Written by Jorge Solis Tuesday, 28 February 2012 14:44



In Image Comics' ALPHA GIRL (#1 out now), a street smart punk finds herself lost in a zombie apocalypse. The year is 1984 and Judith Meyers has just watched a third-rate cosmetics company doom the entire world. The streets are littered with masses of flesh-hungry zombie women and violent men hunting after them. FANGORIA spoke with authors Jean-Paul Bonjour and Jeff Roenning about their experience working in the comic book industry, how artist Robert Love came onboard with the project, and what readers should expect from the mini-series.

FANGORIA: Tell me how the premise came about.

JEFF ROENNING: I did a horror film five or six years ago. When I was done, I wanted to do some zombie stuff. I wasn't sure if I wanted to do it on film. I cranked out a draft of a story about 130 pages. I gave it to Jean-Paul, and he and I started reworking it. That's how we got to where we are. The initial incept comes from a story out of China in 1990. I don't remember what they were producing. The men in the factory started growing breasts!

JEAN-PAUL BONJOUR: Jeff came to me with ALPHA GIRL and we started reworking the idea. We were thinking where it would best have a home. From a different sphere of influence, I know one particular person at Image, who's been a longtime friend of mine. She's always been into comics. She brought me to a comic book convention in early 2010. I've never been in that kind of world. From that point, I kinda had an idea that this was a great place to go. With San Diego Comic Con, the popularity of comics, a story like this in the comic book genre would be a hit. I don't know who made the suggestion; hers or mine? All of a sudden, we were landing a home with Image.

The process was a fun one too; attaching an artist, seeing that work get pre-visualized in concept art, taking the script and pitching it to Image. We put a press kit together, seeing if

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Image was interested in it. That's where we got publisher Eric Stephenson involved.

FANG: Tell me about your experience with ALPHA GIRL being your first comic book.

ROENNING: It's a lot different than I expected. I figured, we have a story hammered out, it's super-tight. We'll drop that off with the artist. We'll get some stuff back! We're good to go! It's a lot more work! In a lot of ways, it's been great and also interesting learning how to tell a story differently. That's been really cool. We work with great people at Image and artist Robert Love.

BONJOUR: All of the staff members at Image have facilitated things for us, walking through the process. From my standpoint, it's been easier. I'm surprised at how rapidly Robert Love is able to turn out pages and how open-minded he is to changes. Being a first-time creator is a high learning curve—the terminology and procedure—but it's been a really fun process. Now, we are thirteen months into the project and going to press. That's not bad! In the film and computer software industry, it takes four to five years for getting a release.

FANG: Tell me about setting the narrative in 1984.

ROENNING: There are a couple of reasons. We were kids in the 80s. That's a golden era for us. I love that time period a lot. We wanted to take down the technology level a little bit. There are no cell phones, no pagers, and no internet. Back in the 80s, the information thing was TV news or print. I like that, the isolation and the lack of information. We were both sold on that.

BONJOUR: For me, when Ice-T came out with POWER in the 80s, it had Jello Biafra, of the Dead Kennedys, talking over this megaphone about the end of the world. I'm reading sections of ALPHA GIRL—where the dissemblance of government still kind of exists in this fractured world with all this chaos—and I'm hearing Biafra's voice in my head. "Stay in your home. Do not come out." That's how I felt the 80's vibe.

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