

'WOT COMICS TAUGHT ME...' – DUNDEE COMICS DAY 2011

Judge Dredd creator John Wagner, and Frank Quietly, one of the world's most sought-after comics artists, are among the top names appearing at this year's Dundee Comics Day.

They are just two of a number of star names from the world of comics lined up for the event, which will see talks, exhibitions, book signings and workshops take place as part of this year's Dundee Literary Festival.

Wagner started his long career as a comics writer at DC Thomson in Dundee before going on to revolutionise British comics in the late 1970s with the creation of Judge Dredd. He is the creator of *Bogie Man*, and the graphic novel *A History of Violence*, and has written for many of the major publishers in the US.

Quietly has worked on *New X-Men*, *We3*, *All-Star Superman*, and *Batman and Robin*, as well as collaborating with some of the world's top comics writers such as Mark Millar, Grant Morrison, and Alan Grant. His stylish artwork has made him one of the most celebrated artists in the comics industry.

Wagner, Quietly and a host of other top industry talent will head to Dundee for the event, which will take place on Sunday, 30th October. Comics Day 2011 will be asking the question, what can comics teach us?

Among the other leading industry figures giving their views on that subject will be former DC Thomson, Marvel, Dark Horse and DC Comics artist Cam Kennedy, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design graduate Colin MacNeil, who worked on various 2000AD and Marvel and DC Comics publications, such as Conan and Batman, and Robbie Morrison, creator of Nikolai Dante, one of the most beloved characters in recent British comics.

Noted comics historian Paul Gravett will be talking about his new book *1001 Comics You Must Read Before You Die*, as will Martin Conaghan and Will Pickering, the creators of the *Burke & Hare* graphic novel, and Montynero, creator of a forthcoming new comics, *Death Sentence*. Phil Vaughan and Jamie Bryan, who work on the interface between comic, computer games and animation, will also take part.

Dr Chris Murray, event organiser and Mlitt in Comic Studies programme leader at the University of Dundee, said this year's theme is intended to provoke discussion of comics as educational and instructive tools, and to consider what top creators have learned about the medium, and from the medium of comics, over the course of their careers.

"We have managed to put together an absolutely fantastic line-up of renowned international speakers that we're very excited about," he said. "John Wagner, Frank Quietly and the other speakers are some of the most sought-after names in the industry so we're delighted to be able to welcome them to Comics Day 2011.

"The speakers will reveal what they have learned from a career in comics, and will share their thoughts on the instructive potential of the comics medium. This is timely as the University is currently leading the way in this emerging academic field, with modules on comics at undergraduate level and the UK's first MLitt in Comics Studies.

"Dundee is an appropriate location for these innovations as it is one of the great powerhouses of comics production, not just in the UK, but internationally. Dundee Comics Day exists to draw attention to Dundee's important role in the history of comics, and to bring together artists, writers and other professionals involved in the comics industry to celebrate the comics medium in all its forms."

An exhibition of artwork and rarely seen items from the popular DC Thomson war comic Commando accompanies the event. Commando is currently celebrating its 50th anniversary.

'Wot Comics Taught Me...Dundee Comics Day 2011' takes place at the D'Arcy Thompson Lecture Theatre, University of Dundee, from 11am-6.00pm on Sunday, 30th October.

This is the fourth Dundee Comics Day, and previous programmes have featured speakers such as Warren Ellis, Bryan Talbot, Alan Grant, Alan Davis, Pat Mills, Dez Skinn, Rian Hughes, Nana Li, Gary Erskine, Hunt Emerson, Metaphrog, Keith Robson, Ilya, Emma Vieceli, Morris Heggie, Bill McLoughlin, and David Bishop.

Comics Day talks are designed to appeal to everyone with an interest in comics from comics fans of all ages to those with a scholarly interest in the medium. The conference fee is £10 for the whole day, including refreshments.

There is a £5 concession for children under 13. More information about Comics Day is available by contacting Dr Chris Murray at c.murray@dundee.ac.uk.

Tickets are available from Literary Dundee, 5th Floor Tower Building, University of Dundee, from Overgate and Dundee Contemporary Arts.

They can also be purchased by calling 01382 384413 or visiting www.literarydundee.co.uk.