



Graphic Novels, Manga, and Anime: What's New and Cool for Your Library
ALA's Annual Conference, June 2006

GREAT GRAPHIC NOVELS

FOR CHILDREN UP TO AGE 10

AKIKO - Mark Crilley (Sirius Entertainment)

This series follows the adventures of fourth grade Japanese schoolgirl Akiko as she travels to the planet Smoo.

ASTERIX THE GAUL - Rene Goscinny and Albert Uderzo (Orion Books)

Hysterical historical adventures in ancient Gaul as Asterix and his fellow Gauls outwit the Roman legionnaires and others.

BABYMOUSE - Jennifer and Matthew Holm (Random House)

This new series follows Babymouse in her everyday adventures at school and with her friends and enemies.

HEROBEAR AND THE KID: THE INHERITANCE - Mike Kunkel (Astonish Books)

Tyler inherits a stuffed toy bear and a "broken" watch, but both lead him into adventures he never dreamed of before.

JACKIE AND THE SHADOW SNATCHER - Lawrence Di Fiori (Knopf)

When Jackie loses his shadow, he must confront the villainous Shadow Snatcher to rescue it.

THE LAND OF SOKMUNSTER - Mike Kunkel and Randy Heuser (Astonish Books)

Sam chases a sock through the lint catcher of his dryer and finds himself in the land where lost socks live and face the evil of the Moth King.

MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO - Hayao Miyazaki (Vis/Studio Ghibli)

This set of four volumes uses screen captures from Miyazaki's anime (animated film) to tell the story of two young sisters and their adventures with forest spirits during one magical year.

OWLY - Andy Runtan (Top Shelf Productions)

This series of nearly wordless books follow round little Owly, who makes friends with Wormy and they learn together what friendship really means.

WHAT'S MICHAEL? - Makoto Kobayashi (Dark Horse Comics)

This series of manga depicts the antics of the cat Michael and other animals and humans around him. Stories range from realistic to zany fantasy.

YOTSUBA&! - Kiyohiko Azuma (ADV Manga)

This series follows clueless, cute and charming little Yotsuba as she turns the neighborhood upside-down, learning what doorbells are for, how to play on a swing, hunt for cicadas, and more. The title is

pronounced yoh-tsoo-bah-toe and means Yotsuba and ...!

FOR PRETEENS AND YOUNGER TEENS, AGES 11-14

ALISON DARE, LITTLE MISS ADVENTURES - J. Torres (Oni Press)

In the two volumes so far, readers meet Alison, whose mother is a swashbuckling archeologist and whose father is a librarian (and super-hero!); naturally, Alison wants adventures of her own, and she finds them!

BONE - Jeff Smith (GRAPHIX)

This is the newly revised, full-color edition of the hugely popular series. It tells the story of the Bone cousins, Fone, Phoney, and Smiley, as they find adventure and suspense in the valley, along with stupid Rat Creatures who serve a sinister hooded figure.

CRYPTOZOO CREW - Allan Gross and Jerry Carr (NBM)

For those who like their adventure laced with lots of humor. Cryptozoologist Tork Darwyn hunts legendary creatures such as the Yeti and the chupacabra, usually accompanied by his science teacher wife, Tara (who often rescues Tork).

ELECTRIC GIRL - Michael Brennan (Slave Labor Graphics)

The three-volume series (so far) follows the adventures of Virginia, who has electrical powers, her cute dog Blammo, and the mischevious gremlin only Virginia and Blammo can see, Oogleeog.

HIKARU NO GO - Yumi Hotta (Viz/Shonen Jump)

Who would have thought the game of Go could be so popular? Sixth grader Hikaru accidentally bonds with the spirit of an ancient Go master, and the athletic boy soon displays a skill at Go that rivals the current masters. One other young Go expert wants to find out why Hikaru is so good.

KAMIKAZE KAITO JEANNE - Arina Tanemura (DC Comics/CMX)

Maron is a teenage school girl, but she's also a special agent who is the reincarnation of Joan of Arc; as Jeanne, she steals paintings that have been possessed by demons sent by the devil and purifies them. She has a rival, Kaito Sinbad, who is (unknown to her) Maron's classmate Chiaki.

LITTLE LULU - John Stanley and Irving Tripp (Dark Horse Comics)

Cartoonist Marge created Lulu Moppet in the 1940s; the comic books by Stanley and Tripp are being reprinted by Dark Horse Comics for yet another generation of comics readers.

TOMMYSAURUS REX - Doug TenNapel (Image Comics)

Sent to his grandad's farm for the summer after his dog dies, lonely Eli faces the local bullies, then makes an amazing find - a live tyrannosaurus rex! Naming it after his dog, Eli teaches the dinosaur tricks, then one bully's nasty prank goes wrong.

WHISTLE! - Daisuke Higuchi (Viz/Shonen Jump)

This series follows the intense efforts of Sho, who dreams of becoming a star soccer player. He's not very good yet, but he's willing to keep practicing and improve; his enthusiasm starts to ignite the soccer team at his new school - can they dare to dream big, too?

WJHC - Jane Smith Fisher (Wilson Place Comics)

WJHC are the call letters of the new student-run radio station at Jackson Hill High School. The crew, headed by Janey, aren't quite sure what they're doing, but they're having fun!

FOR OLDER TEENS, AGES 14-19

AZUMANGA DAIOH - Kiyohiko Azuma (ADV Manga)

Set in a suburban Japanese high school, here are the very episodic and hilarious stories of one home

room, from freshman through senior years, as the students deal with the ditziest teacher on record. This is a four-volume manga series.

FRUITS BASKET - Natsuki Takaya (Tokyopop)

Orphaned teen Tohru is befriended by the Sohma family, who give her a place to live. She soon discovers their secret: every member of the family turns into an animal of the Asian zodiac when hugged by a member of the opposite sex. She works hard to keep their secret even as she tries to help bitter Kyo, whose cat form is considered an outcast among the Sohma.

MARY JANE - Sean McKeever (Marvel Entertainment)

Here's the story of Spider-Man, told from the viewpoint of high school student Mary Jane Watson.

MEGATOKYO - Fred Gallagher (Dark Horse Comics; Vol. 4 to be published by CMX)

Inveterate gamer Largo and major otaku (total manga/anime geek) Piro travel to Japan on a whim, max out their credit cards on their passions, then find they don't have enough money to go home. Now they're stuck in Tokyo; Piro tries his hand at working retail while Largo starts obsessing about zombies from his game coming to "life" in the city.

NARUTO - Masashi Kishimoto (Viz/Shonen Jump)

Naruto has grown up an outcast in his ninja village, but that doesn't stop him from dreaming of becoming the top ninja, the Hokage. Not even the spirit of the nine-tailed fox demon trapped inside him will deter him.

NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF THE WIND - Hayao Miyazaki (Viz Media)

In a world devastated by ecological disaster, humanity survives on small pockets of livable land, surrounded by the waste. When war threatens the world again, Princess Nausicaa, of a small kingdom, may be the world's only hope, for she is the only one who communicates with the Ohmu, giant worms, and other strange creatures of the wastes. This is anime director Miyazaki's manga masterpiece, now available in seven volumes.

NEOTOPIA - Rod Espinosa (Antarctic Press)

In the world of Neotopia, ecological balance and peace came only at a hard price; now, the Empire of Krossos wants to bring back the bad old days and attacks the kingdom of Mathenia. The Duchess rallies the people, but ... wait, she isn't really the Duchess, but Nalyn, the servant girl, who now must continue to play the role thrust upon her by the real, selfish Duchess.

PERSEPOLIS - Marjane Satrapi (Pantheon)

In two volumes, Satrapi tells the story of her childhood and teen years, growing up in Iran in the years just before the revolution which toppled the Shah and established an Islamic government.

RUNAWAYS - Brian K. Vaughan (Marvel Entertainment)

Six teens who've been thrown together for years because their parents are all friends, find out one horrible night that their parents are actually super-villains; they all run away together, determined not to become like their parents. They also discover they each have super-powers, but they want to use them for good - if they can defeat their parents.

THE TALE OF ONE BAD RAT - Bryan Talbot (Dark Horse Comics)

Helen runs away from home in London, after years of sexual abuse by her father and nothing but recriminations from her mother; she has only a few things, including all her cherished Beatrix Potter books, her art pens and her pet rat. After her pet is killed and Helen barely escapes even more abuse, she makes her way to the Lakes District, where Beatrix Potter lived. With her imaginary giant rat companion and some helpful adults, Helen hopes to find healing.

FOR ADULTS

BATMAN: THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS - Frank Miller (DC Comics)

This book, originally published as a mini-series, revitalized Batman and the comics industry. Miller's Batman is older, Gotham City is worse than ever, and Superman is now on the side of the oppressive government.

GOON - Eric Powell (Dark Horse Comics)

This series brings back the humor in horror that one used to find in the old EC Comics. Goon and his buddy Franky battle zombies and other critters of the night, trying to keep their town kinda safe.

EX MACHINA - Brian K. Vaughan (DC/Wildstorm)

Matthew Hundred accidentally became a super-hero, but after a while that became boring, so he retired from super-hero work to run for mayor of New York City - and won the election. He still has his powers, but they can't do a whole lot of good when dealing with politics in the Big Apple.

A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE - John Wagner (DC Comics/Vertigo)

Tom McKenna ran a diner in a quiet little town, but one day he takes down two wanted killers who had come into his diner. He's a hero, but he's also a man with a secret past he wants to keep hidden, and the publicity brings unwanted attention from people in his past.

THE RABBI'S CAT - Joann Sfar (Pantheon)

In Algeria during the 1930s, the Rabbi's cat eats a parrot and gains the power of speech; his first demand is to be bar mitzvahed. Then the Rabbi's daughter meets a Parisian Jew, falls in love, marries, and the Rabbi and his cat travel to France to meet the in laws. This book is translated from the original French.

30 DAYS OF NIGHT - Steve Niles and Ben Templesmith (IDW)

In Barrow, Alaska, there is one month in the winter when the sun never rises; and this time around, a band of vampires has decided to take advantage of the month-long night to feast. All the town has in its defense is the husband and wife team of Sheriff and Deputy - how can they stand against vampires?

STRANGERS IN PARADISE - Terry Moore (Abstract Studios)

Francine, Katchoo, and David are three young people whose lives continually intertwine in varying relationships. Katchoo brings danger into the mix, when her past as a prostitute for a vengeful madam comes back to smack her in the face. And that's just part of the long-running story.

V FOR VENDETTA - Alan Moore (DC Comics)

In a future Britain ruled by a totalitarian government, the mysterious V - who always wears a Guy Fawkes mask - seeks to inspire rebellion and revolution.

THE WATCHMEN - Alan Moore (DC Comics)

In an alternate world in which Richard Nixon never had to resign from the U.S. Presidency, super-heroes had to give up being super-heroes. Years later, someone starts to kill them one by one. Who's doing it, why, and what purpose might they still have? This book has been chosen by various lists as the top graphic novel and one of the top ten fiction books of all time.

WE 3 - Grant Morrison (DC/Vertigo)

A clandestine government operation took three pets: a dog, a cat, and a rabbit - and turned them into armored, intelligent killing machines. When the operation shuts down, the animals are slated for death, but they decide to run away and find Home.