

# ANNUAL 4TH OF JULY SALE!

## 20% OFF EVERYTHING AT ALL THREE BIG PLANET STORES!

# O BIG PLANET ORBIT

Volume 11 #4

"News, reviews and opinions from the world of comics"

July 2007

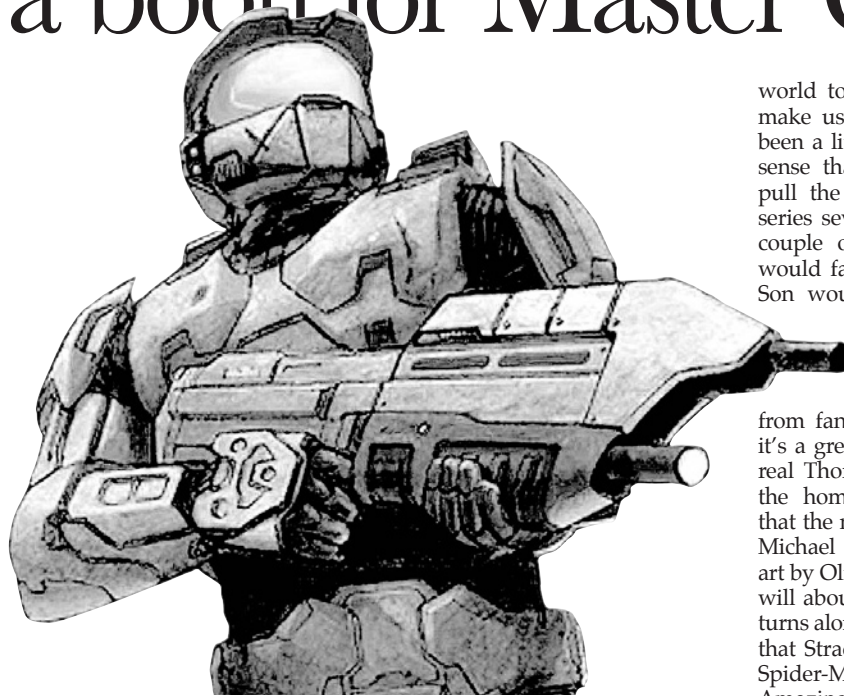
## Bendis a boon for Master Chief

By Ian Delaurentis

### Halo: Uprising #1 (of 4)

Comics based on toys, cartoons, bands, TV shows, movies and video games are risky business. For every successful adaptation like Star Wars, you get five failures like the Wu-Tang Clan comics. There are just so many things that can go wrong between the original source material and the creation of the actual comic. Sometimes a franchise just isn't meant to be made into comics. Other times, companies spend so much money obtaining the rights to do the book, they're left with nothing to hire the right creative team to make the project any good. There is a very incorrect mentality out there that you can put any kind of crap between the pages as long as the big recognizable logo is on the cover. Scores of cancelled books and silly amounts of wasted money can be directly traced to simply not having the creative juice to carry a series – it's the same basic rule that applies to all comics.

So if this ranting is all true, then why are we putting the new Halo comics on the cover of the newsletter? The answer is two words: Bendis & Maleev. Brian Michael Bendis and Alex Maleev are the Eisner Award-winning team that made Daredevil into a legend again, and their Halo: Uprising mini-series promises to



be something special. In addition to being a massively popular video game, Halo also has the right story elements to make for an interesting comic. Add that to the fact that Bendis and Maleev have been allowed to write the series as the official connection between the end of the last game and the upcoming Halo 3 and you're pretty much set.

Ah, but what if you don't care about video games? It doesn't matter. Bendis and Maleev are so good together that you won't

have to know a thing about who the Master Chief is or why he's battling against Covenant forces in space. Expect Halo: Uprising to read just as well to fans as it does to newcomers.

### Thor #1

The advertisement for this series proclaims: "Not a dream, not a hoax, not a clone...Thor hath returned!" Well thank goodness for that. It's been ages since Thor apparently met his demise, and while I give all the credit in the

world to Marvel's willingness to make us wait for his return, it's been a little too long. You got the sense that Marvel was ready to pull the trigger on a new Thor series several times over that last couple of years, but that plans would fall through and the Odin Son would be put back on the shelf. Then we got the Thor clone (or "Clhor") in Civil War and gasps of horror were heard from fans all over the world. So it's a great relief to finally see the real Thor back in action. Making the homecoming even better is that the new series is written by J. Michael Straczynski and features art by Oliver Copiel. Say what you will about some of the twists and turns along the way, but remember that Straczynski totally revamped Spider-Man when he took over on Amazing and his other work in comics has been some of the strongest in the industry for quite some time now.

Thor will pick up on some hints Straczynski dropped in Fantastic Four about where the God of Thunder has been hiding out. It's also going to be pretty interesting to see what Thor thinks about Civil War, Captain America being dead and that little thing where Reed Richards and Tony Stark created a murdering clone version of him. Get ready – this should be a great



**Green Lantern: Sinestro Corps Special 1**

This is the beginning of the big Sinestro Corps storyline that's going to be running through the Green Lantern titles this year. The set-up for this one is pretty simple: Sinestro puts together his own army of yellow ring wielding psychopaths to put an end to the Green Lantern Corps once and for all. Expect total mayhem and intense action as only writer Geoff Johns can deliver.

**Black Canary 1 & 2 (of 4)**  
**Green Arrow: Year One 1 & 2 (of 6)**

Expect big things this year from these two char-



acters. With the regular Green Arrow series on hiatus, we're getting these two mini-series in its place. Green Arrow: Year One is by The Losers creative team of Andy Diggle and artist Jock (one word...like Madonna or Ladronn...or Moebius...or Shaq). Birds of Prey fans will want to take note of all of the League of Assassins action in the Black Canary mini.

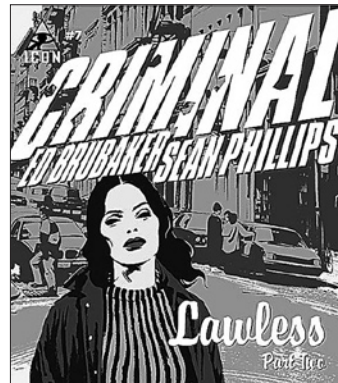


**The Facts.**  
By Ian DeLaurentis

**Alan Moore: The Complete WildC.A.T.S. TP**

Holy crap, is this awesome! Collecting Alan Moore's run on WildC.A.T.S. (#21-34 and a story from issue #50), this TP is a must-have for pretty much everybody. I'm betting there are a lot of you out there who haven't read these issues because you were put off by the title or didn't know the characters. You are totally missing out. In addition to an incredible

plot by Moore, you also get art by the mind-bending Travis Charest. Don't judge this book by its cover.



**Criminal #7 & 8**

These issues feature the start of a new story-arc in Ed Brubaker's awesome crime series. Each arc focuses on a new character and a new set of messed-up circumstances (think Sin City), so don't feel like it's too late to jump on board. Once you get hooked on this series you'll be happy to know that the first story arc is collected in Criminal Vol. 1: Coward.

**Thunderbolts: Desperate Measures**

The new Thunderbolts series by Warren Ellis is so awesome that I can't stop talking about it. I think I've mentioned it in the last three issues of Orbit. I gotta stop talking about how great Warren Ellis is on



Thunderbolts. Instead, let's focus on this special by Paul Jenkins that nicely complements the Ellis series. Thunderbolts: Desperate Measures focuses on Penance's suicide mission to take down the brutal, rogue law-enforcer Americop. Who the hell is Americop? I don't know either, but it sounds like there's gonna be a big fight so I'm in.

**World War Hulk Update:**

We just wanted to pass along a friendly reminder that the super-fantastic World War Hulk event runs through October. What's this mean? Well it means that we're getting five months of Hulk smashing the hell out of the rest of the heroes in the Marvel Universe. It also means that there are some crossovers to keep up with. While you certainly don't need to pick up everything to enjoy the story, you might want to keep an eye out for Iron Man #19 & 20, World War Hulk: X-Men #1-3, Avengers: The Initiative #4, and Incredible Hulk #107-110 in addition to World War Hulk #1-5.



Hello, Indyvillians! How's it going? Oh yeah? Awesome! Lot's of great stuff out recently, and a bunch of awesome looking stuff on the way (I'm looking at you, Incredible Change-Bots!). On with the books!

**Indyville**  
By Kevin Panetta



**Phonogram TP**

I talked about this before, but now it is available for all you floppy monthly pamphlet haters. If you don't know about Phonogram, it's a story about people who can make music (or, more specifically, Brit-Pop) into magic. So, pop in your Manic Street Preacher cassettes and enjoy!

**Uncle Scrooge Adventures: The Barks/Rosa Collection Volume 1**

Scrooge gets plenty of love from

Big Planet. And as far as Scrooge goes it doesn't get better than Carl Barks or Don Rosa. This first in a series of many (fingers



crossed) has two long-form Scrooge stories. The first story is a Barks classic, the second, a newer story by Rosa. Sand-

wiched in the middle is a Rosa commentary about the Barks story! Amazing! A must have for any fan of the ducks.

**Re-Gifters TP**

This book is not an independently published graphic novel. It is, though, an indy comic through and through! Dixie loves hapkido. (don't we all?) Unfortunately for her, of late she also loves Adam. He's all she can think about and her hapkido and everything else is getting all screwed up because of it. The same team that brought us My Faith in Frankie (Mike Carey, Sonny Liew, Marc Hempel) and DC have put together a fun romantic comedy that wouldn't look out of place with an Oni logo on it's spine.

That's all from me this month. L8er sk8ers.

# Captain America's Florida adventure

I remember the good old days when this section of the newsletter was just a space for me to make fun of unintentional innuendos on the covers of old comics. But these days, there are a bunch of blogs and a certain magazine that rhymes with "Tizard" using that format. Some of them do a nice job and others really suck at it.

So while I wrestle with the idea of whether or not I'm going to keep using old comics covers in this spot, I've been substituting other things that I find equally hilarious. This month I find Dr. Raymond Adamcik hilarious. The good doctor lives in Melbourne, Florida, and he was arrested a few months back for drug possession and groping a few women at a pub crawl. Now, I'm sure arrests like this happen on a nightly basis all over the country, but it turns out that Dr. Raymond was dressed like Captain America when the cops busted him.

For some reason, he also had a burrito and some drug paraphernalia stuffed down the front of his pants, which must have come as some surprise to the cop that did the cavity search. But wait – that's not even the strange part. When the police arrived on the scene they had to do an impromptu line-up outside of the bar because so many people were dressed like Captain America. What the hell is going on down in Melbourne? Cap's death must have had a deeper effect on the country than I expected.

I'm also off burritos for a while.

Journey  
into  
Astonishment  
By Ian Delaurentis



## Interview: The Pride of Niko Henrichon

Friend of Big Planet Chris McCall caught up with Pride of Baghdad artist Niko Henrichon to talk about Smurfs and Spider-Man. Here's how it went down:

**CM: What did you grow up reading?**

**NH:** I grew up reading more real books, without pictures, [laughs] and a few comics, but from Europe, like you call them the Smurfs.

**CM: The Smurfs...right.**

**NH:** I think they were the first comics that I've read. And after that there was Asterix and Tintin and all the Franco-Belgian stuff. So I was more into these kinds of books. And I discovered superheroes a lot of time after that when I .... Actually, I discovered superheroes approximately at the moment that I decided that I wanted to do comics for a living. So I got interested in all the kinds of comics that were available.

**CM: Were there any particular comics artists or works that influenced your artistic style?**

**NH:** First, there was Moebius. Yeah, definitely Moebius at the start. When I discovered him, I was like blown away and I didn't think that it was possible to do comics in that way because it's very free and creative and it's very original and he has a very distinctive style and that was the kind of comics that really sparked my interest from the start.

**CM: I wanted to talk a bit about Pride of Baghdad. First of all, the Harvey award nominations were just announced and Pride received**

**two nominations so congratulations for that.**

**NH:** Yeah, I saw that. Two nominations, that's great.

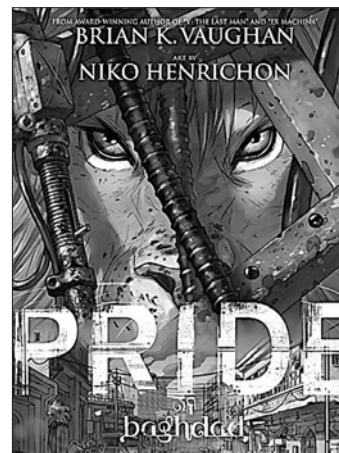
**CM: You were also recently nominated for an Eisner award as best artist. Did you start getting a lot of calls from publishers after that?**

**NH:** Not specifically. No, I started getting calls after Pride of Baghdad was released. The nomination, yeah, some publishers called me. Well, I can't say it was because of the Eisner nomination. I think if you win an Eisner, probably you get many people suddenly interested by your work. A nomination is probably not enough to get the big interest.

**CM: As to the story itself, there has been a lot of debate, I think, about the political aspect of the story. But it also reads a story of animals with some very recognizable human emotions. How do you prefer to think of the story?**

**NH:** Well, for me it's more a story about the people that live in Iraq more than the political thing. It's more about what the people live there. How they discovered that suddenly they were given freedom and I think of it as a very, very human story even if it's not humans that are in the story. I think it's really about the violence that these people are witnessing and are experiencing every day in a very dramatic way.

**CM: One of the things that made me realize what a good story it was just how strongly connected the reader becomes with the Pride and**



**identifies with them rather than with human beings in the story. It seemed like it was very intentional to make the reader identify with the pride. Were there any specific things you did artistically to accomplish that?**

**NH:** Well, we wanted to give the lions a very human feeling without being too much human. Certainly we know that the readers all fundamentally like animals so we think that giving animals the principal subject of the book, it gives to the reader a sentiment of, how can I say, everybody likes the animals in a general way.

**CM: I thought they were a very effective allegory.**

**NH:** Yes, that's it. People get more... When the animals are experiencing violence you can see that people are probably more affected by it than

people. We're used to seeing people die, you know, in movies and kind of getting used to it.

**CM: Do you have a favorite scene in Pride?**

**NH:** It's very difficult to... I like the fight between Zill and the bear. I think it's a very intense scene. It's a big confrontation. I think this might be the more intense scene for me.

**CM: Since Pride you've been doing mostly work with Marvel comics although Pride was with Vertigo. How in the world did DC let you get away to work for Marvel?**

**NH:** Well, DC didn't really let me get away. After Pride of Baghdad I've been called by Marvel and they made me an offer that I could not refuse. I wanted to try superheroes and, well, Marvel gives me that chance so I took it but I'm definitely not closing the door to DC and I probably will work again for them because they have so much good projects and good writers.

**CM: What do you have coming out next?**

**NH:** I just finished the Spider-man Fairy Tales book. I don't know if you've heard about that.

**CM: I hadn't heard about the Spider-man Fairy Tales issue before you mentioned it. When does that come out?**

**NH:** It's coming out in July actually. Next month. I just finished it. There was not a big publicity show about that. It's an underdog series for Marvel, not like Ultimate X-men, Ultimate Spider-man and all the big things.



## Come Meet Mike Carey!

Mike Carey, renowned writer of *Lucifer*, *X-Men*, *Re-Gifters*, *Hellblazer*, and many more, will be appearing at Big Planet Comics in Vienna, VA on Thursday, July 12th from 1 to 2 pm! He will also have copies of his brand new novel, *The Devil You Know*. For directions or questions, call 703-242-9412.

# Celebrating 10 years of Top Shelf

This summer, Top Shelf Productions is celebrating their 10th anniversary. This is quite an awesome accomplishment for an independent comics publisher. What makes it extra awesome is that Top Shelf is run by some of the best people you'll ever meet, and their books personify quality and dedication. I rarely do this, but I'd like to use this section to make you a little more aware of Top Shelf and all the cool stuff they do. Check it out, because no matter what type of comics fan you are, I guarantee that they publish a comic that you will love. So, without any further noise from me, here's a quick run-down of Top Shelf and a few of the books they having coming out soon — all of which you can find at Big Planet Comics.

From [www.topshelfcomix.com](http://www.topshelfcomix.com): TOP SHELF PRODUCTIONS publishes contemporary graphic novels and comics by artists of singular vision. Dedicated to championing veteran creators as well as finding and developing emerging talent, the Top Shelf library is anchored by such masters of the craft as Alan Moore (*From Hell*, with Eddie Campbell), *Lost Girls*, with Melinda Gebbie),

Craig Thompson (*Blankets*, *Carnet De Voyage*), Andy Runton (*Owly*), Jeffrey Brown (*Clumsy*, *Unlikely*), Alex Robinson (*Box Office Poison*, *Tricked*), James Kochalka (*American Elf*), Renée French (*The Ticking*, *Micrographica*), and many more.

Known for excellent production values, our handsomely crafted editions combine the best in reproduction techniques with a unique, inspired design sensibility. Never limiting ourselves in format or content, our catalogue includes all-ages material and cutting-edge erotica, genre fiction and autobiography, and all that exists in-between. The recipient of dozens of awards, we continue to bring superior stories and ideas to the ever-growing audience of the comics medium.

In this, our tenth year of publishing, the Top Shelf brand stands as a hallmark of quality — a fine addition to any connoisseur's library.

Coming this July from Top Shelf — and just as rad as the Transformers movie:

### Incredible Change-Bots

Far away in space, there is a planet full of robots able to change from robot form to vehicle form — the

Incredible Change-Bots! Leaving their war torn planet, the Change-Bots arrive on Earth, where their battle continues — BUT AT WHAT COST?!

Part parody, part nostalgic tribute, part moral fable — with *The Incredible Change-Bots*, Jeffrey Brown re-invents the shape changing robot genre into a heart stopping action comedy that's full of romance, half-drama, and epic battles! The first FULL-COLOR graphic novel from Jeffrey Brown is an all-ages friendly (one guy and some robots die) immersion into sci-fi fun.

Coming this August from Top Shelf — and not really related to the new Bourne Identity movie:

### Super Spy

*Super Spy* is a super-deluxe, full-color collection of 52 interwoven spy thrillers about cyanide, penguins, heartbreak and betrayal. Spanning the countries of Spain, France, and Germany during World War II, each story follows the everyday life of a spy, exploring their small lies and deceptions, as well as the larger secrets they hide. A children's book is something more than it seems; a woman swims the English Channel to deliver a deadly secret; a German spy desperately seeks escape for herself and her daughter; and a

spy continues to serve his country even beyond death. A gorgeous full-color graphic novel that not only reveals the nature of espionage, but how an individual can be lost in a world of lies and deception, and still manage to find redemption.

Coming this June from Top Shelf — and probably cool to read after you watch *Willy Wonka*:

### Death By Chocolate — Redux

Agent Swete — an unlikely hero comprised of organic chocolate and a member of the FBI's Food Crimes Division — and his sharp-tongued partner, Anderson, investigate a series of bizarre, food-inspired crimes. Along the way they encounter a variety of characters including an extraterrestrial canine named Geoffrey, writer Ernest Hemingway, an organized crime lord intent upon finding the life-enabling 'eternity pasta,' and an eerie, all-devouring trio known as The Metabolators. This collection includes the Xeric-grant awarded origin tale of Agent Swete, a never-before published *Death By Chocolate* tale, and an essay by Yurkovich on the creation of the series. Every page has been reworked by Yurkovich, making *Redux* the definitive edition of these stories.

### In Case You Were Wondering...

By Ian Delaurentis

**Big Planet Orbit** Volume 11 #4; July 2007 is published by Joel Pollack, Peter Casazza and Jared Smith for Big Planet Comics. [www.bigplanetcomics.com](http://www.bigplanetcomics.com).

**Big Planet Comics, Inc.** 4908 Fairmont Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814, 301.654.6856

**Big Planet Comics of VA Inc.** 426 Maple Ave. East, Vienna, VA 22180, 703.242.9412

**Big Planet Comics of DC Inc.** 3145 Dumbarton St. NW, Washington, DC 20007, 202.342.1961

