message that results from it. It's the mark of great artists and Frank Quitely is undoubtedly one of them... and he's Scottish!

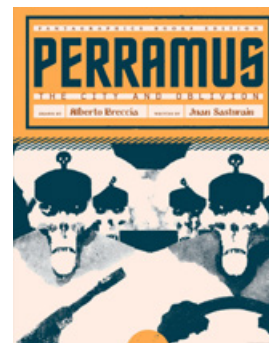


**Number 2: Buddha** by Osamu Tezuka

When I think of Buddha, I see the introductory scene with the rabbit. It's a terrible and magnificent moment at the same time... I was greatly "traumatized" by it, so much so that I can't read this passage without crying every time! This is the strength of the God of Manga, Osamu Tezuka is an amazing teller of incredible stories which can go from tragic to sublime, from cruel to gentle, from sinister to fun, all with this round line that characterizes him. In Buddha, we follow Siddhartha's destiny towards Enlightenment. Through this long initiatory journey, we discover a multitude of different characters and intersecting destinies. It is a wonderful saga that will surely bring me Peace on my desert island.

**Number 1: Perramus** by Alberto Breccia

More than 25 years ago, I already took part in the Desert Island Comics game and Alberto Breccia - with Perramus - was already my number 1. He is the absolute master for me! Beyond Breccia's virtuosity and graphic genius, it is above all the man and the artist's commitment that impresses me. Perramus particularly embodies the pugnacity of this Argentinian who, from 1982 to 1989, with the comics writer Juan Sasturain, produced this large fresco of more than 460 pages. It is a cry of protest against the dictatorship of the time which forced him to bury his original pages in his garden! It is also a tribute to Hector Oesterheld, his writer friend, who also worked with Hugo Pratt. Oesterheld disappeared without a trace and was a victim of the military violence of the time. I like to think that comics/graphic novels can be a weapon against injustice, that they educate and elevate us, that they amaze us and make us better... make us more attentive to what is happening and to the people around us.



I note that there are no female authors in this Top 5, so I would like to salute some young French creators who have the courage to tackle very intimate and serious subjects in graphic novel form. I recommend the reading of the graphic novels of the author and feminist activist Blanche Sabbah and in particular **Mythes & Meufs**, published by Dargaud, in the Mâtin collection. I also really like the graphic novels of Aude Mermilliod who talks about the intimacy of women with great kindness. **Le Choeur des Femmes** is an adaptation of the novel written by Martin Wincler and for me it is a "must-read" for all women and men of all ages in order to break the taboos around sexuality. Recently, author Alix Garin published

**Impénétrable**, a deeply intimate and moving story, which tells us about her liberating journey through the twists and turns of sexual disorders. A very brave and inspiring testimony.

I love discovering and reading this new generation of comics artists.

Now at 51 years old and with more than 30 years in the comics industry, it's very exciting to see the evolution of the 9th Art and these new artists. Our move to Scotland is also a wonderful opportunity, and a great joy for me, to discover the Scottish and British comics scene. This is the beginning of our Belle Adventure.



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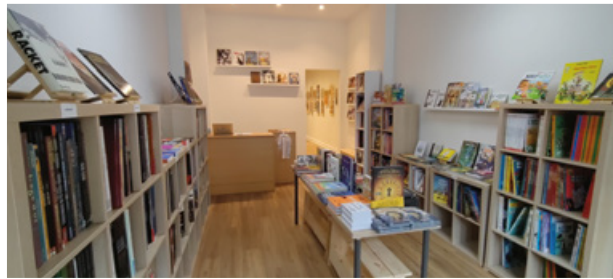
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