

MN Comics

Paneled Pages from the Northland

If you are interested in purchasing a work of art from this exhibition, please contact a member of the Duluth Art Institute staff during regular office hours.
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Duluth Art Institute

With assistance from guest curator, Eric King

Morrison Gallery

June 18 - August 27, 2015

Gallery Talks:

Kate Vo Thi, August 4, 5:30 pm

David Beard and Tim Broman, August 21, 12 noon

Sponsored by the Depot Foundation



Newspaper strip artists have long dominated the Minnesota comic imagination. Legends like Charles Schulz grew to national and international prominence, while locally, R. D. Handy achieved national recognition as a newspaper cartoonist. (At left: *Duluth News Tribune* cartoon by R. D. Handy from 100 years ago — Oct. 23, 1913.) Chris Monroe has carried the mantle of beloved local strip artist with her statewide series *Violet Days* running in the *Star Tribune* since 1996.

The medium has grown, exploded, to express so many other kinds of stories. This exhibit showcases nationally recognized artists, raised in Minnesota, working in multiple genres. Clint Hillinski, Barbara Schulz and Brent Schoonover have worked in the action-adventure genres that we associate with comics: superheroes and science fiction, from *Superman* to *G. I Joe*.

Fantasy comics came to the fore in the last half of the 20th century, and works by Duluth creator Peter Gross (On *Unwritten* as well as sometimes working with fellow Duluthian Schulz on *Books of Magic*) exemplify the turn toward stories that enchant. Sci-Fi worlds are explored by many in the state as well as seen in Conrad Teves' series *Hollow*.

Comics can be used to tell true stories as well as fantastic ones. Emi and Jill Lyman are a mother and daughter team that is in the process of producing *Elliot Eleven*, a book that explores the role of gender in raising a child.

Barbara Schulz has been a prominent voice in autobiographical comics, with her *Hitchhiker Vinegaretttes* serving as “childhood memory sketches.” Powerfully inflected by questions of gender equity, *Hitchhiker Vinegaretttes* is about a girl growing up with a young divorced mother in the 1960s—what it was like to be that generation when you saw your mother working during World War II but then she had to go back to the house.”

Sometimes comics serve as a venue for artists to assert their own vision -- and facilitate the visions of the next generation. John Hoban's *Apocalypse City* is a powerful, individual, *self-published* work. The only element of John's work more powerful than his imagined world is his commitment to developing the skills of the next generation of artists. As one of the leaders of the Duluth Sketch Bomb, Hoban helps Duluthians find their voice in their pencil.

As you walk the halls of this exhibit, you are turning the page in Minnesota comic history. We invite you to share your memories of the comic medium with each other (and in the comment book at the end of the exhibit), and to consider picking up a pencil to explore what you can say on the paneled pages

- David Beard, Associate Professor of Rhetoric, UMD

Participating Artists

Peter Gross

Clint Helinski

John Hoban

Emi and Jill Lyman

Chris Monroe

Anders Nilsen

Conrad Teves

Barbara Schulz

Brent Schoonover