

Classics and Comics

Edited by George Kovacs (University of Toronto) and C. W. Marshall (University of British Columbia)

Proposals are invited for an edited volume to be entitled Classics and Comics.

Comics have been a major element of popular culture in North America, Europe, and Japan for over a century. For the past two decades comics have been regarded increasingly as a legitimate artistic and literary medium, through the emergence of the 'graphic novel' (developed literary narratives extending beyond the 22-page single-issue format) and through efforts of scholar/practitioners such as Will Eisner and Scott McCloud to define the relationship of the comic book to audience, artist, and other artistic media. So far there has been very little work integrating the medium into a larger understanding of Western artistic and literary culture. In *Classics and Comics*, we shall begin this work by presenting the first extended integration of comics with the foundations of western culture, in a collection of 12-18 chapters, each approximately 5000 words in length.

There are many examples of comics appropriating the classics, including Frank Miller's *300*, Neil Gaiman's *Sandman*, Eric Shanower's *Age of Bronze*, Bill Messner-Loebs' *Epicurus the Sage*, Fred van Lente's *Action Philosophers*, and Goscinny and Uderzo's *Asterix* series. Since at least 1939, comics have drawn (on) material from Greek and Roman myth, literature and history. At times the connection is cosmetic-as perhaps with Wonder Woman's Amazonian heritage-and at times it is almost irrelevant-as with Hercules' starfaring adventures in the 1982 Marvel miniseries. But all of these make implicit or explicit claims about the place of Classics in modern literary culture.

Classics and Comics will engage critically with the relationship between modern and ancient culture. This proposal will develop the 2008 Outreach panel of the American Philological Association, set to take place in Chicago in January. The response to the initial CFP was exceptionally strong, and the wide-ranging proposals were so clearly relevant to several aspects of reception studies, that it was evident that a critically engaged edited volume would break exciting new ground in Reception Studies.

The editors seek contributors who will examine the intersection between Classics and Comics from a variety of critical, theoretical, and cultural perspectives. This collection will be aimed at both academic readers and an educated general audience. We seek essays that are both scholarly and engaging, and authors who are equally comfortable in Greek, Latin, and the pre-Crisis history of the Justice League. Given the nature of our subject material, images are essential and contributors will be allowed the equivalent of three or four plates. A major

university press has expressed interest in the volume, dependant upon the final submissions.

Please send a 400-word abstract, along with a separate file containing your name, the abstract title, and a brief biographical statement (or CV), as email attachments in Word or Rich Text Format to both of the editors:

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Further questions may also be addressed to either of the editors. The deadline for abstract submission is November 15, 2007. Selected contributors will have until May 2008 for final submission.