



STRIP

Entertainment's irregular feature on the stuff great (& not so great) comics are made of.

By Cal Rifkin

Good day and welcome to another hip-hoppin' happenin' kind of STRIP section. This time, I've only got keen, neat, way-cool stuff to tell you about. I hope those of you who may prefer a bitchy critic won't be too disappointed. I promise that next time, I'll be as sour as 3 year old milk.



Arkham Asylum

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Arkham Asylum has been one of the most eagerly awaited comic events of recent years. It is a hardcover graphic novel 128 pages in length. It carries a hefty price tag of \$30.95, but, according to its sales figures, that does not seem to be deterring fans. Arkham is more the story of the asylum itself, than another Batman story. The asylum is in Gotham City and is home to the most dangerous, insane criminals. Most of whom are the Bat-guy's sworn enemies. Well, one bright day, in the middle of the night, they take over the asylum and offer to trade their hostages for a night with Bats. As the story unfolds, we are also brought into the mind of the asylum's founder, Amadeus Arkham, and the events unfold, revealing the deeper horrors within the asylum and within its residents. This is a chilling book, both terrifying and insightful.

December 1, 1989

AKIRA

This is one of the best comics on the market today. Akira is fast-paced, well thought out, and extremely varied in tone. Written and drawn by Katsuhiro Otomo, it originally ran in Japan's comics, but thanks to the folks at Epic Comics, it is also available to Western consumers of fine graphic eye-food. The story is set 38 years after WW3. Tokyo has been destroyed, and is still bearing the scars of the war. This is t'riffic, really t'riffic stuff, and I cannot recommend it highly enough. Each issue has a synopsis of what has gone before, so new readers can catch up. Try one of these on for size!



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Deadman

For those of you who may be Clive Barker or Stephen King fans, Deadman might be a good series for you. It's a 2 issue mini-series about a ghost in search of something to make him feel or at least to help him remember how it was to be, alive. Written by Mike Baron and illustrated by Kelley Jones, this looks to be one of the surprise hits of the winter. As Count Floyd would say, Scary stuff, kids! Haunted circus, ghosts, romance, jealousy, what more do you need?



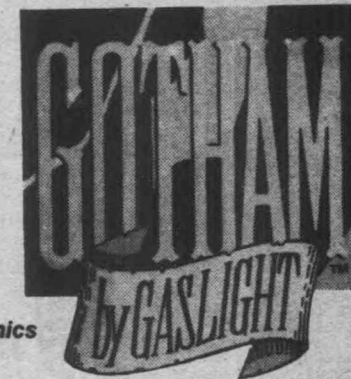
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Concrete

A former speech writer for an American politician is kidnapped by aliens while he was on a hunting trip. The aliens place his brain inside one of their own stone-like nearly indestructible bodies, while the alien mind inhabits his body. He escapes, still imprisoned in the alien body and is given a new job. The gov. "reveals" that he is a cyborg created by the U.S. Concrete is an amazing series. An interesting, thought-provoking peak into one man's psyche. Very honest, and more down to earth than one would expect. This is for those of you who've never liked comics.



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Gotham By Gaslight

This one is kind of neat. An imaginary story with the premise of "what would happen if Batman were born 100 years earlier?" Using the technology of the Victorian era, our intrepid manhunter sets out after Jack the Ripper, who has recently taken to the streets of Gotham. The story is well-plotted, but seems all too brief. The solution literally falls at Bat-dudes feet, but taken with a grain of sodium chloride, this is a really nice little story with great artwork by Mignola & Russel. You'll very likely be seeing one or two sequels to this, as I noticed a Joker-like character is introduced.

A Futile Attempt to Fill a Page



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