

News Release

For Immediate Release

MDA launches graphic novels under First Time Writers and Illustrators Publishing Initiative

New Scheme IGNITE to further the creation of Singapore comics

20 August 2009 – The Media Development Authority of Singapore (MDA) today announced the launch of eight locally-produced graphic novels by first-time creators. Supported under the First Time Writers and Illustrators Publishing Initiative (FTWIPI) to help local authors get their maiden works published, the graphic novels cover a range of genres from science fiction to fantasy to action adventure (see appendix for details).

An initiative by MDA in collaboration with Chuang Yi Publishing to nurture talents in the publishing industry, the FTWIPI (Comic and Graphic Novel) provides support of \$8,000 to each successful applicant. The recipients were given the opportunity to embark on a mentorship programme with Chuang Yi Publishing to produce the graphic novels. Along the way, they picked up technical know how such as writing, inking, pencilling, colouring and layout, as well as gained rare insights into the business and operational aspects of the comic publishing industry. The graphic novels can be purchased directly from Chuang Yi Publishing, as well as from major book outlets such as Times, Kinokuniya and Big Bookshop.

The eight graphic novelists join a growing list of local writers and illustrators supported by the FTWIPI since its inception in 2005. Since then, MDA has helped support the publication of 53 new works by first time writers.

Mr Kenneth Tan, Director of Film, Animation and Publishing, commented that MDA wants to encourage the creation of new content from talented local graphic novelists and put Singapore's publishing sector on the world stage.

"There are many publishing talents in Singapore waiting to be uncovered. Through FTWIPI, we are able to help discover these hidden talents and help develop their ideas into viable intellectual properties exportable to both local and international markets," he said.

Moving ahead, MDA has partnered the Association of Comic Artists (Singapore) (ACAS) this year to introduce the Inaugural Graphic Novel Initiative (IGNITE!) which will develop talents and original works for the Singapore comic scene. IGNITE! is the latest initiative launched under FTWIPI.

Under IGNITE, 10 different teams, each consisting of writers and illustrators, will be provided \$5,000 each to create their maiden comic books short stories. The teams will spend the next two months working with mentors from ACAS to create ten 24 page comics to be published into two 144-page anthologies, scheduled to be launched at the Singapore Writers Festival later this year.

"The aim of IGNITE! is to generate a creative dialogue among fans, budding writers, artists, published writers and artists, and publishers/sponsors, in order to support and develop the Singapore comic scene to an internationally comparable level. IGNITE! is also a platform for Singapore talents to create original intellectual property that can travel across multiple media platforms," said Mr Jerry Hinds, President of ACAS.

In recent years, comics and graphic novels have gained tremendous popularity in Singapore and around the world. With the success of Hollywood movies based on comics and the influx of Japanese Manga, comics' sales have boosted and opened the market to an international demographic. Singapore companies which have made headway into this area include Storm Lion, Imaginary Friends Studios and TCZ Studio.

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Media Development Authority of Singapore (MDA)

Formed in 2003, the Media Development Authority of Singapore (MDA) plays a vital role in transforming Singapore into a Trusted Global Capital for New Asia Media. MDA spearheads initiatives that promote industry growth in film, television, radio, publishing, music, games, animation and Interactive Digital Media. At the same time, in ensuring clear and consistent regulatory policies and guidelines, MDA helps to foster a pro-business environment for industry players and increase media choices for consumers. For more information, visit www.mda.gov.sg and www.smf.sg.

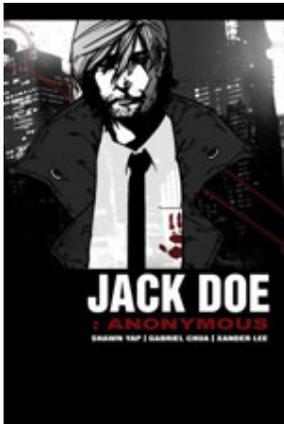
Chuang Yi Publishing

From its early inception in 1990, Chuang Yi positioned itself as a company specialising in manga (Japanese comic book) publications, with the goal of sharing with the local populace this unique storytelling art form, having recognised its popularity in Japan and Taiwan, and its potential to take off with equal fervour in Singapore. Over the years, Chuang Yi has successfully achieved its goal of promoting this "manga culture" not only locally, but also in countries like Australia, India and the Philippines, with several of her flagship titles like "Pokemon", "Slam Dunk" and "Fruits Basket". Currently, Chuang Yi is doing its part to groom local artists and share their creations with the rest of the world, with the confidence that our homegrown talents will put Singapore on the map.

Association of Comic Artists (Singapore) (ACAS)

ACAS was formed in 2005 by a group of professional & semi-professional Singapore-based cartoonists, all of whom had in their portfolio previously published work. ACAS has been active in workshops & seminars, promoting & demonstrating the artform of pictorial storytelling. Along with art competition judging tasks, ACAS has been visible in much local media promoting the positives that come from comics. 2009 has seen even greater involvement with the Association's drive to ensure local or locally connected talent see their work in the international marketplace. So much so, we are currently undergoing a slight name adjustment, which means adjusting the word 'Artists', to 'Artistes' – we are keen to include writers in our new drive, as well as general comic empowering design enthusiasts. Apart from prospects of publishing, ACAS now has a programme of liaising with numerous local vertical businesses, who are able to offer its members varying customer incentives.

APPENDIX



Jack Doe: Anonymous Creator: Shawn Yap

Synopsis:

Meet Jack Doe, Central City's most unknown detective. Protecting the city from the shadows. He solves cases no one else can. All but the murder of his father and the rest of his clan... For years he has been on a quest for the truth. Jaded after too many questions without answers, he is called out of anonymity when a close friend is killed. But what starts out to be an ordinary murder unravels to become a conspiracy that could bring him closer than ever to the answers he had been searching for, Now, more than ever, he realises that he must live up to the legacy of his forefathers. Or risk being the last son to bear the anonymous name.



Lament Creator: Hu Jingxuan

Synopsis:

"Like the aftermath of apocalypse, angels stripped of their voices and heaven laid waste..."

Below, lost souls of the underworld grow restless... their murmurs, once silent, now overwhelm the senses with their deafening cries. As the sins of the mother who forsook her humanity to serve her new master are passed on to her accursed newborn, sixteen years on, the devil's spawn walks on human soil unaware of his fate, even as ominous signs hint of his eventual awakening... the day when the dark apostle crosses over and devours the world...



Monsters Everywhere! Creator: Kelvin Kee

Synopsis:

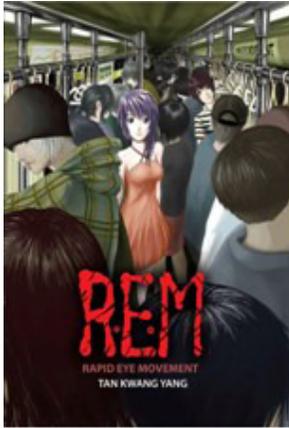
Freakish monsters, ridiculously powerful weaponry, and one angry ape. Just another ordinary day for Young Warren and Alison Atom - humanity's first, last and only defence against monsters that have started terrorising the world. While monster fighting may seem daunting for the two teenage siblings, who have to struggle with their responsibilities while searching for their missing parents, no doubt some... err... questionable guidance from their mentor, Darwin the talking chimp, is what is needed to overcome their inexperience and insecurity. But wait! *Monsters? Ridiculously powerful weaponry? One angry ape?* Nothing ordinary about this for sure!



Atlas Creator: Alan Bay

Synopsis:

Captain Shane is a loud, brassy and cocky fighter who is always game for adventure, so imagine her delight when she and her crew are sent on an expedition by the king to investigate a series of disappearances happening on the eastern continent! Together with Bobus and Byte, Shane's faithful right-hand men, they must brave many challenges ahead; including sea monsters, strange poisonous bugs, an evil force that threatens to destroy the world... and Titus?! While battling creatures may be cakewalk to the crew, having to babysit an inexperienced young scribe following them around is a different matter altogether! Will Shane's biggest challenge be surviving the book nerd who messes up on his magic and knows nothing about the outside world? One thing's for sure... it's going to be one heck of an adventure!



R.E.M. Creator: Tan Kwang Yang

Synopsis:

Marilyn has dreams unlike others. The trauma of surviving a terrorist bomb attack left her memories in pieces, and horrific visions had started to haunt her in her sleep...as well as every other waking moment. When a serial killer is suddenly loose on the streets, her reality and subconscious start to blur. Is all this actually happening, or is it all in her head? More inexplicably, the detective investigating the murders seems more interested in digging into her past than solving the case, and appears to be connected to the girl in more ways than one...

Will Marilyn ever wake from this living nightmare before she goes out of her mind?

Mystery Investigators Five:

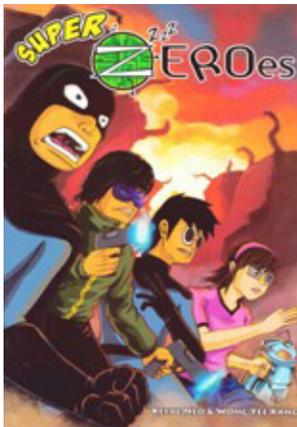


The Case of the Missing Golden Bird Mask

Creator: Rizal Wahap & Rhaime Wahap

Synopsis:

A mysterious new kid on the block, a stolen priceless artefact – join five best friends – Ahmad Zaki, Carmen, Prabhask, Pui Yeen and Wee Teck – as they embark on an adventure in solving the case of the missing golden bird mask of Rapa-Nui using their wit, ingenuity and humour.



Super Zeroes. Creator: Wong Yee Kang & Keeve Neo

Synopsis:

Superheroes. Made up of your not-so-average Zeroes. Meet Smarty Boy, Blurman, Speedy Girl and Hitman, the new breed of justice fighters for (pro-bono) hire! They may not be your typical Super, Bat or Spider--- but *man*, do they take their superhero responsibilities seriously! After all, Capital Zero needs to be kept safe from the clutches of their evil nemesis Dr. Black, and a slew of other misguided misfits that threaten the well-being of its peaceloving citizens, and neither professors nor zealous terrorists are going to stand in their way! Prepare for a madcap world of trouble, the Super Zeroes are here to save the day... whether you want them to or not!



Awaken. Creator: Ng Shi Kian

Synopsis:

Mundane. Ordinary. That was how life was meant to be like for the rest of Ori's life... or so he had thought. But on the night of his nineteenth birthday, his world takes a sharp dive into the bizarre... when he finds himself... a target for assassination?! As if getting caught in the middle of a fight between power-wielding beings isn't outrageous enough, Ori inexplicably shields his attacker from harm's way, only to wake up and find himself in a strange new land, and thrust into the thick of an inter-realm feud, where entire worlds – including his own – are at stake!

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