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New Indie Comic Anthology Full of Magic and Vancouver Talent



VANCOUVER –CANADA— 2012 has been a great year for comic fans in Vancouver. April welcomed 16, 780 costumed fans to the first Vancouver Fan Expo while May saw independent comic creators from all over Canada and the United States come to showcase their work at the first Vancouver Comic Arts Festival (VanCAF). As Shannon Campbell, organizer of VanCAF, said, Vancouver cartoonists “have a voice--one that is unique from cartoonists elsewhere in Canada.... Their passion and talent for comics makes their works engaging and one-of-a-kind.”

Now, Cloudscape Comics, a Vancouver collective of more than 60 indie artists and a driving force behind VanCaf, has **released its sixth anthology** — *Giants of Main Street*, described by Jason Wilkins of *Broken Frontier* as an excellent showcase of “the up-and-coming talents of comic book ‘Can-con,’ ... a giant of a book exploring the mysteries and magic of the inner cities of our imaginations.”

The *Giants of Main Street* launch party will be on Wednesday, August 1, from 6:00-8:00 PM at the Cultch, Vancouver East Cultural Centre, located at 1895 Venables, downtown. Cloudscape’s artists will be there selling and signing copies of *Giants* and Cloudscape’s other books. Furthermore, there will be a gallery displaying select comic art of various Cloudscape members. The event is free and all are welcomed to attend.

Giants of Main Street is a tome exploring the themes of fantasy and magic within an urban environment and with a cover illustrated by Steve LeCouilliard, creator of the popular comic strips *Una the Blade* and *Much the Miller’s Son*. Among the anthology’s contributors are such varied prominent artists as independent comics veteran Colin Upton, animator and illustrator Rebecca Dart, video game artist Edison Yan, VanCAF organizer Shannon Campbell, and Toren Atkinson, vocalist and lyricist for horror-themed rock band Darkest of the Hillside Thickets.

This graphic novel carries the reader through a multitude of fantastical cities inhabited by all manner of strange creatures, from the labyrinth of Minoan Crete where the Minotaur howls for understanding to an industrial slum where a panhandling monster yearns for respect and power, from communities ravaged by sorcerous wars to thriving metropolises preserved in bottles, from realities so unlike any we know to worlds that seem so

comfortingly familiar until we realize what lurks within the cracks. Anything imagined can be found here if you are brave enough to look.

Jeff Ellis, Cloudscape's founder, describes what inspired him to launch Cloudscape in the beginning: "I had a dream that I wanted to boost local comics in Vancouver, The next idea that came... [was] 'we have all of these artists making comics – rather than spending money to do our own individual works, why don't we work together and pool our resources to publish something?'"

In 2008, Cloudscape Comics published the graphic novel anthology *Robots, Pine Trees & Broken Hearts*, which was the first of what became yearly anthologies, each with its own theme. Now Cloudscape's membership is the largest of any BC comic society, including such diverse creators as manga artist Chloe Chan, book illustrator Scot Ritchie, Angela Melick of the popular humour webcomic *Wasted Talent*, and three receivers of the Xeric grant for graphic novels: Wei Li, Jonathon Dalton, and Steve LeCouilliard. Each member contributes his or her own style and artistic vision to the anthologies, resulting in a wide range of stories and style.

Giants of Main Street is available for purchase from the Cloudscape online store at <http://www.cloudscapecomics.com/store/> in both physical and electronic form and at select comic shops and bookstores.

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For more information, such as a media kit or copy of the book, contact Bevan Thomas by e-mail at bevan@bevanthomas.ca or by phone at 604-710-1659.

