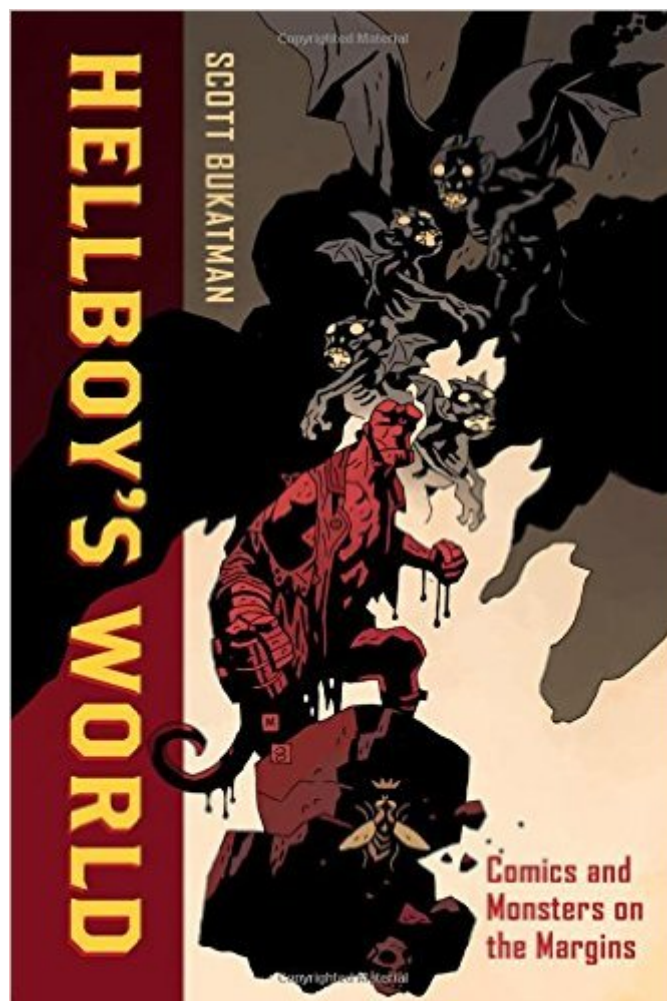


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Hellboy's World: Comics And Monsters On The Margins



Synopsis

Hellboy, Mike Mignola's famed comic book demon hunter, wanders through a haunting and horrific world steeped in the history of weird fictions and wide-ranging folklores. Hellboy's World shows how our engagement with Hellboy's world is a highly aestheticized encounter with comics and their materiality. Scott Bukatman's dynamic study explores how comics produce a heightened "adventure of reading" in which syntheses of image and word, image sequences, and serial narratives create compelling worlds for the reader's imagination to inhabit. Drawing upon other media "including children's books, sculpture, pulp fiction, cinema, graphic design, painting, and illuminated manuscripts" Bukatman reveals the mechanics of creating a world on the page. He also demonstrates the pleasurable and multiple complexities of the reader's experience, invoking the riotous colors of comics that elude rationality and control and delving into shared fictional universes and occult detection, the horror genre and the evocation of the sublime, and the place of abstraction in Mignola's art. Monsters populate the world of Hellboy comics, but Bukatman argues that comics are themselves little monsters, unruly sites of sensory and cognitive pleasures that exist, happily, on the margins. The book is not only a treat for Hellboy fans, but it will entice anyone interested in the medium of comics and the art of reading.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The author misidentifies Mike Carey, author of THE UNWRITTEN, calling him "Peter Carey," no doubt conflating the author and the principal artist on the series, Peter Gross. The artist Jerome

Opeña is given as "Joseph Opena." These minor errors aside, the quality of analysis in each of the essays that comprise the book's chapters is good. The author indulges in cutesy, self-conscious colloquialisms from time to time, but he has done his pop culture homework and understands his critical sources, though the arguments presented are more on the level of a grad student's, rather than a professor's, in my opinion. (Bukatman is Professor of Film and Media Studies at Stanford University). That said, if you have more than a passing admiration for Mike Mignola's 30+ years working in the graphic storytelling form, this book makes a strong case for Hellboy and the Mignolaverse as the most ambitious and satisfying "shared universe" experiment in modern popular culture.

If you read comics, and suspect a whole other world informing all the decisions that end up on the page, this is an in depth view into one of those worlds.

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