

SPACE ALIENS, BAD MOTHERS AND GUNS!

ISSUE No. 8

The Magazine



**LOVE, DEATH +
ROBOTS**

**TÓMAS ÁRNASON
MIDGARD 2019**

**CON-TRAVELER:
Part III**

FRITH : THE GAME

**COSPLAYER
OF THE
MONTH**

#SABMG

DERAVILLE

SISTERS

SPACE ALIENS, BAD MOTHERS AND GUNS!



FROM THE EDITOR

In this Issue...

We visit **Big Apple Comic Con**. This is old New York, The underground underworld of Comic Cons.

Then we update you on one of our most exciting places to visit as we interview **Tómas Árnason**, the new exhibitor manager for Iceland's all-inclusive event, **Midgard 2019**.

David Fincher's Adult Animated Anthology takes the narrative to the next level. **Sonise Lumbaca** give us her thoughts on **LOVE, DEATH + ROBOTS**.

Con-traveler rounds out the third and final part of our series on traveling to Comic Cons abroad.

We introduce **Frith** from Volume 2, 3 and upcoming Volume 4, of our novel *Space Aliens, Bad Mothers And Guns*.

Finally, there is our **Cosplayer of the Month!** Super talented super creative. So hang on tight and enjoy the ride! It's another space ship we've never driven before and we cannot wait to see the stops and majestic beings we'll meet along the way! As always, we welcome your feedback. Email us at deraville.sisters@gmail.com or DM us on Instagram [@spacealiensbadmothersguns](https://www.instagram.com/spacealiensbadmothersguns) OR [@SABMGOfficial](https://www.instagram.com/SABMGOfficial). We look forward to hearing from you all! Thanks for stopping by!



@sweette816



@outlaw2wlk

BIG APPLE COMIC CON

Article and Photographs by A.C. DeRaville

We are reminded how easily it is to think about Comic Cons all being the same as vendors, exhibitors, cosplayers and even attendees. Moving from one event to the next. Some working like conveyor belts at an automobile factory, others so disorganized that you swear never to return, again...but you do!

As an attendee you've saved up all of this money to purchase "the latest this or latest that." They don't have the one thing you are looking for, but you can't go bust so you buy the next best thing, paying much more than you wanted, especially since it is not your first choice. How annoyingly frustrating, but very gratifying at the same time - you didn't leave empty handed.

Exhibitors, artists, vendors, cosplayers and attendees, as much as we look forward to attending an event, sometimes we also wished we had sat this one out.

When it is so easy to get lost in a sea of vendors and exhibitors, you are reminded just why you are here. It's when you meet that one artist that is so excited and proud to show you his/her work and they don't even care if they make the sale. They want you to see that they are doing the one thing they love and are most passionate about in life and that one thing is creating. Creatives are complex people and each person is brilliant in his/ her own way. Their brilliance shines because by showing a complete stranger their work, by putting it all out there and opening it to much criticism, they have that

confidence and dare to ask you to "believe in me because I believe in me."

You are here to experience freely expressing yourself without fear.

And for those creatives, putting a satisfying smile on the face of that one kid that loves your version of their favorite superhero or anime character, carrying that last issue of that one comic that some guy flew across the country for, or saving enough money and putting in the blood, sweat and tears to create your cosplay, only to be met by awe-struck attendees, fighting to get that pic of you, *with* you, makes all of this worth it. (Con't)



@its.fabian



@pink.mason and @flawless_by_tenisha

This is what Big Apple Comic Con felt like. A floor filled with determined creatives. It is not like any other Comic Con we've attended. The crowd is much older, on all fronts both salty and gritty. Old school. They've been around the block a few times and it makes sense for an event that is over 20 years old. For some, this *is* their day job, while others are reaching with that last light of hope in them to "make it." There were a few that traveled great distances via train and then buses or vice versa, and others that live a couple of avenues over from the Penn Plaza Pavilion, where the event was held.

You come here with a purpose to get what you want and what you need. Not much lallygagging going on here.

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Now for the experience. There were panel events. One I actually had the opportunity to attend. I learned a lot. Here are some quick interesting facts. Captain Marvel was too much like Superman. DC Comics sued. At one point in the 1940s Superman was public domain, *Steamboat* was trying to appeal to a black audience, Tony the Tiger and Captain Marvel worked together and Superheroes are social justice warriors.

One surprise was seeing that Mary Wilson from The Supremes was in the house. We scratched our heads. Nonetheless, as I walked by her booth, there was an excited large crowd vying for her attention. I googled The Supremes to see if maybe there was a comic or some kind of animation showing a connection to the event. The only two things that stood out was The Supremes animation about a family of superheroes, with multiple powers and the superhero Supreme created by Rob Liefeld and published by Image Comics.

Luke Cage's, Michael Colter was present and we were disappointed not to get to see him. We were told that he appeared a few times but not long enough for us to catch him as we manned our exhibit space.

William Shatner, Captain James Tiberius Kirk arrived. We thought you could get a picture with him or a selfie like many did with Michael Colter, but understandably, there is always a security concern for that level of talent. Not to take away from Michael, but maybe since William Shatner has been around for a while, he's probably had a number of security scares warranting the limited interaction. Who knows? Autographed images were really the only thing available. Regardless, having a legendary icon like William Shatner at any comic con gives you some serious scifi street cred. Great job BACC!

I was fortunate enough to meet Chris Rankin, you may remember him as Percy Weasley, from the Harry Potter series. (Con't)

I laughed and appreciated how down to earth he came across, but I also lost interest because of the old guy with the long black hair that was either a Big Apple Comic Con volunteer or staffer that kept trying to block our conversation (standing in between me and Chris the whole time), once I said that I was not there to pay for a picture with Chris. I did have second thoughts about getting the picture, but decided not to. The old guy with the long black ponytail, kind of ruined the whole idea for me, but I did not let his presence ruin the overall moment. It was a pleasure meeting Mr. Rankin and age has been very kind to him despite his aging comment.

There were A LOT of people present. I have to say, I liked how the tables snaked around like a maze, making sure an attendee hits every area on the convention floor. BACC did an amazing job fostering interaction with this set up. As many vendors and exhibitors that there were, it was not hard to remember where anyone was set up. I was surprised that I was able to find where I was going because it was so crowded. But again, the set up was very well orchestrated.

The Big Apple Comic Con really is just that. It's straight up a comic book haven filled with mavens. These guys all talked comics. It was like going to a historical society to learn about the origins and direction this industry is moving towards. We were very impressed with how knowledgeable and "connected" these sellers and creatives were. That being said, one could easily be intimidated being in this sea of aficionados or one could capitalize on it and ingest the wisdom. We may have come across a few that would just "toss you in the waters" as a first time swimmer, while others took their time explaining trade secrets, offering up good sage advice.

Now, it doesn't boast many cosplayers like Anime Con, Baltimore Comic Con or New York Comic Con, but the level of creativity was definitely up there, especially running into Voltron and Carnage. Very impressive with the details of the cosplay. We did run into some of our fanbase in cosplay, who dropped by to show us support. @sweettee816 was there with her beautiful homemade cosplay. We also ran into @mighty_morphin_power_priestess who introduced us to @newyorkssixthranger.



@newyorkssixthranger and @mighty_morphin_power_priestess

Who could not ignore the botanically beautiful @primadonnacosplays as Poison Ivy? Then there were the two lovely cosplayers I ran into, heading towards the bathroom, flawless_by_tenisha and @pink.mason. They looked great and were so excited to be there! But our overall favorite was the throwback to Voltron by @outlaw2lk and we were excitingly scared by @its.fabian as Carnage.

Overall, it was a good time. We enjoyed the experience, met some great people and the venue was in an ideal spot. No complaints on the food since all the world's taste-buds are a few feet away. Our set up was quick along with our break down. Until next time, we are grateful for the Big Apple Comic Con experience and would like to thank the staff and organizers for the opportunity to participate. **End.**

Websites to know:

www.bigapplecc.com

www.spacealiensbadmothersandguns.com

CON-Travel: Comic Conventions Abroad



Article and Illustration by Sonise Lumbaca

So You Want To Participate In a Comic Con Abroad: Part III

Welcome to our final series of Comic Con Travel Aboard articles. In our previous issues we covered the things you might want to consider when traveling abroad to a Comic Con; everything from picking the right Comic Con and booking a flight and lodging, to in country transportation and the Comic Con specific items you may want to consider bringing. This issue we will go over some important requirements to consider like observing local customs, considerations for selling merchandise abroad at Comic Cons and some areas of interest you will definitely want to keep at the forefront so that you aren't caught in a bind.

As mentioned in the first two articles in this series, these considerations aren't the end all be all answers, nor are they written in stone, but they can be quite insightful and provide some great planning options. The information we impart in this issue on comic con travel and participation abroad, like previously, is targeted towards Artist Alley participants; but there is plenty to pull from here for cosplayers, vendors and other types of participants who wish to pursue their adventures at Comic Cons abroad.

Time To Spend: All About The Currency

While many countries will take payment in the form of foreign currency, the U.S. dollar being sometimes the most recognized, in some instance this is not always the case.

If you decide that you do not want to run up a credit

card bill (Oh by the way the major credit card companies tend to be universally recognized abroad), then currency conversion may be your best option.

This option may also allow you to manage your budget better (rather than the "unlimited" façade of the credit card). Also, at the Comic Con itself, chances are, the local will not be carrying your country's currency to make purchases, so unless you enjoy math and have a calculator handy, you should probably consider carrying local currency on you. You have three common options of converting your currency for the destination of your travel; have it converted while you are still home, wait until you are abroad to make the exchange, or do it through an ATM while abroad. There are others options, but we are highlighting the three most frequently used by average travelers. One of these options is usually better than the other two only because you often will find that you get more money for the exchange. This happens on both ends of your travel. The best way to figure this out is by either checking with your local bank or the one abroad, checking at the currency exchange counters and or kiosk at the airport at your departure and or destination location, and then there is also always conducting a search on the internet.

If you decide to use your credit card instead, a word of caution with using it: If you decide to use it solely for your purchases abroad rather than using cash, consider making sure that you give advanced notice of your travel to your credit card company, and in some cases your bank.

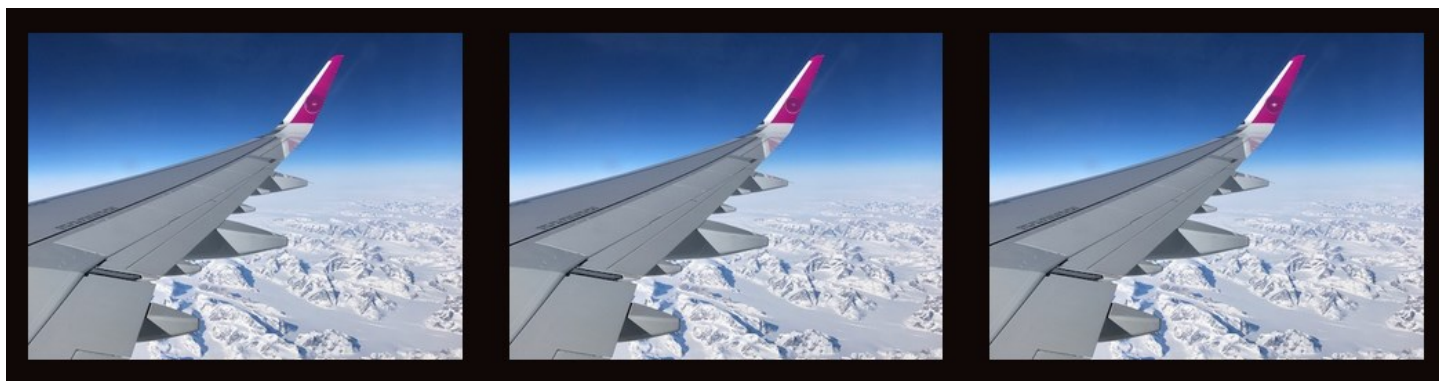
Nothing say "I'm stuck" like your credit card company denying a purchase because they think someone in Europe has stolen your identity and is

trying to run up your bill with “free” stuff. It’s great that they are looking out for your identity and finances, but bad because you may end up having to “wash dishes” to pay for that meal you just ate, or worse, end up detained by local authorities. This leads us into our next consideration about understanding requirements for selling abroad.

The Cost of Doing Business

If you are intending to just show your work, network

with other artists, and conduct general participation in a Comic Con abroad, in most cases all you need to do is just show up (and of course pay for access to the conventions). However, some countries require a bit more. See below for a list of some requirement examples. The list below is only a snap shot of examples that exist. We recommend that once you decide what country you intend to visit, you consider contacting an official for specific requirement.



The List:

- If you intend to sell artwork and other related products to the general public as an exhibitor, some countries require a work permit. In most cases, this can be obtained at the Port of Entry at your destination upon arrival.
- If you have an elaborate display (larger than a pop-up), some countries will require a work permit for you to set up the display, regardless of if you are selling something or not.
- Some items cannot be sold in certain countries. For example, many countries prohibit the foreign sales of anything that can be construed as pornographic in nature, weapons, and food.
- Some countries do not allow you to place orders at the convention and then ship the items later.
- In some countries exhibitors cannot take orders for, or sell goods made in that country (for example, exhibitors participating at conventions in Canada cannot sell Canadian made goods.
- Because of the tight knit community among Comic Con attendees and participants, this next items tends to be a nonissue, however, sometimes it is: Some countries require you to get insurance, or recommend you get your own insurance to recover items of theft or destruction because the promoter and the venue will not cover you.
- Find out if there are any tariffs on your product or trade barriers. Tariffs are usually paid to the customs authority of the country imposing the tariff. For example, in the United Kingdom, the HM Revenue & Customs collects payment.
- Some countries have a Tax ID requirement for tax collection. For example, in the United States, Massachusetts to be exact, Comic Cons are required to collect Sales Tax ID from its exhibitors at the convention and submit it to the Department of Revenue (DOR). This means that the exhibitors need to register with the Massachusetts DOR and collect sales tax on the products they sale. Not being a US citizen, this process can take at least ten weeks to obtain a tax ID.

As you can see, depending on which country you intend to travel abroad to and participate in their Comic Con, sometimes the process to sell abroad will most likely require some action on your part that involves filling out applications along with paying some sort of fee; while others may not require much at all. Your best bet is to consider getting this information straight from the Comic Con promoters or the country's official website site where you can normally locate their business, commerce or revenue department. What's important is making sure you identify the country's requirements for sales, the requirements for reporting the sales you made abroad to your own country, and ensuring that you give yourself enough time in advance to meet the requirements if it requires more than paying a small fee at customs upon entry into a country. Don't let this portion of your trip abroad discourage you, the reward for enduring the requirements could potentially be fruitful in the form of a new fan base, international recognition of your product and brand, and or your artwork and other products selling out in a new market.

Oh NO! I Have No Power!

You packed all of your required electronics like your phone, laptop, artist pad, and every other gadget requiring electricity to power it. So, you should be good to go correct? Wrong! Only if you purchased an international power adapter. Not every country and or region uses the same electricity standard. The voltage, frequency and plug itself is totally different from one country or region to the next. Now while some facilities abroad host universal outlets and accept plugs from multiple countries, not all of them do, so you have to ask yourself do you really want to take the chance of not being able to light up your Comic Con display (if this is part of your set up), or not have a charged phone which nowadays does everything for us to include operating as a navigation device (which tends to work perfectly abroad), and take credit card payments? Also, you don't want to fry your devices because you plugged it into the wrong outlet. You may require a voltage converter to avoid this. The good news is that these power adapters (sold individually or as a group under the title of "Universal Adapters," covering every region of the inhabitable globe), are not that expensive to purchase. Although some hotels carry them, these power adapters sometimes can be purchased abroad in city centers at electronic stores, and in some cases supermarket chains. But, we recommend that you consider buying them prior to your travel. We made a list below of some things to consider with regard to power adapters:

- Verify what type of plug you are going to need. A travel guide or a quick internet search can help in answering this.
- Verify the voltage and frequency of the outlets at your destination as you may need a voltage converter accessory.
- Consider purchasing the adapter prior to your trip. You may want to also consider buying a voltage converter as well just to have one since you never know when you will need it. That amazing coffee shop next to your hostel that doesn't have the same voltage as your laptop may be a great place to hangout for a few hours to catch up on some administrative work after the day's event concludes.
- When in contact with the Comic Con promoters, if you decide to send them a list of inquiries to ensure that your participation goes well, consider making sure to communicate your electrical needs.
- When in doubt, consider bringing backup power adapters and converters in the event you lose your adapter or forget to unplug your adapter from that amazing coffee shop we mentioned above.



Sonise Lumbaca, Author/Illustrator

Observing Local Laws and Customs

When traveling abroad, one thing to consider is understanding and observing local customs and laws. This is important because you don't want to find yourself paying a heavy fine or worse, in jail, because you were doing what might be permissible in your country, but not in others. For example, did you know that there is a chewing gum ban in Singapore? It's true. The ban was enacted in 1992 to prevent people from vandalizing properties with it and because the cost of cleaning it up and repairing damaged cleaning equipment increased maintenance costs. This law was eventually amended in 2004. Chewing gum for therapeutic, dental and nicotine received an exception and can now be purchased from a doctor or registered pharmacist (oh by the way, they take down the names of the buyers). This is just one of many examples of why it is important to research prior to traveling abroad. There are many ways to do this. The two we have found that works best and that you may want to consider doing is getting a travel book and or guide, and doing a thorough internet search online. With regard to the travel books, they can be borrowed from libraries or be purchase at major brick and mortars book stores and or ordered online. They cover everything from regional and local maps to restaurants, lodging, nightlife and attractions; and more importantly, a majority cover local customs. So do yourself a favor and research this prior to travel.

Save Time For Sightseeing

Sometimes making time for sightseeing seeing is easier said than done, especially if you are operating on a budget. But, this is something that you should really consider especially since you don't know if and when you will get the chance to ever return to the country you traveled to again. When there are time and budget constraints involved, we have a few ideas for you to consider:

- Consider taking an overnight flight. Travel during this time may provide you time to sleep on the flight so that you are wide awake and ready to hit the ground running on a day excursion.

For example, this tends to work well when traveling



Sonise Lumbaca, Author/Illustrator

from the east coast of the United States to western European countries like Iceland and London where it will probably be morning upon your arrival. "Red Eye" flights like these also tend to be cheaper.

- Another flight related consideration is when determining what day to travel. As mentioned in Issue 6, you can save hundreds, even thousands of dollar, depending on the day you travel. Coupled with this is that you may end up having to arrive two day or three days before the Comic Con. This may be your only chance to go sightseeing as your return trip may end up being the day after the convention concludes.
- If you locate your lodging near the city center, you may find some great places to explore in walking distance like museums, botanical gardens, and other local and or tourist attractions.
- When booking your flight, sometimes along with bundling your hotel and car rental, you can get a good deal on some sightseeing excursions.

(Con't)

Make a List

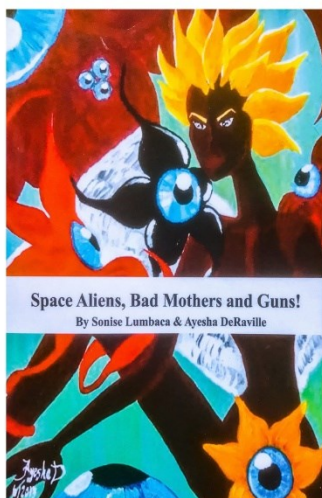
The best things you can do in preparing to travel abroad is to make a list of all the considerations we have recommended from all three articles within this series. This is probably the easiest part of your planning since we have completed much of the work for you. All you have to do is go back read Issues 6-8 of this online magazine; which have many helpful details. By making a list, you will avoid in most cases forgetting steps and items you will need for your travel.

Conclusion

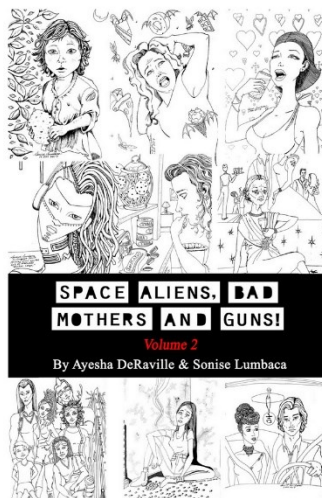
We have mentioned a lot of things to consider as you embark on your first con travel abroad and these considerations can become quite costly. Try not to let this overwhelm and or discourage you. Consider a piecemeal approach to preparing your trip and purchasing the items. If you decide that this month you plan to go abroad to a Comic Con in the future and the finances are a bit tight at the moment, be realistic and give yourself enough time to plan. You may need to start budgeting six months to a year out. Consider working on saving for the important stuff like getting a plane ticket, your lodging and your passport first if you don't have one already (see SABMG!: The Magazine, Issue 6 for more details). Then work from there. Chances are, you won't regret whatever amount of work you put into planning this trip.

We hope that you enjoyed and found this series of articles on Comic Con travel abroad to be very helpful and hope to see you abroad soon. Please let us know what you think at our Instagram account at @space_aliens_bad_mothers_guns or on Facebook. If you have anything to add about Con travel abroad to help out those who would like to give this adventure a try, please drop a comment as well. We look forward to hearing from you. Thanks for stopping by! **End.**

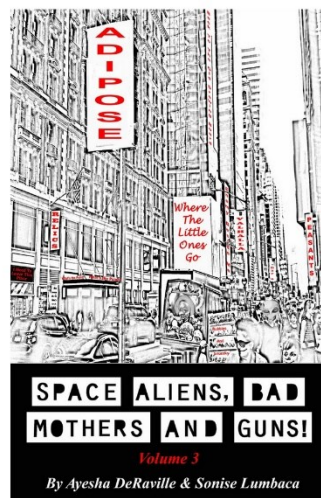
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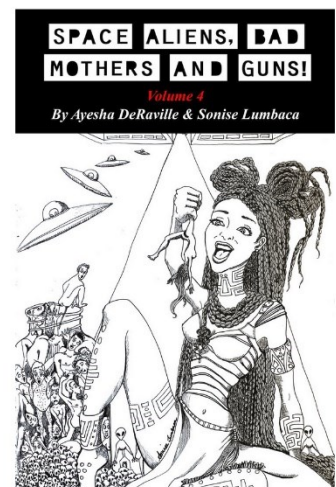
SABMG VOLUME 1



SABMG VOLUME 2



SABMG VOLUME 3



SABMG VOLUME 4

We are super excited about our *Space Aliens, Bad Mothers And Guns!* novels. With each novel we create we have more fun, especially because we decided to add more humor, fantasy and a surprise new genre with our latest, as well as poke a little fun at how we've seen people (on social media, we interact with and those we see out and about) adapt to our ever-changing climate of life as it happens. We hope you enjoy the reads as much as we've enjoyed writing them. Visit us on social media and our website: **IG: spacealiensbadmothersguns** and **Website: www.spacealiensbadmothersandguns.com**

Feature: Tómas Árnason

By A.C. DeRaville

Last year SPACE ALIENS, BAD MOTHERS AND GUNS! had the fortune of attending Midgard 2018, Iceland's first all-inclusive event. Check out Issue number two of Space Aliens, Bad Mothers and Guns!: The Magazine for our entire story on the event. We are excited to announce that we will be attending Midgard 2019 and were pleased to be able to interview this year's new Exhibitor Manager, Tómas Árnason who goes by Tommi, to get all of the deets on this year's event.

We are very pleased for the introduction as you being the new Exhibitor Manager for Midgard 2019. Have you managed other events like Midgard or is this your first convention?



Thank you. I'm really excited to be part of the Midgard staff this year. I have managed other events through my involvement with the 501st Legion Star Wars organization, though none at the same scale as Midgard. That includes visits to the local children's hospital, blood drives and other charitable events. Midgard 2019 is the first time I'm managing an event of that size and I am very honored and excited to be part of the great team that is needed to make Midgard come together.

Last year was Midgard's first event, to include it being Iceland's first all-inclusive event of its kind and it was very successful. Will there be any changes to this year's event that you would like convention goers to know about?

Last year was truly amazing and it did show us that there is room to go bigger. This year we will do exactly that.

- Our exhibitor area has tripled in size, the gaming area is doubled.
- The main panel room is a separate space this year, which is bigger, and in addition we have space for round tables and smaller panels.
- We have a grass area for children's activities, display fights, quidditch matches, and more.
- We are welcoming more people and a broader fanbase to enjoy the convention.

There were quite a few international attendees that we met last year to include Sweden, Scotland, Denmark and the United States. Do you anticipate that there will be a larger turn out this year?

- We were very happy with our international attendees last year and look forward to welcoming them back again. There have already been some inquiries and ticket sales from people abroad so we are hopeful that more international attendees will be able to visit the convention.
- Additionally, Icelandair is about to (or perhaps has when this is published) announce combination packages for a flight including Midgard tickets.

Interestingly enough we noticed many gamers attending in 2018. The exhibitor next to us sold out of his games within a few hours. Is gaming (board/card games) more prevalent than comics here in Iceland?

- At the moment games, in any form really, are more common and better known in Iceland. The comics are getting more popular though. For example, with the release of Batman now in Icelandic, by one of our founders, Nexus, we are starting to see more demand for comics and comic related items. With events like Midgard we are able to introduce all these fandoms and (Con't)

give people the chance to experience the things that have not gained a proper foothold in Iceland yet.

What sets Midgard apart from any other international convention?

- We think all conventions are great and have their own unique touch.
- For us the main goal is to be all-inclusive. Both with regards to diversity of people, as well as including all fandoms. We really want everyone and anyone to feel welcome, and safe, and to have a home for their fandom.

Tell us about the training provided to the staff and volunteers for Midgard. Last year the staff and volunteers were extremely helpful and no question was left unanswered.

- All volunteers go through orientation at the venue before the event, where we go through the layout, things that could occur, how to handle difficult situations etc.
- In addition to that, several of our staff are experienced in hosting events, community management, customer support, etc. So help is always only a radio call away if needed.

It's our understanding that Midgard is one of the nine worlds in Norse cosmology. Of the nine options, what special reason, if there is for choosing Midgard as opposed to Asgard for example?

- Yes that is correct. According to the mythology, Midgard is located between Niflheim – the land of ice, and Muspelheim – the land of fire. For us that sounded like the perfect name for an event held in Iceland, the land of fire and ice.

How did the idea for an all-inclusive event come about?

- There has basically always been a demand for this kind of event in Iceland. Nexus, the comic book store, and one of our founders, regularly had people walk in and ask if they would do an event. Meanwhile two of our staff members had already



- talked about wanting to create such an event in Iceland before. When one of them (Regina) started working for Nexus, and they also talked about doing an event, the puzzle pieces all came together, and we took it from there.
- Events like this are very new in Iceland and we wanted everyone to be included.
- Being all-inclusive gives us the chance to show and share every genre of the amazing artists, authors, video game makers and so many more.
- We love to celebrate diversity and want Midgard to be the place where anyone can share their passion.

Is there any other information about this year's event that you would like our reader to know about? What are some of the highlights of this year's event?

- We like to keep things as a bit of a surprise, but can share a few details
- By popular demand, there will be a party this year.
- Midgard starts on Friday the 13th, so of course we could not resist also planning a masquerade, which will include a special themed activity during the evening.
- Children's activities! Midgard was very popular with the children attending, and this year we want to give them even more to do. The super popular miniature painting lessons are expanding for more space, we have an entire section of the hall set apart for activities from the Vikings, the quidditch team, the 501st legion, multiple more activities and fun that we



Tómas Árnason with Arnar Logi

have planned ourselves, such as a scavenger hunt, etc.

- The short version is, we are trying to make everything be bigger and better.

We are very much looking forward to attending Midgard 2019 and we hope that you add this event to your bucket list. We'd like to thank Tommi and the Midgard team for giving us their time, especially because we realize how challenging it is to put together such an amazing event! See you in September! **End.**

Other Information about Midgard:

- Midgard is held in Reykjavik, Iceland.
- Midgard is an international convention with a distinct Icelandic touch. They include a Viking Village, with volunteers from the local Viking group; they have several Viking activities; and in their community row, they always include multiple local artists and craft people.
- Social media:

Website: www.midgardreykjavik.is

IG: @midgardrvk

Twitter: @MidgardRvk

SABMG Character: Frith



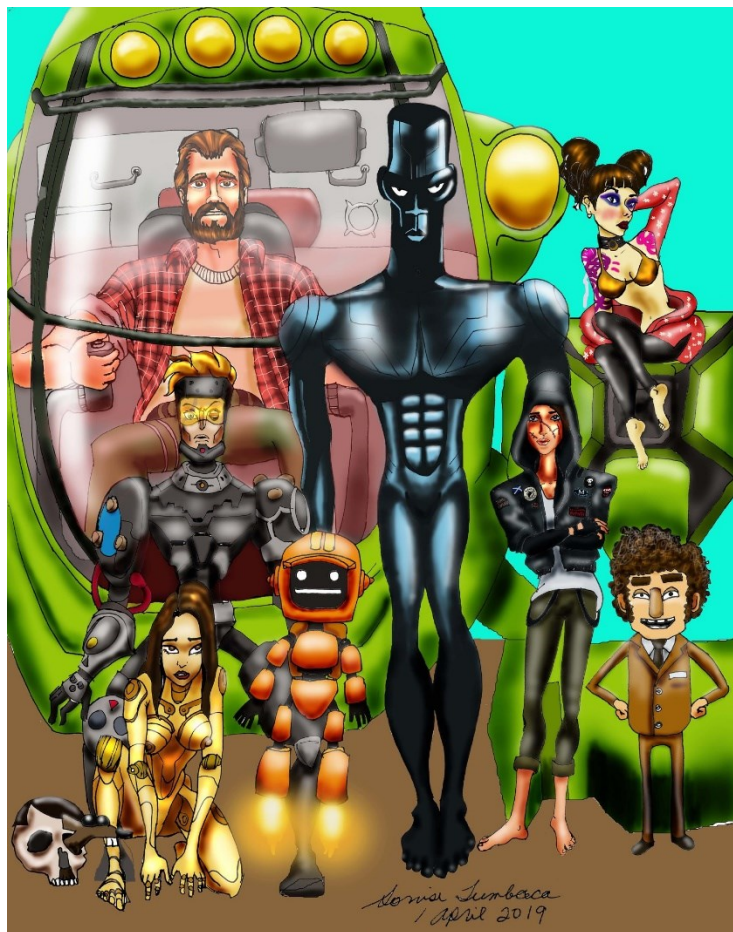
FROM VOLUME 2, 3 AND UPCOMING VOLUME 4 OF
SPACE ALIENS, BAD MOTHERS AND GUNS!

Written and Illustrated by Ayesha DeRaville

One day you wake and you look around you and you realize that this is not where you want to be. It's not an "anywhere but here" type scenario, but more of "I know I don't want to be here. I know where I want to be and it's not here". How did I get here? Why have I not tried all of these years to leave? What was I waiting for? Who am I waiting

for? Why do I listen to others when there is that little voice inside of me that I tend to ignore, which gets me into trouble when that happens. Fight it. Don't ignore it. Why have I not listened, but rather ignored my guts. Trying to please everyone and be a part of something that doesn't even acknowledge *ME*. It only acknowledges what I can do. It acknowledges benefits. There is no sense of community. There is no such thing as friends in such a sensory overloaded, senses deprived environment. Vacations are temporary runaways from reality. Hiding. My current role as a cog is slowly deteriorating. Soon no other cog will be able to latch on to me to make the machine work, because I am spent. I must leave this place before this happens. I must search for who I am and what it is that I want, and maybe, just maybe I will be introduced to what it is to live life. **End.**

Romance Meets the Reaper and Artificial Intelligence



FAN ART by Sonise Lumbaca @i_am_sonise

By Sonise Lumbaca

What does the Grim Reaper, romance and artificial intelligence have in common? Nothing really unless you happen to be the Netflix's animated hit *Love, Death & Robots*! The adult animated anthology, produced by Joshua Donen, David Fincher, Jennifer Miller, and Tim Miller, made its debut on March 15, 2019. We're always searching for amazing animations to watch and this series had us dropping everything for an evening of binge watching.

What's magical about this series is that it is reminiscent and somewhat of a reboot of the 1981 Canadian animated classic *Heavy Metal*, directed by Gerald Potterton and produced by Ivan Reitman and Leonard Mogel, who also was the publisher of *Heavy Metal Magazine*. In the same spirit of the movie *Heavy Metal*, the Netflix series *Love, Death & Robots* highlights a variety of science fiction and fantasy stories but without

the stories having any connections (in *Heavy Metal*, while each story has its own twists, turns and unexpected ending, the one thing that links them together is an orb known as the Loc-Nar; a magical orb that tends to wreak mayhem on those in possession of it). Additionally, in *Love, Death & Robots*, each episode's theme correlated to the love, death and robot title. Some cover only one theme, while others cover all three.

Despite each story being animated by an international community of artists, they manage to have a couple of things in common: great animations, under twenty minutes and the twist, turns and unexpected ending we love so much! While the lot of this first series blew us away, in our humble opinion, some were more amazing than others. Below we ranked the order of which episodes we enjoyed watching the most from "best" to just "okay." We also provided a quick rundown of the plot, but we didn't want to give too much away. To learn more and to be dazzled by the specifics of the amazing plots, we highly recommend that you grab a big bowl of kettle corn and watch it for yourself.

1) Sonnie's Edge: Two beasts enter a cage match, only one leaves. Each beast seems to be controlled by the telekinetic power of its host... or not. The 3D animation and movement of its characters is pretty amazing. While there is a bit of lust and not much love (unless it's the love of life), there is plenty of death and robots in this animation. The action and unexpected ending puts this animation at the top of our list.

2) Suits: When you live in a small rural community of farmers, banding together with a team of homemade man-powered mechanical suits is pretty much the only thing that can be done to ward off an alien invasion. There's plenty of love, death and robots in this animation; plus a lot of action. The amazing sense of community and how seamless it runs along the backdrop of this story is what puts this animation at #2 on our list.

(Con't)

Love, Death and Robots Con't.

3) Shape Shifters: What happens when a US military force fighting in Afghanistan comes up against a ravenous supernatural enemy that's able to take out a platoon in one swift move? They get their own couple of supernatural Marine to counter the offense. With definitely no "love" shown from team members despite needing these two supernatural Marines (who show unconditional love for each other) and no robots, there is plenty of death and gore in this animation. The storyline, which is great at face value and symbolic of real wars fought in the past at a time when the U.S. was dealing with its own internal equality struggles, puts this animation at #3 on our list.

4) Beyond the Aquila Rift: A captain and his crew who have been asleep in their cryogenic chamber wake up after a long journey. What they discover begs the question of taking the red or blue pill. With plenty of love, death and robots, this 3D animation and unexpected ending lands this tale at #4 on our list.

5) Good Hunting: It's the hunter versus the hunted in this Chinese Steampunk themed tale. Sometimes when it comes to the supernatural, there's more than meets the eyes. With a variety of twist and turns, this amazing 2D animation lands at a respectable #5 on our list.

6) The Witness: A woman becomes an eyewitness to a murder. And thus begins the pursuit through the backstreets of a shady city, into a seedy but eccentric stripper club, only for the chase to return to the back alleys of the street. With not much love nor robots, there is plenty of death in this amazing suspense thriller 3D animation. For the blown away and "didn't see that coming" ending, this animation is #6 on our list.

7) The Secret War: Siberia. An elite Red Army. And, what seems to be a swarm of unstoppable creatures. There's tough, and then there's tough. This tale is full of "on the edge of your seat" suspense! For its amazing 3D animation and thrilling storyline, this tale full of death, but no love or robots, lands at lucky #7 on our list.

8) Blindspot: Looking for action that involves a high speed chase, a ton of fire power and some great 2D

animation? Well you have come to the right place. Enter a team of cyborgs on a vehicular heist adventure. Not much love, lest it be that of the thrill seeker, but plenty of deaths and robots. For this reason, we place this animation smack dab in the middle of the pack.

9) Suckers of Souls: Some archeologist on a dig accompanied by a team of mercenary guards encounter a blood thirsty creature. Once trapped, they learn about the one thing that is key to their survival. Who says that dogs are only man's best friend? Full of plenty of action and lots of humor, this loveless and robot-less 2D animation has plenty death and gore to make it #9 on our list.

10) Zima Blue: A mysterious artist who uses the color blue throughout his artistic body of work mesmerizes the public. With each work, he continues to challenge himself, making a greater statement as his momentum builds. It's a tale of a rise to fame while remembering where one comes from. With plenty of symbolic love of art, death and robots, we place this animation also at the middle of the pack.

11) The Dump: A dump owner who calls the dump his home discovers that everything around him is alive. But what happens when the city sends its minion to repossess the dump? With plenty of love for him home, no robots and plenty of gory deaths, this 3D animation lands at #11 on our list.

12) Three Robots: Three robots tour post-apocalyptic earth long after humans have become extinct. As they visit various locations attempting to understand the "artifacts" they come into contact with, they discover a lifeform and unwittingly are controlled by it. For the hilarious storyline and its 3D animation, this tale of life after humans ends up at #12 on our list.

13) Lucky 13: Lucky 13 is a dated ship that after two missions in a row, lost its entire crews. No one wants to fly her, but rookie leaders don't get a choice despite having to confront carnivorous aliens. It's a tale of making choices between taking chances with luck or exercising caution. For its wonderful storyline, highlighting the love of a ship, with some robots and plenty of death, we place this tale on our list at coincidentally #13. (Con't)

14) Fish Night: Two stranded traveling salesmen discover that something fishy is going on in the middle of miles and miles of empty desert. What they discover isn't only enchanting, but also becomes dangerous. With not much love nor robots, this colorful 2D animation checks the block on the death theme and lands at #14 on our list.

15) Helping Hand: What would you do if you were stranded in orbit, you were running out of oxygen and the decision between life or limb depended on it? Find out when you watch this amazing 3D science fiction animation that's full of plenty of love for life, some robots, but we won't spoil the ending by admitting whether or not there is death involved. For its suspense filled tale, this animation is #15 on our list.

16) Alternate Histories: How many ways can Hitler die? Find out when you watch this comical 3D animation that highlights a variety of deaths and an alternate history. No love, only some robots, but plenty of death in this tale. This animation lands at #16 on our list for its *Groundhog Day* with a twist scenario.

17) Ice Age: A couple finds an ever-evolving civilization living in their retro refrigerator in their new apartment. While this animation is limited to the refrigerator, it is still entertaining. With plenty of lovey-dovey affection, equal amounts of death, but barely any robots (unless you use a microscope), this cute animation ends up second to last on our list.

18) When the Yogurt took over: A scientific experiment gone wrong! In this animation, yogurt (of all things), is accidentally transformed into a super intelligent being that seeks world domination over humans. We know... Seems farfetched, but you will have to see it to believe it. Plenty of love for yogurt, but not much death and robots in this animation. While the storyline places this animation last on our list, the animation is quite adorable.

As you may have probably surmised, some of these animations are not for the faint of heart; certainly not for kids. One thing is for sure, if you are looking for some amazing animations, awesome storylines, action and adventure, you definitely should consider setting up a binge-watch experience for *Love, Death & Robots*! We are definitely looking forward to Season 2. **End.**

Cosplayer of the Month:

CHECK OUT THIS COSPLAYER!
She goes by Rnx.l. She's talented, she's creative and she's beautiful. If you think these are some amazing cosplays, wait until you check out her Instagram account @rxn.l We are looking forward to seeing more of her creative ideas!



Last Page!

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