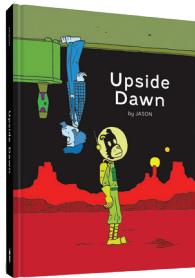
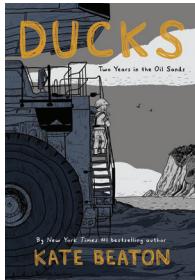


GRAPHIC NOVELS

BY TOM BATTEN, MELISSA DEWILD & NEAL WYATT

Beaton, Kate. Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands. Drawn & Quarterly. ISBN 9781770462892.

After graduating from college burdened with debt, 21-year-old Beaton leaves Nova Scotia to work in northern Canada's oil sands. As she moves between job sites and positions over the next two years, she discovers the physical and mental toll of performing grueling labor in harsh conditions, comes to understand the environmental havoc created by petroleum dependence, and endures rampant sexism and misogyny. An unflinchingly honest, unforgettable depiction of capitalism's dehumanizing effects.



DeForge, Michael. Birds of Maine. Drawn & Quarterly. ISBN 9781770465664.

DeForge adds to his reputation as one of the most thoughtful and imaginative cartoonists working today with this collection of more than 400 single-page strips depicting the lives of birds who have abandoned Earth to establish a utopian society on the moon. DeForge's satire can be hilariously cutting but is made more impactful by the sense that he's driven less by anger than by compassion for characters who yearn to transcend the absurd, faltering systems that ensnare them.

Jason. Upside Dawn. Fantagraphics. ISBN 9781683966524.

Norwegian cartoonist Jason's virtuosic storytelling and idiosyncratic perspective remain as compelling as ever in this playfully experimental collection. Whether reimagining Ulysses

as a thriller about Leopold Bloom and a one-eyed assassin racing to obtain top-secret information or depicting a date between mismatched lonely hearts in increasingly incongruous styles to emphasize their inability to connect, Jason's ability to blend elements of absurdity, deadpan humor, and melancholy results in a thrilling, unique reading experience.

Khan, Sabba. What Is Home, Mum?: A Memoir. Street Noise. ISBN 9781951491178.

Mixing lyrical, meditative prose with personal and intimate questions of self and family, Khan offers a powerful reflection on life as a member of the Kashmiri diaspora in London. She creates metaphorical imagery that fractures, wraps, folds, and flows into and out of itself. Hand-lettered text spills across the pages, each variously designed, resulting in a cacophony that reflects mood and event with force. At all times illuminating and multifaceted, the work rewards close and repeated reading.

Murasaki, Yamada. Talk to My Back. Drawn & Quarterly. tr. from Japanese by Ryan Holmberg. ISBN 9781770465633.

A middle-class Japanese woman in the early 1980s struggles to define herself as something other than a caretaker for her children and husband in this newly translated masterwork from one of alternative manga's most important and influential figures. Yamada (who passed away in 2009) reveals her protagonist's inner life through poetic prose and fluid,

expressive linework reminiscent of fashion illustration but keyed to depict complex emotion. A brilliantly realized, insightful character study.

Ross, Alex. Fantastic Four: Full Circle. Abrams ComicArts. ISBN 9781419761676.

The Fantastic Four explore the treacherous antimatter universe known as the Negative Zone in acclaimed creator Ross's debut as both author and illustrator of a long-form graphic novel. Ross presents a range of uniquely nightmarish settings and powerfully dynamic action sequences with tight linework painted in a color palette heavy on fluorescent purple and green, eerie blue, and warm shades of orange to create a distinctive pop-art masterpiece that must be seen to be believed.

Spurrier, Si (text) & Matias Bergara (illus.). Step by Bloody Step. Image Comics. ISBN 9781534322387.

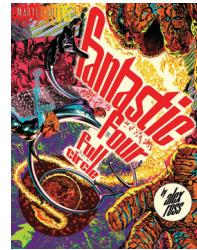
A young girl and a fearsome, armored warrior journey through harsh terrain abounding with vicious monsters, ushered along by a magical wind that prevents them from straying from the path or taking shelter in any one place for too long. This astonishing feat of graphic narrative features richly developed characters and a profoundly moving climax through illustrator Bergara's masterly visual storytelling alone, unaccompanied by text or dialogue.

Tynion IV, James (text) & Álvaro Martínez Bueno (illus.). The Nice House on the Lake, Vol. 1. DC Comics. ISBN 9781779514349.

An oddly inscrutable, loyal man named Walter invites his 10 closest friends for a getaway at his lake house in Wisconsin. It's so much fun, they wish they could stay there forever—and they just might, if Walter gets his way. A breathlessly thrilling, completely engrossing horror story rendered in exquisitely atmospheric illustration, as well as a provocative meditation on what it takes to stay alive, and to stay human, in a collapsing world.

V, Ram. The Many Deaths of Laila Starr. BOOM! Studios. ISBN 9781684158058.

When the Goddess of Death learns that a child destined to one day unlock the secret of eternal life has just been born, she travels to Earth in the form of a recently deceased woman named Laila Starr to stop him from rendering her obsolete. A passionate and refreshingly unsentimental fable examining whether it's the inevitability of death or the experience of being alive in and of itself that gives life meaning.



Woodring, Jim. One Beautiful Spring Day. Fantagraphics. ISBN 9781683965558.

A bucktoothed, pantomiming everyman endures a series of calamitous misadventures that find him rebelling against the management of a bizarre factory, becoming smitten with an erratic female counterpart he finds in the middle of a mysterious jungle, and attempting to rescue his doglike companions from an enormous, writhing entity. Woodring's classic animation-influenced cartooning creates a sense of fluid motion between panels bursting with fantastic imagery. This hallucinatory adventure resonates with the intensity of raw self-disclosure.