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aspen comics LEGACY

PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE

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MICHAEL
TURNER

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YOU NEED
TO KNOW
ABOUT
ASPEN
COMICS!

aspencomics.com

THE DREAM & VISION OF **MICHAEL TURNER**

MICHAEL
TURNER



**CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF
ASPEN COMIC'S PAST,
PRESENT...AND FUTURE!**

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ASPEN
COMICS

CLASS
OF
2005

THE PENCILING DEPT.

A MESSAGE FROM: ASPEN COMICS

BY Aspen Co-Owner's
Frank Mastromauro
& Peter Steigerwald

15th

It all started with a, "What if?" and that idea exploded into something we're so happy to be doing fifteen years later...

15 years.

Though I've been a part of every moment of it, it's sometimes still hard to believe. But that's what we were able to do all of these years...persevere and believe.

Many of you reading this may know that Aspen Comics is the house that Michael Turner built. If you don't, let me give you a quick run down on Mike...he was the best. Simple as that. Plus, he was a pretty good artist too. From FATHOM to SOULFIRE, to the short-lived EKOS, Michael's creations are the base foundation of Aspen itself. And though Michael tragically passed in June of 2008, he lead the charge and brought together some of the most hard working, talented people in the industry, all striving to bring you some of the best comics possible.

Over the course of those 15 years, that's exactly what we've tried to do. Often times with varying degrees of results, but we've done our best to learn from our mistakes and hopefully delivered a better product to you each new time. We've been fortunate enough to introduce close to 30 fully independently created properties all the while working on some of the industries biggest titles and events from the likes of DC and MARVEL. It's been an amazingly rewarding (and difficult!) 15 years, but I wouldn't change it for the world.

Well, we may be changing a few things, but we think you're going to like them! In celebration of our 15 years, we have several new titles coming your way that we'll have more information on later in this issue. We also have some fan-favorite series making their long awaited return which we'll have .25¢ introductory Primer issues available for many of them to help increase your knowledge on Aspen properties you may be interested in checking out. And

I've yet to mention the 20 year anniversary of FATHOM, the 15 year anniversary of SOULFIRE and the 10 year anniversary of EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT IRIS, all taking place in 2018 throughout Aspen's 15 year anniversary. Whew! That's a lot of stuff.

In fact though, that's what this Legacy issue is all about. We understand we've been around a long while now and a lot of you may not be familiar with Aspen or many of the projects we've worked on. Even if you are, this is your chance to learn more about our worlds, our titles, the fantastic projects we've played a part in, the brand new ones coming up, and the dopest people on the planet that labor to bring all of this to you month in and month out.

We're proud of what we've accomplished. We appreciate what the comic book industry means to us, and what it means to you. We're humbled and forever grateful to our fans for sticking with us all of these years and we're excited to bring you our newest offerings in 2018 and beyond.

Michael Turner may no longer be with us (and I miss him every day), but the imprint he left on the comic book medium and with the fans will live on forever. We'll never forget that...and we have YOU to thank for it. Without your support, all of us (Michael included) could have never made it to where we are today. We sincerely thank you for that and will continue to break new boundaries and push Aspen to even greater heights. We hope you enjoy it and come along with us.

For 15 incredible years...

—Frank Mastromauro

Aloha,

This past Saturday, Mazden, Frank's son, came into my office to borrow \$10 for lunch. (Frank was out of cash.) It made me realize what fifteen years equals. Fifteen years ago, in 2003, we were walking with Mazden back to the office after seeing *Finding Nemo*. He was 6.

Fifteen years ago at the time I write this, late December 2002, Mike, Frank and I were in my apartment, going over colors for the FATHOM, SOULFIRE and EKOS pages in what would become our first Aspen publications. [Despite the official record, the first Aspen production office was my bedroom. The first planning office was Mike's couch (and pool table).] Frank and I hadn't even hit 30 yet.

Four offices and four computers later, I sit here adding it all up. There's more days, months, years, offices, people, computers, artwork and stories coming to be sure, but let's tally for now. 2 refrigerators, 2 toaster ovens, 3 microwaves, 5 coffee pots, around a dozen computers total, Frank's had 2 trucks, Mark: 3 cars, and we've published more than 500 comics. That's over 10,000 pages written, 10,000 pages drawn and inked, and colored and lettered. That's not counting the work I, and others here, have done for DC, Marvel, and other publishers and clients. That nearly doubles the number!

I've made around 50 logos, Mark's done a few. Vince has made a million emails. Literally a million. More probably. We've got statues, baubles, t-shirts and products galore and one pair of themed thunder-sticks. Our art tables have lasted, I use Mike's now. Chairs do not—we've gone through at least 20, though Frank is quite proud that

this is the same chair as the first day (both armrests have fallen off, but it's still the same chair). We've had one store, and one operator of it, Chris Rupp, who is as integral to our fifteen years of success as any Aspen employee, but we're on our second Gabe. (Gabe Sauro is our printer and has been the whole time. Gabe #2 is Carrasco our editor and he's newer.) I can't count the characters we've invented, there's just too many, but I can say we've done over 200 conventions, that's over a thousand flights, 500 hotel rooms, 4 countries, dozens of cities and countless restaurants and bars. We've met tens of thousands of fans, across the globe, signed sooooo many signatures...easily over a hundred thousand by now.

We've had only one Michael Turner. There's no changing that quotient. Fifteen years includes five years of him. Pages, poker, pool, parties, pals... stories. Treatments. Surgeries. Services. Crutches and courage. Smiles and tears. He made this place with us for all of us...and all of you. The Legacy of Aspen begins with him.

Fifteen years is one junior in college, and it includes deaths, and births, and marriages. Fifteen years from now when I write this on our Thirtieth Anniversary, from my flying car on my way to my palatial oceanic estate under the sea, Max, Mark's young son will be graduating high-school — Knowing what we have coming up this next year alone, and in the years beyond that—I can't wait to do that math for you.

And Frank owes me \$10.

—Peter Steigerwald



PREVIEW COPY

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM

Celebrating 20 years!

20th

#DIDUKNOW
FATHOM
 debuted in 1998
 as the number one
 selling comic book of that
 year, beating out X-men,
 Avengers and Batman in
 overall sales!

Currently available series:
 Fathom Volumes 1 – 6 » Fathom: Killian's Tide »
 Aspen Extended Edition » Fathom: Dawn of War »
 Fathom: Cannon Hawke » Fathom: Kiani Volumes
 1 – 4 » Fathom: Blue Descent » Fathom: The Elite
 Saga » Fathom Blue » Aspen Universe: Revelations

Michael Turner's first creator-owned comic book series took the world by storm...

Where it came from: Michael Turner's *Fathom* debuted in July of 1998 and went on to become the highest-selling comic book of that year. It was Michael's very first creator owned series and he remained an integral part of the series even after completing his final *Fathom* story within the pages of *Aspen Comics Presents* back in 2003. After nearly 20 years in publication, *Fathom* is still going strong today with six subsequent volumes, a number of popular mini-series and spin-offs, and the newest volume 7 debuting this summer!

What it's about: Aspen Matthews grew up tied to the water. It is in her blood. Adopted by Captain Matthews on the Paradise ocean liner, she flirted with Olympic Gold as a swimmer before becoming an experienced diver with several degrees in Marine Biology. With one fateful experience below the water's surface, she became the only true link between the world above and the world below. However, the link was broken, and war between the Humans and the underwater race of The Blue threatens all of humanity—with only Aspen Matthews powerful enough to stop it!

What's next: This June, *Fathom* will be celebrating its 20 year anniversary, and to mark this incredible milestone, writer Ron Marz and artist Siya Dum will be taking the helm of Michael Turner's flagship property to bring the latest volume to all new heights... and depths! Be on the lookout for several new trade paperbacks and more *Fathom* related products to coincide with the newest series!



FATHOM TRADE PAPERBACKS
 RECOMMENDED READING ORDER



KILLIAN'S TIDE



VOLUME 1



ASPEN:
 EXTENDED EDITION



DAWN OF WAR



CANNON HAWKE
 COMING SOON



VOLUME 2



VOLUME 3



VOLUME 4



VOLUME 5



THE ELITE SAGA
 COMING SOON



KIANI - VOLUME 1



KIANI - VOLUME 2



KIANI - VOLUME 3
 COMING SOON



KIANI - VOLUME 4
 COMING SOON



VOLUME 6
 COMING SOON



BLUE DESCENT
 COMING SOON



FATHOM BLUE



ASPEN UNIVERSE:
 REVELATIONS



ASPEN MEMORY
**KOI
TURNBULL**
ARTIST
Fathom vol 2, Black Panther

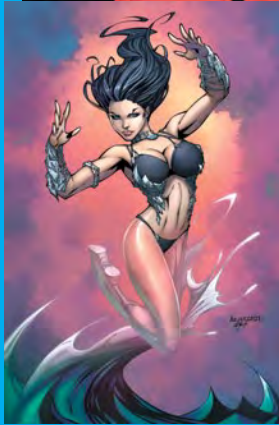
"I still believe *Ekos* would have been a great series!!

the first they thought of. To be honest, I was amazed by the company from that moment on. The main character was rugged and the idea that this lush 'alien' world, to my eyes, was being invaded by aliens. But...the alien invaders were human. You read that right, the alien invaders were humans!! The idea was before the blockbuster film *Avatar*, and the story had a soul that was aching to be told in any form, let alone comics. I was a little let down to find out after I finished the drawing that the fans picked *Soulfire* over *Ekos* in a voting contest inside *Wizard Magazine*.

For six hours I had drawn this image getting jazzed with every pencil stroke only to be told this great idea was going to sit on the burner. Wah, wuhhh!?! But, I thought then and there, 'If they can cut this idea, these guys must throw great ideas like this around everyday that this is nothing?!?! I want to be around that type of creativity everyday.' I wasn't disappointed. I then looked at the designs and pages for *Soulfire* and *Ekos* never came up again...seriously, because *Soulfire* is beautiful!!

Aspen MLT, to me, are where fresh ideas come to be created, spurned, boiled, re-thought and produced to provoke thought and wonder. A studio with graceful imagery and a loyal readership that want to read something unique with fresh, new and strong characters with designs usually only seen on the walls of sci-fi movie production concept design rooms. Creating new unique worlds with creative conceptual design and 15 years later that recipe still works for the engine that will."

—Koi Turnbull



ASPEN MEMORY
**ALEX
KONAT**
ARTIST
Fathom vol 4 & vol 5, Mindfield, No Way

"I WOULD NOT BE THE ARTIST OR THE PERSON I AM TODAY HAD IT NOT BEEN...FOR MY FATHER INTRODUCING ME TO FATHOM."

—Alex Konat

"I don't really stop to think about it often, so it's odd to when I do to realize that I've know these guys for more than half my life. That being said, it makes it hard to pull a single moment out of so much time or so many moments. Whether it was listening to Mike and Frank telling stories over dinner; pestering Peter, Mark, or Vince for advice, or just some of the small moments where everyone is just hanging around together. These guys have seen me grow up, it's hard to boil all that down to a few sentences. There is one thing I can say for certain though, I would not be the artist or the person I am today had it not been for the time I've gotten to spend with this group of people, and for my father introducing me to *Fathom*."



DREVIEW

COPY

MICHAEL TURNER'S

SOULFIRE

Celebrating 15 years!

15th



#DIDUKNOW
SOULFIRE
 was voted by fans
 to become Turner's next
 creator-owned series
 with writer Jeph Loeb,
 beating out EKOS with
 writer, Geoff Johns!

Currently available series:

- » Soulfire Volumes 1 – 6 » Soulfire: Chaos Reign
- » Soulfire: Dying of the Light » Soulfire: Shadow Magic
- » Soulfire: New World Order » Soulfire: Search for the Light » Eternal Soulfire » Aspen Universe: Revelations

Michael Turner launched Aspen Comics with an all new action-adventure series where magic and technology collide...

Where it came from: Michael Turner's *Soulfire* debuted in the summer of 2003 and went on to become one of the best-selling independent comic books of that year. The series contained nearly everything Michael loved to draw, intense action, incredible environments, and beautiful women. After nearly 15 years in publication, *Soulfire* is still going strong today with six subsequent volumes, a number of popular mini-series and spin-offs, and the newest volume 7 debuting this summer!

What's next: This July, *Soulfire* will be celebrating its 15 year anniversary and to mark this incredible milestone, long-time writer J.T. Krul will join forces with breakout new talent Chahine Ladjouze as they take the helm of Michael Turner's flagship property and breath new magic into its latest volume! Be on the lookout for several new trade paperbacks and more *Soulfire* related products to coincide with the newest series!

What it's about: In the year 2211, in the city of San Francisco, a young orphan boy named Malikai discovers he is the link between an age of magic long forgotten and the ruling forces of technology in the present. But, the dark lord of technology Rainier has other plans for the young boy—mainly vanquishing him and the magical power building within the child. However, along with the winged Goddess named Grace, and a group of his closest allies, Malikai manages to narrowly escape Rainier's attempts to capture him, and journeys on a quest to discover the true nature of the magical world he must now lead the charge to protect at all costs.



ASPEN MEMORY
JASON FABOK
 ARTIST
Soulfire: Justice League

"When I was young and breaking into the industry, Aspen took a chance on me and gave me a place to learn the in's and out's of comic books. The lessons I learned from them helped me grow into the artist I am today. I'll forever cherish the friendships I have with the team at Aspen and wish them the best with their future endeavours carrying on Michael Turner's legacy. Here's to 15 more great years."

—Jason Fabok

SOULFIRE TRADE PAPERBACKS
 RECOMMENDED READING ORDER



CHAOS REIGN



DYING OF THE LIGHT



SHADOW MAGIC
 COMING SOON



VOLUME 1



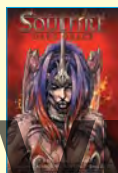
VOLUME 2



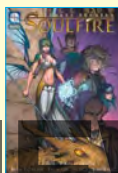
VOLUME 3



SEARCH FOR THE LIGHT
 COMING SOON



VOLUME 4



VOLUME 5



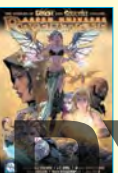
VOLUME 6
 COMING SOON



ETERNAL SOULFIRE



NEW WORLD ORDER
 COMING SOON



ASPEN UNIVERSE:
 REVELATIONS

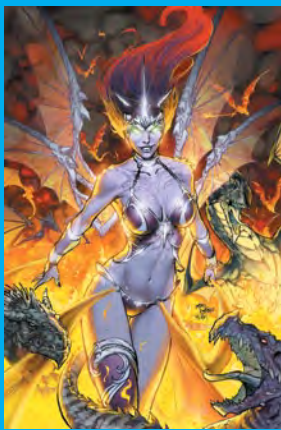
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ASPEN EVOLUTION ONE: LOCATION

Marina Del Rey, CA. Much like our lead heroine and our founder's various hobbies and passions, Aspen Comics' first studio could be found close to the water. Marina Del Rey, California, was the launch city of the studio's first facility, and what it lacked in size it certainly made up for in charm. However, its founders knew the time would quickly come for an upgrade.

Santa Monica, CA. They say bigger is better, and the second Aspen Comics studio definitely fits that bill. Located near the heart of downtown Santa Monica—and yes—the ocean, the second building saw the expansion of not only the size of Aspen as a company, but also a world renowned stable of brilliant artists and production staffers. Many of our most talented alumni sharpened their skills at this location.

Culver City, CA. With Aspen continuing to evolve, and time and technology progressing, our goals as a company required a change of facility and focus on different mindset. Thus, the Culver City locations were forged, starting with a smaller more intimate studio yet quickly shifting to our larger, current facility right up the street. With each evolution, we've made it a focus to continue our goal of providing the highest quality of entertainment possible...and yes—be as close to the water as possible!



"Aspen was my first home, it was where they saw something in me and my work that few did. Mike and the gang took care of me and helped me grow as an artist and as a professional. Thanks to them, I can help pay it forward."

—Marcus To

ASPEN MEMORY
MARCUS TO
ARTIST
Soufins: Omega Reign, Soufins vol 2, Nightwing, New Avengers, Justice



"...PETER STEIGERWALD HAS BEEN A GREAT COLORING MENTOR THROUGH THE YEARS."

ASPEN MEMORY
JOHN STARR
COLOR ARTIST
Soufins: Fashion, Executive Assistants, Ito

"I unfortunately don't have a great memory of Michael Turner to share with you. I really wish I did, but I never had the pleasure of knowing him. I remember briefly meeting him at a con once. He was staring at a print I did for a bit, which I took as he either he really liked it or dude this is terrible...most likely the latter haha. I have had the fortune of knowing the great group of guys and girls at Aspen. Frank Mastromauro and Vince Hernandez have always been good to me, Mark Roslan is a godsend, Beth Sotelo is always there for me if I need help and Peter Steigerwald has been a great coloring mentor through the years. I'll always be grateful for their help and kindness. It's been great working at Aspen through the years and I hope we continue and do some awesome projects in the future."

—John Starr



PREVIEW

RETAILER RELATIONS

BY: Chris Rupp

For 15 years, Aspen has strived to cultivate a solid relationship with direct market retailers, creating products they have hopefully enjoyed selling and providing to their customers. There have also been countless store signings and events. Aspenstore head honcho Chris Rupp recounts one of those events from WAY back in the day...

I had known of Michael Turner since his artwork first popped up on the comic scene, and with the release of *Fathom*. It was a hit with all of our customers at Rupp's Comics. He was one of the most popular artists in our store, and this was of course many years before ever getting the chance to meet him and become friends. His artwork just connected instantly with most of our customers.

I was lucky enough to hit it off with Frank (Mike's best friend)

and Michael right off the bat back in 1999, and thus began Mike and Frank's multiple visits to Fremont, Ohio. Yeah, who would have ever thought Mike would visit Fremont, OHIO?! Although, I think a good reason behind that was Cedar Point (the roller coaster capital of the world!), it was always a definite go to whenever Mike came out for a visit.

Every time we ran an event with Michael it was a massive success. More than three hundred fans would show up, packing the area with cars and lines of people. It was on the level of spectacle you would think that some Hollywood celebrity was visiting Fremont. And in a sense, there was. Each and every person that came to see Michael not only got to meet their idol but in true Mike fashion, he made you feel like you had been friends forever. He had that smile that

would just invite you over, and then you were friends. And that was Mike. Just a truly down to earth, humble person that you instantly had a connection with.

During a signing event for the AspenStore which is located in the same building as Rupp's Comics, Michael had finished up and wanted to check out some of the latest comics. He hadn't been in a comic book store for awhile and this was quite a surprise for the customers in the store at the time. They asked, "Is that Michael Turner?" I said "yes" quietly, and they were asking if they could get something signed at which time I was about to try and discourage that as I knew Michael had just finished signing about 1,000 items for the AspenStore. But Mike being Mike was listening and said, "Sure, I can sign that for you." and a mini-signing started. That's why Mike was one of the most popular artist/creators in the industry. He knew

that it was the fans that helped him to his success and he never forgot that, no matter how he felt health-wise.

After Michael's passing, many retailers and others thought this was the end of Aspen. I always had faith and the determination to ensure that his legacy lived on, continuing in my store and the comic community. And ten years later, I think we have done a pretty good job at doing that both in store and throughout the comic book industry.



"This is how I met Mike, and became the best of friends (and more).

Back in March of 1999, still early in my career as a comic retailer, I had previously hosted a few signing events but

wanted to go bigger and couldn't think of anyone else but Michael Turner for a store signing. I reached out to Frank and over multiple calls we talked about some in-store promotions and about the possibility of Mike coming out for a signing in the small city of Fremont. About a month later we were talking again and he told me about this promotion, order 1,000 copies of *Fathom* and Mike would come out for a signing as part of a *Fathom* Tour. In my head I was like, "Wow, a 1,000 copies is a lot of books. I can't do that." I of course responded with a "let me think about it tonight" as orders weren't due for a few more days. That night, I ran the numbers and found that it wasn't quite as big of a deal once you factor out the usual costs of bringing in an artist (especially from Los Angeles), and the only expenses were buying the books. I called Frank back and said, "I am going to do it. I will order the 1,000 copies of *Fathom*." He then asked if I was going to Pittsburgh the next month for the comic con, "sure" was my response. Afterwards I got to thinking, if this is a 'Tour' then why don't we treat it like a rock band tour, with merch and everything. Over the next few weeks I put together a program consisting of *Fathom* Tour t-shirts and bags, contacted all the retailers on the tour, and collected orders. April rolls around and I drive out to Pittsburgh to see Frank and show him this proposal for the *Fathom* Tour Merch Program, all typed up and professional looking (at least it was to me back then) and ready to show them what we could do with this. I walked up to the booth, introduced myself, and talked with Frank for a bit as Mike was busy with a signing session. We sat down and I pulled out my proposal to which Frank spent a few minutes looking it over, and was a little surprised by all of the info, the response and commitment from all of the tour retailers, and the amount of orders for shirts and bags. Just as Mike was wrapping up his signing, Frank calls him over, introduces me and shows him the proposal. As Mike is looking it over he looks up and with that smile (if you ever met Mike you know what I am talking about) says, "Want to get some lunch?"

There are so many memories that we had, from conventions, to multiple Cedar Point visits, to the Cavs game, to those times when I would work out of the L.A. office at one of the extra desks, to when Mike would stop by and ask about me about my health (to which I was like, I have Crohn's but YOU are fighting Cancer, yes they both start with C but totally different). But that was Mike. He cared about others more than himself. I still to this day remember having dinner in Baltimore, at one point it was just he and I talking (and this was one of those times when he was having a rough time health-wise), and it ended up becoming a talk about my health issues and he was really concerned that I wasn't taking care of myself (which I wasn't). After that evening, I spent a lot of time thinking about what he said and how much it meant to me. I have since used that 'talk' as an intervention talk to get myself healthy, to think more about my body, and to try and be a better person all around.

That day in Pittsburgh was the start of something that I never imagined happening, becoming part of the family that was around Mike. That's what it was. It wasn't just friends. Mike made you feel like you were family. You laugh and play, you fight and disagree, but in the end you were family.

And still to this day, I have that original proposal sitting in my office safe...and it is one of my most valued possessions."

—Chris Rupp

ASPEN MEMORY
CHRIS RUPP
ASPEN STORE
AspenStore.com, Rupp's World Comics

PREVIEW COPY

Aspen Comics is known for high quality stories and artwork. However, they have also contributed their talent to some of the industry's highest profile companies and characters—including the Big Two!

DC COMICS



Graphitti Designs spent well over a year putting together the ultimate Michael Turner/DC art book. Collecting together Michael's entire 'The Girl from Krypton' storyline from *Superman/Batman*, and featuring every DC cover Michael illustrated, this incredible art edition book is a must have for any Turner or DC fan.



Michael Turner and Aspen Comics first team-up with DC Comics was a pivotal moment that saw *Superman's Godfall* and the *Return of Supergirl* as the beginning of many successful projects worked on by Aspen Comics for DC. At the time, it was unprecedented for one of the major publishing powerhouses to hire an independent company to work on their flagship characters. Thankfully, fans and readers overwhelmingly responded to what Michael Turner and Aspen did, which built the foundation for the long-standing friendship and working relationship the two companies still have today.

Over the years, Aspen Comics has contributed many produced works for DC. Some of the most well known contributions aside from *Superman/Batman* were a series of Eisner Award-nominated covers for the best-selling DC mega-series, *Identity Crisis*, *The Flash*, *Justice League of America*, *Supergirl*, *Brightest Day*, *Green Lantern Rebirth*, *Convergence*, *Flashpoint*, *Dark Knight Returns: The Last Crusade* and many others!



One of Aspen Comics' Exclusive DC Comics Variant covers



One of Aspen Comics' Exclusive Marvel Comics Variant covers

MARVEL COMICS

Later in his career, and after much anticipation and speculation, Michael Turner would finally collaborate with Marvel Comics on an iconic run of covers for a multitude of their best-selling series, including the groundbreaking *Civil War*; *Captain America: Fallen Son*, *Ms. Marvel*, *Daredevil*, *Fantastic Four*, *The X-Men*, *Thor*, *Hulk* and many more. The team-up would prove to be a dream come true and one cut way too short for Turner fans waiting to see his incredible renditions of some of Marvel's most iconic characters!



PREVIEW COPY

SHRUGGED



The voices are real...

Where it came from: *Shrugged* was created by Michael Turner and Frank Mastromauro, and after *Soulfire*, was the first brand new property to debut from Aspen back in 2006. Mike always felt many of the ideas incorporated into the series were derived from vivid dreams he would have resulting from the intense medication he was taking to battle cancer. Quite a few of the scenes are also based off of real life experiences Mike and Frank had as well. *Shrugged* quickly became a fan favorite and has cemented itself as a core Aspen series that continues on today.

What it's about: Yes or No? Right or wrong? Whatever the choice, Theo Langstrom's conscience makes the call. But is Theo truly the one calling the shots or is he just merely along for the ride? One thing is for sure—he is definitely not alone! Dev and Ange are the literal "voices" inside Theo's head. They know it is their sole purpose to capably guide Theo from his birth to his passing, providing their own conscientious reasoning on his behalf. But as they will come to realize, they can do more than simply provide their own perspective, they can now affect his world. And they as well—are definitely not alone!

What's next: With the long in production volume 2 recently wrapping up, the *Shrugged* series has shifted into overdrive with the brand new volume 3 set to premiere in stores next month! *Shrugged* is back in a BIG way!

SHRUGGED
TRADE PAPERBACKS



VOLUME 1



VOLUME 2
COMING SOON



ASPEN MEMORY
BETH SOTELO
COLOR ARTIST

Patron, Soulfire, Shrugged, Broken Pieces

"So many of my favorite moments were experienced with my friends at Aspen Comics. We jumped off a Hawaiian cliff into the ocean. I miss our annual dinner at that awful Italian restaurant where they didn't bring my lasagna until everyone finished their meals.

Good times. Great friends!"

—Beth Sotelo



ASPEN MEMORY
MICAH GUNNELL
ARTIST/DIRECTOR

Soulfire, Dying of the Light, Shrugged, Helix, Guardians of the Galaxy Animation

"The day that Aspen contacted me about working with them is still to this day one of the happiest and most exciting of my life. They gave me my very first professional job in comics, and played a huge role in the success I have had so far in my career as an artist. I will always look back on those early and memorable years at Aspen with a profound sense of nostalgia. Michael Turner, Peter Steigerwald, Frank Mastromauro, Marcus To, Vince Hernandez, Mark Roslan, Christina Strain, Koi Turnbull, and Beth Sotelo all contributed to my development as an artist and as a person, and they'll forever hold a special place in my heart."

—Micah Gunnell

"THE DAY THAT ASPEN CONTACTED ME ABOUT WORKING WITH THEM IS STILL TO THIS DAY ONE OF THE HAPPIEST AND MOST EXCITING OF MY LIFE."



ASPEN PRODUCTS

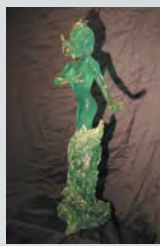
While Aspen is known for cutting edge art and storytelling, our comic books are not the only products Aspen has produced. In fact, from our best-selling art prints to merchandise as diverse as t-shirts, posters, statues, busts, skateboard decks, stickers, trading cards, drinking glasses, travel mugs, shot glasses, bottle openers and even lip balm! Here is a quick glance at some of the awesome Aspen items we've debuted and created throughout our fifteen years!



Grace Crick's Fathom Statue:



Michael Turner's mother is a brilliant sculptor, and thus the Aspen Matthews water form statue and bust came to life. With only a few private editions of the statue ever made (actress Megan Fox has one!), this piece still stands as one of *Fathom's* most cherished products!



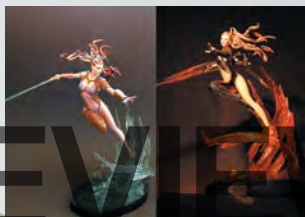
Soulfire's Grace Statue:

Our very first statue! This gorgeous statue marked the first of three Aspen-produced statues and to this day is one of the most sought-after statues on the market!



Kiani Statue:

A marvel of design and ingenuity, this statue to date is the only statue featuring *Fathom's* fearsome warrior of the blade come to life!



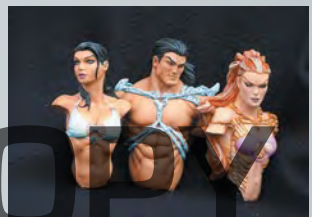
Aspen Matthews Statue:

The 2009 Aspen Matthews statue saw the long-awaited return of Aspen in statue form to the public, and it didn't disappoint! This edition captured two of Aspen's most prominent costume variations—both her White and Black armor!



Aspen Busts:

Aspen Comics has explored different sized statues and busts throughout the years, as seen in the original and classic Aspen Matthews bust and followed by the trio of Aspen, Kiani and Cannon Hawke mini-busts!



ASPEN EVOLUTION TWO: LOGOS

Aspen's Logo Designed by Co-Owner, Peter Steigerwald

Aspen's company name is an obvious nod to our lead heroine, Aspen Matthews, from the title *Fathom*, but the creation of our logo is a combination of many shared influences. Designer Peter Steigerwald went through several initial versions that incorporated a duality of thematic elements: the symbolism from Aspen's charmed necklace and the initials of its founder, Michael Turner, in a balanced circular design.



In 2016, Aspen Comics reached a new evolution with the debut of the universe-combining series, *Aspen Universe: Revelations*, and with it came a new logo design to usher in the new era of Aspen storytelling. Featuring a more social media-friendly design that works for the modern market, Steigerwald managed to create both a stunning new design that is eye-catching yet remarkably reverent of our original Aspen Comics logo.



PREVIEW COPY

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT: IRIS

#DIDUKNOW

IRIS was designed by Joe Benitez, of Lady Mechanika fame, for Brad Foxhoven and David Wohl. Benitez continued to illustrate covers for the series upon its release!

Celebrating 10 years!

10th



Currently available series:
Executive Assistant: Iris Volumes 1 - 4 » Executive Assistant: Assassins Volumes 1 - 2 » No World »

Obedient... Efficient... Deadly...

Where it came from: Brad Foxhoven and David Wohl came upon an old New York Times article that talked about how, in the 1980s, business meetings in China were extremely dangerous because people were often getting kidnapped or killed. So, in order to protect themselves (and not seem like they didn't trust the people they were meeting with), businessmen would hire Executive Assistants who also acted as bodyguards if necessary. These were usually women, and they were "purchased" from "schools" that were devoted to training these women in all aspects of society and fighting. Many of these women were orphaned at birth and raised by the schools. Off of this amazing premise, Iris was born!

What it's about: Our story is about one such Executive Assistant, Iris, who enters this world of corporate intrigue as an employee of a businessman named Mister Ching. She serves him in any way he chooses, and is loyal only to him. But as his dealings become more and more ethically questionable, this forces Iris to explore what loyalty really means, and she must decide if her own morality is more important than her duty.

What's next: There is a new Iris series coming out in 2018, written by Blake Northcott, and from what we've seen so far, it will be one of Iris' best series yet!



ASPEN MEMORY
MEGAN MADRIGAL
OFFICE MANAGER
Aspen 2013 - Current

"I've made so many amazing memories being a part of Aspen that it's hard to choose just one! Between goofing off and shooting marshmallows at each other, long days at the office prepping a huge shipment, or going to my first SDCC, everything has meant so much to me. I really feel like I've grown as a person so much thanks to everyone's guidance, lessons, and my experiences. 2018 will mark my five years that I've been with the company, and it's never felt like a boring ol' J.O.B. I had to do. Thank you Aspen for everything, love you all!"

—Megan Madrigal



ASPEN MEMORY
BLAKE NORTHCOTT
WRITER
Fathom vol. 6, Upcoming Executive Assistant: Iris vol. 5

"Joining Aspen in 2017 was a dream come true. I was welcomed with open arms, and my San Diego Comic Con trip really solidified my bond with the team; we signed books, met fans, attended panels, and I quickly realized that I wasn't just part of a team—I'd become part of a family."

—Blake Northcott

EA: IRIS TRADE PAPERBACKS
RECOMMENDED READING ORDER



PREVIEW COPY



"I worked closely with Michael Turner when he began his career at Image's Top Cow oh so long ago. We both achieved some level of success at the same time, with me co-writing and him drawing *Witchblade*, but of course his success was tremendous, and kept on growing throughout his career. To

ASPEN MEMORY
DAVID WOHL
CREATOR/WRITER
Executive Assistant, *Inv. Fathom* vol 4 & vol 5
Legend of the Shadow Clan
Santeria: The Goddess Kiss

be honest, the guy pissed me off at the beginning. I felt like he should keep his mouth shut and let me write, since he was the new guy and I was around for a little while. But, that pain in the ass was always right! He cared so much about anything he worked on, his comments always helped make our story better, and his phenomenal art redefined the Top Cow style. I quickly learned to shut up and take the ride with him. Eventually he was ready to create a concept that was fully his own, and I was proud to be able to contribute a bit to the mythology that would become *Fathom*. I remember being awed when I was seeing the artwork for *Fathom*. It was a step above *Witchblade*. Probably several steps, really. It showed how much talent Michael had, and how his work ethic just pushed him to keep improving. Initially with Joe Weems and especially with Peter Steigerwald, he was forming the team that fully reflected his own vision, and it was awesome!

Eventually Michael was in the position to form his own company, Aspen. And when he created it with Peter and a handful of great people, I knew it would be a successful, resilient publisher that would create great new material that could withstand the test of time. Eventually I left Top Cow, and hoped that Michael would allow me to be part of his new home. I'm very thankful to say that Michael, Frank, Vince, Peter and Mark let me in with open arms, and allowed me to be part of their sandbox! Since that time, I've been able to do my best work with Aspen, co-creating new projects with Michael and the crew there, and continuing to work on my favorite projects after Michael's passing.

I miss that pain in the ass every day! And I still always try to do my best work whenever I write with Aspen, wondering what Michael would think of my work, and what suggestions he would make to improve it.

Thank you, Michael! You helped me to be a better writer, and, with the help of Frank, Vince, Mark, Peter and Gabe, your legacy is in great hands today!"

—David Wohl

Creator and writer David Wohl fills you in on some of his Aspen Comic properties:



Homecoming

This is the story of a group of high schoolers who discover they are at ground zero for an alien invasion. Inadvertantly receiving alien powers themselves, this disparate group of students must fight off the vanguard of the alien invasion by themselves, and, believe it or not, the lives of everyone on Earth are in their young hands...and the world doesn't even know it!

This was a project that I worked on with Scott Lobdell, and I think it's funny and scary at the same time, which is a cool combination. Our two lead characters are a nerdy gamer who is the defacto leader and the only member of the team with no powers, and a girl who is the most powerful of the team, but she thinks she's an alien because she was brainwashed by those who abducted her years earlier.

Legend of the Shadow Clan



Long ago, in Feudal Japan, the Arashi clan of ninja was wrongly blamed for the death of a nobleman who had employed them, and they were forced to go into hiding, eventually fleeing to America to escape persecution. Now, in modern day New York, the Arashi family is just a normal Japanese-American family trying to get through the day like everyone else. Mom and dad have regular jobs, the kids are in school, and the old traditions have been completely forgotten. They have no idea what their clan was accused of hundreds of years ago, but they are about to find out because another clan, the actual killers, never forgot, and vowed to destroy the Arashi clan if they were ever

discovered. And they have, in fact, been discovered...in New York. Now the Arashis must quickly discover their lineage and re-learn the ninja techniques that made the clan famous, or they will have no chance against what's coming.

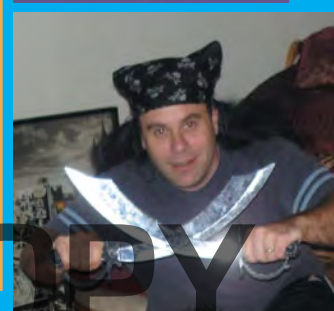
Brad Foxhoven and I created *Shadow Clan* because we love the idea of normal people being thrust into extraordinary situations. We also love ninja. Brad had a soft spot for the vampire ninja you see at the beginning of "Blade 2." He used to talk about it ALL THE TIME. I mean really all the time. Drove me crazy. But I agree it looked cool.

Legend of the Shadow Clan Volume 2 is in the works! It basically continues a year after the events in volume 1. Now that the Arashis know who they are, they go to Japan to face what their ancestors fled centuries earlier.

Santeria: The Goddess Kiss

While trying to revive an old shopkeeper and a teen involved in a police shooting, a paramedic named Naomi Clarke receives an incredible gift that thrusts her into a supernatural world that defies human logic and understanding. A world ruled by an ancient Goddess and her old-world religion, born in the heart of Africa and arriving in the modern day New York City, where Naomi finds herself trying to understand her place in this epic battle across cultures, with the fate of humanity hanging in the balance.

Honestly, I always wanted to do a story about a Paramedic, and had like a dozen different premises over the years. Then I learned about the mysticism of Santeria and realized that could be the perfect place to set this story! Hopefully others agree. What does the future hold? Good question. I have some ideas, so hopefully I'll be able to continue Naomi's story!



THE VIEW COPY

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM: KIANI

Celebrating 15 years!

15th



#DIDUKNOW

Kiani's first appearance was in **Michael Turner Presents: Aspen Comics #2** but she was designed by **Turner and Talent Caldwell** for **Fathom: Dawn of War**, which came out soon after!

Currently available series:

Aspen Extended Edition » Fathom: Dawn of War »
 Fathom: Cannon Hawke » Fathom: Kiani Volumes 1 – 4 »
 Fathom: The Elite Saga »
 Aspen Universe: Revelations

From the depths of Fathom...

Where it came from: Throughout the four volumes of *Michael Turner's Fathom: Kiani*, the titular lead heroine has seen an evolution of character. Kiani began her journey in the pages of *Aspen Comics Presents*, and soon found herself starring in her own series following the events of *Michael Turner's Fathom Volume 2*.

What it's about: The *Fathom: Kiani* series began as both an idea to better flesh out her character for the fans, but also to introduce several new elements of the underwater race known as The Blue. We were introduced to Blue characters that utilized lava, to Kiani's true identity including her family ties to *Fathom's* original villain, Killian, his wife, Anya, and the debut of her sister, Anika. Along the way, Kiani has evolved from an angry, isolated soldier into a mature, empathetic warrior.

What's next: Fans of Kiani are in for a HUGE TREAT later this summer!



ASPEN MEMORY
GIUSEPPE CAFARO

ARTIST

Fathom: Kiani, Trash Out of Water, Slabire

"I remember the first email I received from Aspen. It was a huge and a strange sensation. I fell in love with Michael Turner's art years ago. It was like thunder hitting my heart and that thunder, his art, gave me the power to follow my dream. Mike, and the whole Aspen team, has created something different than other publishers. It's a family. A family where every creator, worker, and fan can feel the passion and love. I will never find the right words to explain how much I feel honored to be a part of this family but I can say: thanks Michael, your legacy is unique and beautiful, and we all know that it will never die."

—Giuseppe Cafaro



ASPEN MEMORY
VINCENZO CUCCA

ARTIST

Charismagic

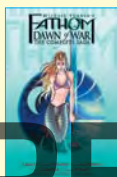
"I've had the pleasure of working with great publishing houses like Marvel, Disney, Glénat, and Le Lombard. It was an honor to participate in the *Charismagic* series for Aspen Comics. Very talented artists are part of Aspen, and I am so happy to have been one of them. My greatest passion is the American style of comic books. Thanks guys for this magical journey...even if I was in Italy."

—Vincenzo Cucca

KIANI TRADE PAPERBACKS
 RECOMMENDED READING ORDER



ASPEN: EXTENDED EDITION



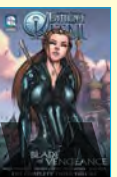
DAWN OF WAR



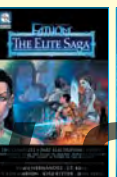
VOLUME 1



VOLUME 2



VOLUME 3
 COMING SOON



THE ELITE SAGA
 COMING SOON



VOLUME 4
 COMING SOON



CHARISMAGIC
 VOLUME 1



CHARISMAGIC
 VOLUME 2

DIREVIEWBOOK

CHARISMAGIC

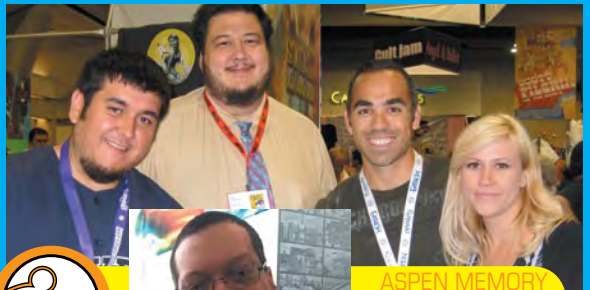
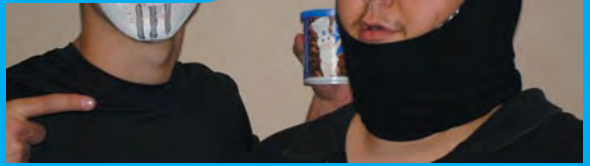


Everything will vanish...

Where it came from: The story of Hank Medley, a reluctant Las Vegas magician tasked with saving the world while fighting the forces of both good and evil in the magic realm. *Charismagic* to this day remains my foremost creative passion. Brought to vivid life by the immensely-talented Khary Randolph and Emilio Lopez, *Charismagic* features the debut of some of Aspen's most popular characters such as Sparkles the cat, and Sudana the druid, along with classic villains such as Samsun and the Death Princess!

What it's about: *Charismagic* originated from an outline that was actually very close to what appears in the pages of the comic today. I believe the original logline was: A Las Vegas magician discovers he has real magical powers and must save the world after accidentally vanishing them all. I think it's a tribute to the lasting effect of the story and characters, if I can humbly say so myself.

What's next: Fans can look forward to the next thrilling volume of *Charismagic* this February as part of our 15-year anniversary lineup of titles!



ASPEN MEMORY
EMILIO LOPEZ
ARTIST

Charismagic: The Death Princess

"So much of Khary Randolph and myself are embedded in *Charismagic*. It is the first comic project we worked on and, at least for me, the series represented all the things I could not do working in animation / licensing art because of time and budget. It also represents all the things we offered as a team.

Vince Hernandez allowed us to do the things we dreamed with his world. I want to thank him for taking a chance on me for the project. *Charismagic* is also the first official comic I had ever worked on. What better way to start a career in comics? The icing on the cake for me was being able to fully illustrate covers, design new characters/creatures, draw fill in pages and finally illustrate and design the expansion to the *Charismagic* universe *Charismagic: The Death Princess*. Orlana, Kentari, Dero and Ro are my children and I am so glad to see them popping up in recent Aspen projects.

I cannot believe it has been 15 years since Aspen's creation. Back then I was in my second year in college. I never got to meet Mr. Turner but I want to thank him for creating a place like Aspen and bringing together an awesome team of talented folks. Here's to another 15 years, guys."

—Emilio Lopez



ASPEN MEMORY
KHARY RANDOLPH
ARTIST

Charismagic

"I've been blessed enough to work on a lot of fantastic projects, but *Charismagic* is without a doubt one of the dearest to my heart. The entire world is so realized and well thought out by Vince Hernandez, and the opportunity to sprinkle a little bit of my own magic on top was one I'll always cherish. Working with Vince is a treat because he really lets the artist do what they do best, which is be creative. It's also the first comic project Emilio Lopez and I worked on together, and through thick and thin he's been THE most important collaborator I've ever worked with. *Charismagic* allowed us both to really shine and show the world what we were capable of when you let us off of the leash. Much love and props to the entire gang at Aspen, past, present and future.

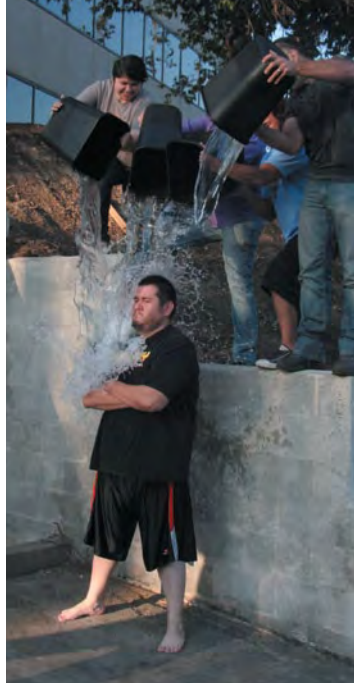
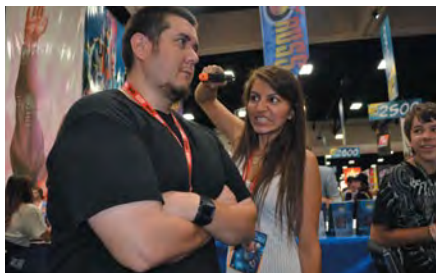
Sidebar: I'll never forget the time Vince brought Michael Turner by my artist alley table (I believe it was Wizard World Chicago). At a time when I was still finding my own way as an artist, meeting someone like Mike and having him say he liked my work is one of those memories that sticks with you. That little bit of encouragement means a lot to a young artist and is one of those things I try to pass along at every opportunity I can. Thank, Mike."

—Khary Randolph



PREVIEW

VINCE HERNANDEZ



Damsels In Excess

If *Charismatic* is my passion project, then I would have to consider *Damsels* its sister property. *Damsels in Excess* features a kingdom of warring princesses that must fight for their prominence—and survival—in a world devoid of men. It came out of my love for fantasy and wanting to tell an old-fashioned kingdoms and war tale but with a reality television feel, like *Sex in the City*.

Fans of the series can recognize this mash-up in the way the characters break the fourth wall and speak directly to the reader. Mirka Andolfo and Simone Di Meo really captured everything with their art that I was looking for as the creator. From Princess Bethany's gorgeous expressions to a talking ferret and arrogant unicorn, they never wavered on anything I presented to them in the script.

Fans of *Damsels in Excess* can expect a second volume soon—it's already written, and of course—the first volume ended on a huge cliffhanger!



Psycho Bonkers

Psycho Bonkers is the full-throttle adventures of Shine and her robot Gabbo as they attempt to win the greatest race of their time, while trying to battle the huge demons from her past in the process!

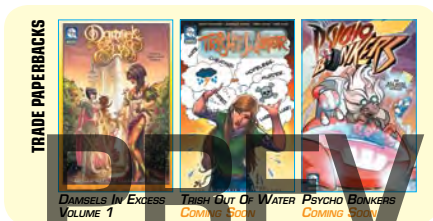


This story originated from Aspen's desire to publish more all-ages material and my thirst for telling a story that appealed to a video game's sensibilities. There are huge plot twists, fun character designs and thrilling adventures wrapped up in one big heartwarming plot! Fans of the *Psycho Bonkers* series can rest assured that at some point we do plan to re-start those engines—with a little help from a bot, of course!

Trish Out Of Water

Trish Powell was just another young teenage girl until she discovered that she was in fact not even human—but a member of the underwater race of the Blue. Sound familiar? Well, not quite, as *Trish out of Water* is set in the world of *Michael Turner's Fathom* but features its own unique cast of characters and adventures.

Trish came out of my love for the world of *Fathom* and my urge to tell a different, contemporary take on the relationship between the human world and The Blue. As in most Aspen properties, the characters and world soon began to take on a life of its own. If you read the series, you know that Trish's adventures with The Blue have really only scratched the—well, you know!



PREVIEW COPY



"How do I encapsulate the past fifteen years of our studio, and my career by extension, in just a few paragraphs?"

I can't.

But really, when you take a step back and look at what we've created here, you start with the name of this very issue—"Legacy." That is what each and every person that passes through the doors here at Aspen hopes to create through their own respective experiences. So, with that in mind, a few memories rise to the surface (pun intended) as my most cherished in building a lasting legacy:

"Igniting My Career"

Even before I began professionally writing comics, I've always fancied myself a pro writer. Most of my studio mates can attest to my ego in this department. Yet, unfortunately, my body of work had not quite caught up to my own perception. However, by some odd string of events, the editor of Top Cow at the time (who shall remain nameless) offered a short story in the back of *The Darkness* that I could write. Now, at the time, *The Darkness* was a huge hit comic book, and in my mind this was the opportunity of a lifetime. I spent literally an entire weekend writing a small two-page short story revolving around the lead character. Flash forward to weeks later when the book came out in print and I eagerly flipped to the back of the book to find my story—only to discover that they decided not to print it. I learned quickly that in the entertainment world—these are the breaks, kid.

To say my early days working in comic books created a lasting chip on my shoulder would be an understatement. I decided early on—not too long after the aforementioned disappointment—that whomever gave me the opportunity to display my talents would be rewarded with the greatest stories the world has ever seen. Enter: Michael Turner, Frank Mastromauro and Peter Steigerwald.

These dudes—best friends—not only gave me another chance working in comics after I was let go by Top Cow, but also provided me with something I will never take for granted—my first comic book writing work. Enter: *Kiani*. In a lot of ways, my career mirrors the doubt that Kiani has struggled with throughout her journey within the pages of the comics, but it's her journey itself that will forever connect us. It was the first comic book mini-series I was given the opportunity to write. *Michael Turner's Fathom: Kiani*. At the time, I was overly enthusiastic and naive to the creation process. I literally spent an entire weekend plotting out an adventure to continue Kiani's story from the pages of *Fathom*. I couldn't wait to present it to Mike that Monday and to this day I'll never forget his reaction: "This is great, but let's change the entire story and instead give her a lava sword, because: why not, right?!"

So, I went back and re-wrote the entire plot that night because—these are the breaks, kid.

"Tragedy"

I had spent the entire evening sitting on the floor of the hospital hallway just outside Michael Turner's room. Throughout the day, countless family and friends found their way to and from his room, offering their condolences, as it was clear Michael's cancer had become too much for even his amazing spirit to overcome.

If you know me you know I'm a very social person but also tend to be the uncomfortable one in large crowds. I'm usually the person that gravitates to the outside of the circle to listen rather than speak. I surround myself with those who usually do the heavy lifting in conversations. I'm fairly certain that's why Frank and I do so well in meetings together. And, particularly on this day, I really just wanted to get a moment alone with Mike, my friend.

As it were, I got that moment precisely ten minutes before his time would come, as we found ourselves sharing his hospital room in a rare moment of quiet with no visitors. I will never forget this time, as I was able to take his hand and promise him that I would do the best I could by his characters. That I would always look out for them the best I could, I would never stop. I had never made a promise to

anyone in this fashion, but it was the only thing I could offer. He passed away a few moments later.

"Hope"

Mike's passing was a dagger in the hearts of all of us here at Aspen, but it also served as the basis for our next chapter—survival. We learned a lot about failure and how to build ourselves up again even stronger. One last memory that serves as a milestone for me personally is a text message exchange I shared recently with creator Siya Dum after I had the pleasurable task of asking her if she wanted to draw the upcoming volume of *Michael Turner's Fathom*. I say pleasurable because I've known for over a decade that one of Siya's career goals was to eventually draw *Fathom*. To say it is a dream for her is an understatement. Now, I was the person that was able to let her know her time had come. It was as momentous a moment for me as it was for her I'm sure, I didn't let her know but I was over the moon. Needless to say, she accepted with open arms and now *Fathom* had the perfect artist. His legacy would still live on in great hands.

And, I can rest easy knowing my promise to Mike is stronger than ever."

—Vince Hernandez

ASPEN MEMORY
VINCE HERNANDEZ
VP/EDITOR IN CHIEF
Fathom, Kiani, Soullire, Shadow Magic, Channemagic, Demons in Excess

Aspen Universe: Revelations & Aspen Universe: Decimation

Aspen Universe: Revelations was the groundbreaking crossover event that forged the current and shared Aspen Universe! Michael Turner's two flagship titles collided into one time-spanning epic as *Fathom's* Aspen Matthews teamed up with *Soullire's* Malikai to forge a new path for many of Aspen's most prominent characters!

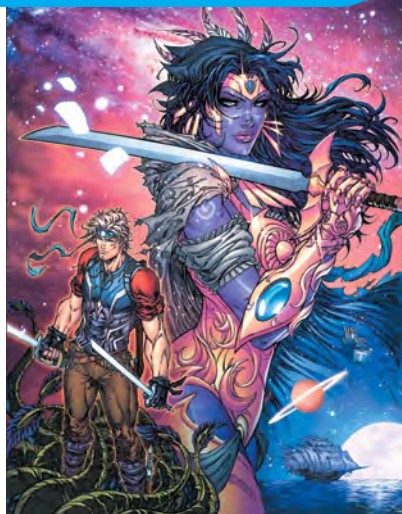
If *Revelations* was the mini-series that laid the foundation for the new Aspen Universe, *Aspen Universe: Decimation* is the event that shattered all expectations for Aspen's heroes and heroines! Under the spell of The Death Princess, the most powerful of villainesses laid waste to the Aspen Universe, and an unlikely combination of characters from Aspen's most popular titles were forced to band together and attempt to save the world!



PREVIEW COPY

Mindfield

To aid in the growing war on terror, the CIA revives the defunct MK ULTRA program in order to develop special agents with telepathic abilities, who can track down and stop future attacks before they actually happen. But, there is a dark side to their abilities, a heavy price to pay as the agents struggle to keep their sanity as they are bombarded by the thoughts of all those around them. The initial spark for *Mindfield* came in the wake of the September 11th attacks, as the United States government looked for every possible tool to fight back. I envisioned a CIA agent wandering the halls with files on the forgotten program, convinced that new breakthroughs in pharmacology and psychological research could help finally unlock the potential power within the human mind. In the story, Connor now finds himself alone, feeling betrayed by his government, who lied and deceived him about the true cost of his newfound abilities. As he moves on in a cloud of uncertainty, Connor will begin to discover he might not be as alone as he thought—and, that might not be a good thing.



Jirni

Ara is a half-human, half-djinn warrior princess in the midst of an epic quest to find her mother, who was kidnapped by a evil sorcerer that sees the djinn as the way to ultimate power. Along the way, Ara is confronted by the strange, the terrible, and the magical as she learns more about her world and her place in it. The story for *Jirni* grew from my lifelong love for all things fantasy. *Lord of the Rings*, *Conan the Barbarian*, *Flash Gordon*, world mythology, and Frank Frazetta fed the fire of imagination that has become *Jirni*. The coming third volume will be a culmination of sorts for Ara and her quest, as she finally tracks down the man responsible for her mother's disappearance. But, in order to reach her, she'll first have to face new dangers, both high and low, in this world and beyond.

TRADE PAPERBACKS



JIRNI VOLUME 1



JIRNI VOLUME 2



MINDFIELD VOLUME 1



ASPEN MEMORY
PAOLO PANTALENA
ARTIST

Jirni, Deathstroke

"Aspen is a place where I never felt like an employee but as a member of a family instead. The connection I got with all the team always helped me to improve my skill and to find the best ways to do what I do."

—Paolo Pantalena



ASPEN MEMORY
V KEN MARION
ARTIST

Jirni, Soulfire, Fathom, The Elder Gods

"I remember the day I got the email from Vince offering me the opportunity to draw *All New Soulfire*. It was an absolute dream come true. For years and years prior I had been doing the portfolio rounds at conventions, and always making sure that Aspen Comics was my first stop. You see, Michael Turner was and is to this day one of my all time biggest influences. The worlds he created were so cinematic and lush while his characters were the definition of heroism and nobility. His work really made me see the best in life and I so badly wanted the chance to contribute in any way I could to these stories. I can't thank Frank, Peter, Vince, Mark and J.T. enough for letting me come aboard and join the Aspen family. Congrats to 15 years strong, here's to many, many more!"

—V Ken Marion

"THE WORLDS HE CREATED WERE SO CINEMATIC AND LUSH WHILE HIS CHARACTERS WERE THE DEFINITION OF HEROISM AND NOBILITY."



PREVIEW

ADOPY



"Hang Ten...Or even Fifteen.

ASPEN MEMORY

J.T. KRUL WRITER

Fathom: Dawn of War, Soulfire, Fathom, Mindfield, Jirri, Green Arrow, Teen Titans

So technically that doesn't mesh with the literal meaning behind the expression "hang ten," but it works for my purposes. Of course, I am referring to Aspen Comics and their 15th anniversary. A milestone in every respect. I may not have been there for the official launch of the company, but it sure feels like I've been with them from the very beginning. What started out as a short gig (helping with the *Fathom: Dawn of War* miniseries) eventually turned into what I simply call a career. That's what Mike, Frank, and Peter gave me. A career. Sure, I've had the chance to work with other publishers over the years, but for me, Aspen is the home I never left. I had the incredible opportunity to usher Aspen Matthews along in the pages of *Fathom* for a few volumes, but *Soulfire*...well, that crazy, amazing world has been my playground for all 15 years I've been writing with the company. I've authored more stories in that universe than in any other, sticking with Malikai, Grace, Sonia, PJ, Benoist, Rainier and the gang for the long haul. I created characters and worlds, built mythologies and histories, killed people I loved, and yes, even brought a few back from the grave (hey, it's comics). *Soulfire* is part of me. And, I am part of it.

The same can be said of Aspen Comics. I'm not just a freelancer, and it's more than a company. We're family. That's the way it works in independent comics. A small rag-tag group of people toil away to bring new and exciting stories to local comic shops month in and month out, working tirelessly, burning the candle at both ends, then taking the melted wax and reforming it into a new candle to burn all over again. All seemingly done out of a van down by the river (Any Chris Farley fans out there, or am I dating myself? Don't answer that). During my years with Aspen, I've had the good fortune to work with a bullpen of accomplished artists—Peter Steigerwald, Talent Caldwell, Koi Turnbull, Micah Gunnell, Marcus To, Christina Strain, Ale Garza, John Starr, V Ken Marion, Alex Konat, Jason Fabok, Giuseppe Cafaro, Paolo Pantalano, Beth Sotelo, Mike DeBolfo, Nei Ruffino, Lori Hanson, Josh Reed, Wes Hartman, just to name a few.

And of course, there's Michael Turner—the creative force behind Aspen Comics itself. One of the reasons I cherish *Soulfire* as much as I do is because it was the book on which I worked most closely with Mike. Coming onboard during the first volume, I got to be a co-pilot as we embarked on a special journey, chronicling Malikai's great odyssey of self discovery. So much of Mike's essence resides in the pages of *Soulfire*—and not just the ones he drew. All of it. The book is about him, about his spirit and charisma and warmth. The light of magic in *Soulfire* isn't made up. It isn't fantasy. Mike was that light. He still is.

My love for comic books goes back a long way, to when I was an eight year-old boy buying issues off a spindle rack in a liquor store. You name it, I read it. *The Avengers. Spider-Man. Uncanny X-Men. Superman. Batman. Alpha Flight.* The list goes on and on. And on and on. No, seriously, it seems like all I did as a kid was read comics. They were my escape, my chance for action and adventure and drama. But more than that, they taught me about myself and about the world around me. They showed me the importance of teamwork, of compassion, of facing adversity and standing up for what is right. Through those characters, I learned it was okay to be a little weird, a bit awkward, and kind of a misfit. In other words—a teenager.

Today, writing comics still teaches me. Whether it's taking note of just how special the human spirit can be in *Soulfire*, or channeling the rage and sense of despair in the wake of the attacks of September 11th in *Mindfield*, or creating a new warrior princess in the form of *Jirri's Ara*, so I can offer my daughters a chance to experience a new woman of wonder, comics continues to enrich my life each and every day. And, I can only hope that readers enjoy these stories as much as I enjoy telling them."

—J.T. Krul



PREVIEW COPY

HEROES, VETS, AND DYNAMIC TEAM-UPS

Hero Initiative

Aspen is proud to contribute and work hand-in-hand with our partners at The Hero Initiative, a charitable organization that helps comic book creators in need. From our positive collaborations that included two successful Humble Bundle campaigns to our countless experiences with Hero Initiative at numerous comic book conventions, Aspen understands the importance of contributing to the heroes of the comic book industry's past, in addition to the heroes of the future!

NBC's Heroes

In the summer of 2006, Aspen Comics teamed up with NBC Universal to provide digital web comics as a weekly compliment to their smash hit television show, HEROES. Aspen would work closely with NBC for over 4 years and create nearly 200 unique online comics and digital features that were used to promote the show!

NBC/American Express

Throughout their working relationship with NBC on the HEROES television series, Aspen was often hired and utilized to create comic material for on-air commercials, as well as digital and print advertising. Such clients and work included *Nissan*, *Sprint*, and even an *American Express* commercial featuring Beyoncé Knowles!



Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter

Aspen has been hired numerous times over the years to provide artwork and content to a variety of television shows, movies and video games. One of the biggest projects was a full story art book written by Timur Bekmambetov to coincide with the release of his feature film, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*!

Sony Playstation

Beginning in the summer of 2014, Aspen has been steadily supplying Sony with graphics and themes for fans to acquire on the PS3 and the PS4 interface. *Michael Turner's Fathom*, *Soulfire*, as well as *Executive Assistant: Iris*, *Charismatic*, *BubbleGun*, and various other Aspen titles are all currently available with more to come!



AXE Body Spray

For close to a year, Aspen worked with the marketing team of AXE Body Spray to help introduce to the world their very first girl fragrance, 'Anarchy.' For Anarchy's 2012 debut, Aspen created a group of characters called the 'Anarchy Girls,' and a never before attempted digital comic campaign was launched! Fans and consumers could become part of the *Anarchy Girls Digital Comic* adventures to then help market, push and build awareness for the new fragrance brand across multiple social media platforms. The campaign was a huge success and even went on to win several awards for innovation in digital marketing and media!

Dynamite Entertainment

Michael Turner and many of the folks at Aspen have shared a friendship with Dynamite Entertainment, even prior to the formation of Aspen Comics. They've collaborated together on many projects over the years and Dynamite President Nick Barrucci had this to say...



ASPEN MEMORY
NICK BARRUCCI
DYNAMITE ENTERTAINMENT

"Mike was one of the most talented people this industry has ever had, and one of the nicest people I've ever met both inside and outside of our industry. Mike would always work hard and was able to show that good things do happen to good people. Unfortunately, he also proved the old adage that only the good die young. Mike is sorely missed, but those who met him were blessed for being fortunate enough to have done so, and especially any who knew him well enough and were friends. And though he is not with us today, the mark he made on our industry, and his work, will live on forever, and be an inspiration for generations to come. As it should."

—Nick Barrucci

Vet Tix

Aspen Comics and the Veteran Tickets Foundation (Vet Tix) have been friends and supporters of each other for many years. Founder Eddie Rausch had this to say...



ASPEN MEMORY
EDDIE RAUSCH
VET TIX
Chief Operating Officer
Chairman & Founder

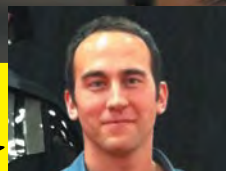
"Working with Aspen Comics has always been extremely successful for Vet Tix. In our early days, we needed to be creative in finding ways to generate revenue to fund approved submissions for our "Hero's Wish" program. We needed to create a foundation we could build upon until the program could be self-sufficient. Frank, Peter, Vince and everyone else at Aspen Comics believed in our mission to "Give to those who gave" and were ready to partner with us with zero hesitation. In many cases they came to us with ideas incorporating their two main characters, Aspen and Grace. Our most recent project included blank covers for each character that helped Vet Tix reach that final goal of being self-sufficient with our "Hero's Wish" program."

Aspen Comics is led by an amazing group of people with BIG hearts. Vet Tix couldn't be any more honored to have partnered with Aspen Comics, and I couldn't be any more humbled to call them my friends. Michael's legacy is in great hands and personally I am very excited to see what the next 15 years will bring for Aspen Comics."

—Edward "Eddie" Rausch

PREVIEW COPY

MARK ROSLAN



ASPEN MEMORY
MARK ROSLAN
VP/DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
BubbleGun, Broken Pieces, Fathom, Gulture

"Aspen is my home away from home. I spend more time there than anywhere else on the planet. My favorite memories include watching Turner turn a blank piece of paper into a masterpiece, Steigerwald creating magic with a computer, and everyday Mastromauro and Hernandez losing to me in fantasy football."*

—Mark Roslan

*Frank and Vince strongly deny Mark's claim.



BubbleGun

I love science fiction with a passion and felt like the comic shelves were lacking an ultra fun sci-fi action adventure story. After watching two Brad Bird films in a row I was inspired and stayed up an entire night filling a notebook with ideas that became *Mission Impossible* meets *The Matrix*.

Sisters Mollie and Devyn, with the aid of trusted teammates Roman and Kyo—form an impressive team of mercenaries taking on jobs that other groups can't, while relying on a plethora of cutting edge, cyber-punk technology along the way. However, when one cyber heist goes awry, and the group finds themselves in the possession of a mysterious package—a natural born cybernetic boy named Asher. As the deadly worlds of corrupt industry and high stakes espionage come crashing down on them, this boy is unraveling the tight knit group to its core—and leaving their "family" with a slim chance for survival.

The second volume doubles down on the *BubbleGun* team's troubles as Devyn and Mollie find their bandit crew forced to do the bidding of an underworld gangster, Sir Penny while Asher gets kidnapped by his wicked father.

Broken Pieces

Only handful of people know that *Broken Pieces* was initially a video game pitch I had where in a future torn apart by the deadly catastrophe of biological contamination, pollution and corporate greed, a hero rises from the ashes, rips off his own body parts and attaches new appendages to fight his way to make things right. Then Aspen co-owners Frank and Peter offered me the chance of a lifetime by asking if I was interested in turning it into comic book. I challenged myself to make the most emotionally charged sci-fi story I could come up with. Frank came up with the title and it fit perfectly. Doctors Richard and Gabriella Adams stood on the verge of a scientific breakthrough—a cure to the epidemic spreading across North America, wiping out civilization as we know it. However, their union of research—and marriage—is ripped apart in a tragic instance, and Richard must make the ultimate decision to get her back. In order to defeat the powerful corporation responsible for his attempted murder, and reunite with the wife he loves more than anything, he must leave behind everything about himself he once held dear—including his own body.



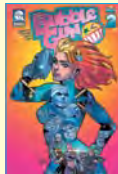
TRADE PAPERBACKS



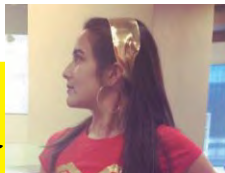
BROKEN PIECES
COMING SOON



BUBBLEGUN
VOLUME 1



BUBBLEGUN
VOLUME 2
COMING SOON



ASPEN MEMORY
ANDREA SHEA
ASSISTANT EDITOR
Aspen 2014 - 2015, DC Comics

"Back when I used to work the Aspen booth, one of the questions I'd get asked most (right after, "Do you have more of those *Fathom: Definitive Edition* trades?") was, "Did you ever get to meet Michael?" I started at Aspen in 2014, so my answer was always

a very regretful, "Unfortunately not." But I did witness Michael Turner's legacy through the stories his fans would tell me. Some met their significant other through a mutual love of his art. Others showed me tattoos of his signature, his name scrawled in sharpie made permanent on their skin. He was the kindest, warmest man you'd ever meet in comics, they all told me, could make you feel like the only person in the room after waiting in line with a thousand others. And my personal favorite, over and over and over again: "He inspired my career. I wouldn't be in comics if I hadn't met him."

Today, industry is bursting with pros that were given their first shot at Aspen Comics, because Aspen has an unparalleled eye for developing talent and upholds Michael Turner's legacy by daring to take chances. On artists you maybe haven't heard of today, but will inevitably grow into tomorrow's brightest stars. On stories that are risky and expansive and thrilling and FUN all at once. And just a few years ago on me, at the time a glorified dog walker with dreams of editing comics but hadn't the first idea how to achieve them. Here's to 15 years of Aspen and many, many more.

—Andrea Shea

PREVIEW COPY

FRANK MASTROMAURO



Overtaken

Overtaken was created by Aspen Co-owner Frank Mastromauro. The series is a love letter to all the alien and creature feature movies Frank enjoyed watching as a kid...and still to this day! It initially came out in the summer of 2013 as part of Aspen's '10 for 10' initiative during their 10 year anniversary celebration.

Some questions, you may not want to know the answers to. Journalist Will Harden is well equipped for most situations, but nothing can prepare him for what's about to come. Relocating from the big city to a small mountain town with his wife, everything is turned upside-down the moment she goes missing. Are the rumors of alien abductions true or did something far worse happen to his wife? No matter the cause, Harden will not stop until he uncovers the truth, or dies trying.

Needless to say, Frank took MANY moons to finally finish up the first volume that recently concluded. He certainly has it set-up for a possible sequel but nothing is on the horizon...yet.



"My very first interaction with the Aspen studio was an interview with Vice President Mark Roslan for a graphic design internship. I wore a

ASPEN MEMORY
GABE CARRASCO
EDITOR
Aspen 2015 - Current

button-down shirt, my best tie, slacks, and even brought a briefcase full of art samples. Megan, the office manager, informed me Mark was running late and directed me to wait on an weathered leather couch where a large Hawaiian man was sleeping a few moments earlier. Mark arrived in jeans, a baseball cap, and a shirt that said, "I'm not saying I'm Batman, I'm just saying nobody has ever seen me and Batman in a room together." As I shook his hand, it was that moment I realized I was extremely overdressed.

Over two years, and a thousand memories later, I'm an Editor here at Aspen Comics. Frank, Vince, Peter, Mark and Megan have all made this the best job I could ever ask for. Any time I tell anyone what my job entails, I can't help but smile.

I hear Frank almost refused to hire "the weirdo with the briefcase."^{*}

^{*}Frank strongly denies Gabe's claim.

Dellec

The *Dellec* series debuted in the summer of 2009. Created by Frank Mastromauro and Vince Hernandez, *Dellec* was one of the first new Aspen series to star a male protagonist. Many of the names, settings and villains in the book were designed and thought of during multiple long drives between convention season as Frank and Vince would sit in the truck for hours thinking up crazy scenarios and events. Brainstorming at its finest!

Dellec is a man caught up in a blur of immorality, yet his quest is clear—destroy the forces of evil where they flourish—and even places where the lines of good and evil are not so easily defined! Following a tragic set of circumstances leading to his wife's murder at the hands of a malevolent Demi-God, our hero lands headfirst into the epic battle between good and evil—and his chances for survival are grim. However, Dellec is not one to back down from a fight no matter the foe—specifically when his own life hangs in the balance. Dellec is one man's quest for vengeance and redemption as he attempts to take on the very being that created mankind itself—God!

Even though the first volume of *Dellec* ended years ago, the character has played a pivotal role in other Aspen series such as the recently completed, *No World*. *Dellec Volume 2* has been in the works for quite some time and is set to hit store shelves later this year!



—Gabe Carrasco

PREVIEW COPY

ASPEN EVOLUTION THREE: MICHAEL TURNER

The Life and Legacy

No mention of Aspen's evolution could possibly exist without the life, legacy and vision of Michael Turner brought to the forefront. Michael founded our company, along with friends and colleagues Frank Mastromauro and Peter Steigerwald, following a superstar stint forging the best-selling series *Witchblade* and of course *Michael Turner's Fathom*.

Aspen's early years were marked by Turner's successes in launching our own formative title, *Soulfire*, as well as marquee projects with industry leaders such as DC Comics, Marvel Comics, NBC and many others. Michael also provided many of our classic and iconic covers as well as help guide many of Aspen's top projects and endeavors.

Unfortunately, Michael passed away in June 2008 but his inspiration would never leave Aspen Comics, as the studio courageously moved forward to continue growing the brand he created.



Lola XOXO

Lola XOXO is about a young woman braving the post-apocalyptic United States landscape in search of her parents.

The concept came about after seeing years of a war, with no end in sight. I also played *Fallout 3*, *Red Dead Redemption*, and read a lot of dystopian novels a few years ago, which helped solidify the *Lola XOXO* world.

Initially, I had three volumes planned for the current story. Now that Lola has grown into her own, and with the past slowly being uncovered, she has greater enemies to face, and more adventures in store. The past has a way of coming back to haunt everyone that thought the end of the war, was the end of future conflicts.



ASPEN MEMORY

SIYA OUM

CREATOR/ARTIST/WRITER

Lola XOXO, Lola XOXO: Wasteland Madam, Fathom

"Michael Turner was the one artist that made me want to pursue my comic career. The way he pushed boundaries inspires me until this day. Every time I'm at a convention and I get to peek at Mike's works, I always do. It still gives me butterflies and pure admiration.

I've been fortunate enough to be a part of the Aspen family that Mike created. We've been through so much together. With their guidance, I've grown so much as a person, and as a creator. The amount of godlike patience and understanding they have in order for me to see my vision through is unmatched.

I have to say, it's been an extremely challenging road, but I wouldn't change a thing. I love my Aspen family."

—Siya Oum



"My very first convention, like any other artist dragging a portfolio around, was daunting. After waiting over two hours outside the convention hall just to gain entry, the very first company I laid eyes on was Aspen. They were situated right in front of the stairs and the doors. Michael Turner had just left Top Cow and I had read a write up in *Wizard Magazine* about him starting his own company. So I wandered over. Perhaps miraculously, the massive line that usually accompanied Mike's presence wasn't there. I asked the first person in the booth I came across, Peter Steigerwald, if Mike was there. He hooked a thumb to his right and I scooted over. Mike graciously looked through my portfolio, chuckled at a seahorse I had put in the background of a panel, and asked then Aspen Marketing Assistant, Liz Brizzi, to give me a business card. As it turned out, Aspen and Mike were the only studio to give me the time of day at that convention. That business card kept my spirits up, and from that point on I focused my energy into Aspen.

ASPEN MEMORY

LORI "CROSS" HANSON

ARTIST

Executive Assistant, Assistants

Through the mentorship, the internship and eventually the work in the nine years to follow, I gained priceless experience, solid friendships, and skills I put into use every day. From collaborating with Vince Hernandez on the creation of Executive Assistants Sophora and Daisy, to brainstorming ideas that unfortunately didn't quite come to fruition, the level of creativity and drive within the studio couldn't help but spark the same in whomever spent any length of time there. I can honestly say that I would not be the woman I am today, I would not be the artist I am today, and I would not have had the confidence and drive to form my own company (Near Mint Mill) were it not for the time I spent with Aspen."

—Lori Hanson



Aspen colleagues and close friends Steve Simon and Sam Campos share some memories:

ASPEN MEMORY
STEVE SIMON
ASPEN FAMILY
Convention support

"Many moons ago, a friend of mine named Sam called me up and said, "Hey, I have these guys who want to come see a film set, can I bring them?" I said, sure why not, it was a great show to walk people around. We were shooting nights

and when they got there I met cool, but being cool and just three guys who had the biggest under playing how much they had smiles on their faces and were done in the comic industry and were just looking around as if it was for me to just see the natural the coolest thing. Enter Michael love, kindness, patience and Turner, Frank Mastromauro, and time they gave back to the fans Peter Steigerwald; I showed them around and we talked a bit about the comic industry and how I had been collecting since 1984, mostly *Batman* and Vertigo Comics titles. The guys kinda casually said they worked in comics. Once you meet these guys you find that they are the most genuine nicest guys you could meet. We became great friends and they invited me to see the new building they recently moved into as they had just created their own company called Aspen Comics.

All of this was great. I got to hang with these guys who seemed so nice and they were starting this small comic company I never heard of. I hoped for the best, as it must be hard to do that in such a tough industry. Then, they invited me to come help at my first San Diego Comic Con. I was so stoked to be able to go and thought, wow-- this is going to be cool. Well, now it was my turn to be bright eyed and amazed. These friends whom I have just started to hang with let me help out and it was so cool. But what blew me away is how much love the fans had for these guys. I mean I knew they were

cool, but being cool and just under playing how much they had done in the comic industry and for me to just see the natural love, kindness, patience and time they gave back to the fans was inspiring.

Wasabi bet:

One comic convention at the Aspen company dinner we were all trying to get Mark Roslan to eat a golf ball size hunk of wasabi, and trying to raise the bet to make him do it. When all of a sudden, Micah Gunnell just walks up and puts the whole thing in his mouth. His face was in tears immediately but he did finish it all...while everyone else almost fell off our chairs laughing so hard. This was the same year artist Francis Manapul was dared to pick Peter up off the ground.

Root beer floats:

Every year after San Diego Comic Con we would head back home and stop to beat traffic and have a meal. This one place we used to stop at had these amazing root beer floats. Until one fateful year they were out of ice cream. Well these guys would not settle for less, so Peter went and got a giant tub of ice cream and we surprised the restaurant by finishing the whole thing!

A big fish and the bird:

One year I was able to go to Dragon Con with Aspen. They had been there the year before and went scuba diving in the big reef tank at the Georgia Aquarium. I heard these tales of how great it was, and how the whale shark had beat up Frank. This year they were going to go again and everyone was so excited. While Peter was swimming around underwater showing the Aspen sign to all the kids watching from the big seating area, Frank was waving to the audience watching, and smiling. Now I have been a friend of these guys for years, and as one does, we like to razz one another a lot. So as Frank swam past the big glass-viewing window I was close to, I hid my hands then gave him the bird. It was the best moment watching his mind flip and then him start to flip me off back while then having to catch and stop himself as to not flip off the whole crowd watching.

My engagement and a thumbs up:

One year on our Aspen trip to Hawaii, I planned to ask my wife to marry me. Out of all of us who went I told Sam, Mike, Frank and Peter, so it would be a surprise to everyone else. The night I was going to ask her to marry me, Mike, Frank and I went to

play golf for a guy's day and of course I won as I had the high score, and as usual Mike had the lowest score, so he lost (just kidding, Mike!). When I called the restaurant where I was going to propose they said they were going to close soon, but when I asked if I brought a whole group of people would they stay open, they said yes, so about sixteen or so of us went to dinner. Sam is taking pictures to capture this amazing event and just as I ask her to marry me he gets the picture. It is such a sweet moment as everyone is looking at us and she is about to cry... everyone except Frank, who is looking right at the camera, smiling and giving a big thumbs up!

Thank you guys for the past 15 years of friendship and sharing the wonderful world of Aspen with everyone. Keep it up and I look forward to more to come."

—Steve Simon



"I was fortunate to be friends with the gang from Aspen even before there even was an Aspen. Life is short. Life is scary. Too scary to take a chance to pursue your dreams. Too short not to. This is something that Michael Turner and I had talked about when I asked him how all of this came about. He took the leap to go out on his own and he had the best of friends who

ASPEN MEMORY
SAM CAMPOS
ASPEN FAMILY
Convention support

were crazy enough to follow. Under great opposition and conflict, they worked together to make it. In the process, they have made some of the best comic book and stand alone art that set the standard for the industry that are still in place today. Was it easy to do? No. Nothing great ever is. It's a constant struggle that few people will ever truly understand. Yet here they are, creators of so many different types of work. It's frikken amazing.

The first year at Comic Con was the real test. How would the fans react to Aspen? Would it be successful or a bust? Under pressure and time constraints to make printing deadlines, Peter Steigerwald worked around the clock till the last minute we loaded the U-Haul trailer and drove to San Diego. It would be the first time the world would meet these worlds of Aspen. The set up was amazing, and the fans came! Mike and the gang worked their magic and greeted each and every fan. It was amazing. The love and support was incredible! Something to see and experience! That weekend I spent most of the convention driving back and forth to Pomona in my Pathfinder picking up the San Diego exclusive books as they were printed. A lot of driving, but it was worth it to bring them and drop them on the floor. It was a privilege to be there with all of them. In the years since, I have returned to Hawaii. People ask me if I miss L.A.? I say, "The only things I miss about L.A. are my friends, my paycheck and Disneyland." When I say friends, I mean my crew, my peeps, my friends, my family at Aspen.
Me Ke Aloha Pumehana my Ohana. A Hui Hou."

—Sam Campos

PREVIEW COPY

SCOTT LOBDELL



ASPEN MEMORY
SCOTT LOBDELL
 CREATOR/WRITER
Fathom, vol. 4, *Horsewoman*,
The Four Points, *No World*

"I never really knew Michael—other than to smile enthusiastically at each other when we found ourselves at the same convention..."

...But you can tell a lot about who a person was by what they left behind when they've gone. One of the things he left behind was a company comprised of some of the most fiercely dedicated creators determined to do the best comics they can each issue.

I know he would be proud of his friends who have been carrying on and growing his company and legacy. I know I am!"

—*Scott Lobdell*



The Four Points

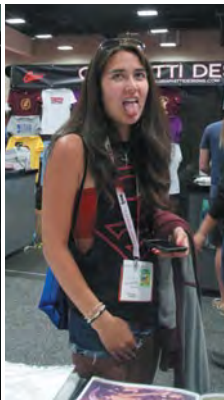
The Four Points, essentially, are the Four Horsewomen of the Apocalypse—that is, it has always been their job to prevent the Apocalypse over the years. We are meeting the most recent incarnation of the Four Points.

The Four Points was something that I had pitched Aspen because (as anyone who has read my run on *Uncanny X-Men*, *Generation X*, *Teen Titans*, and *Red Hood And The Outlaws* knows) I love team books. I made the argument for expanding on the original world of *Fathom* that Michael had created with so much potential for exploring. As it turned out they had been having similar discussions internally about that very idea. So we were pretty simpatico.

No World

No World is a non-team of individuals who come together only in times of crisis. They have no formal leadership, no standing roster, no headquarters, no set agenda. Rather than fight for their own "worlds," they unite as No World.

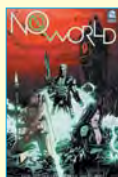
No World was pitched to me by the guys. Essentially they wanted to have a non-team book so that the roster could change from mission to mission so we could explore any corner of the Aspenverse. (Did I make that up?! I should so copyright that!) I love that for each arc there will be mostly new members—though Thicke and Doc Blue seem to represent the core of this informal group so far.



TRADE PAPERBACKS



THE FOUR POINTS
 VOLUME 1



NO WORLD
 VOLUME 1 COMING SOON



ASPEN MEMORY
JORDAN GUNDERSON
 ARTIST
The Four Points, *Executive Assistant*,
Assessors, *Aspen Universe*, *Revolutions*

"One memory about Aspen that really sticks out to me happened my first year in college on a car ride back home during winter break. I had received my monthly copy of *Wizard Magazine* which had a feature article on *Michael Turner's Fathom*. I spent the entire car ride marveling at the universe Mike had created in the world of *Fathom*, going panel by panel in the previewed art and then back again to study everything he had done in those pages. All of the characters, environments and details of his work inspired me to create my own stories and really became the foundation for the artist I am today. It makes me proud to think I was able to lend my art to a universe and artist that had inspired me from the very beginning of my artistic career and set me along my path."

—*Jordan Gunderson*

"I SPENT THE ENTIRE CAR RIDE MARVELING AT THE UNIVERSE MIKE HAD CREATED IN THE WORLD OF FATHOM..."



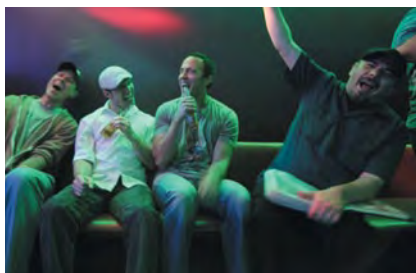
COPY

PETER STEIGERWALD



Lady Mechanika

Lady Mechanika is the breakout sensationally successful creation of Joe Benitez. It began here at Aspen in 2010. Joe launched it with Aspen after he helped finish illustrating *Michael Turner's Soulfire* Volume 1. It's a steampunk mystery action-adventure about Lady Mechanika, a paranormal investigator in Victorian times with a mysterious past and unknown secrets. Fans embraced it immediately and so many have endeared themselves to it. After a few issues published by us, Joe began his own publishing company just as we did and there she now resides, but we are deeply proud to have been her home for her origin.



The ZooHunters

The ZooHunters is primarily a story about relationships and survival, but it touches on several themes. Set on a cosmic stage, the story centers on a father and son, Abros and Ty, respectively. Abros is a ZooHunter, one who travels between planets capturing alien creatures for alien zoos. Ty joins him in his trade after a tragedy and Abros begins teaching his son about his life and life in general. Their adventures take them to far-flung worlds where they encounter strange creatures and cultures. Joined by Abros' friend Minalara and her "Dog" they come into conflict with the machinations of the scheming Gaurec and his cabal of unscrupulous ZooHunter Crews. Their survival will ultimately depend on their wits and skills.

It's a story that began for me because I like drawing animals and aliens and I wanted to explore the definitions of life. It doesn't come out often. There's been a two year delay because of the other demands of my schedule, but it's coming back soon and I hope you enjoy it.



ASPEN MEMORY

JOE BENITEZ

CREATOR/ARTIST/WRITER
Lady Mechanika, Soulfire, Titans, The Darkness

"Aspen was my home from 2008 to 2013. I was brought on board after Michael Turner's untimely passing to finish his run on *Soulfire*, and it was also where my creator-owned book *Lady Mechanika* got its start.

I remember when Mike first broke away from Top Cow to start his own studio. It was awesome. It was something a lot of us had discussed and wanted to do but he was the first one with the balls to do it. It paved the way for the rest of us.

I applaud Peter Steigerwald, Frank Mastromauro, Vince Hernandez, and Mark Roslan for having the strength and vision to continue Mike's legacy. It's difficult as it is to run a company, I can't even imagine how impossible it must be to do it without your leader.

I'm happy I had a small hand in contributing to the books at Aspen and wish them continued success. To another 15 years and beyond!"

—Joe Benitez



ASPEN MEMORY
WES HARTMAN
ARTIST

Fathom, Kani, Portal Board, Sentinel, The Godless King

"I love Aspen and the people that work there. I've been doing this for quite some time and as a colorist it's easy to feel isolated, especially on a tough deadline. But when I was pulling an all-nighter to finish the last half of *Overtaken*, I found out that Vince and Peter and Mark (maybe Frank too, we weren't emailing though so I'm not sure) were all in the office working on books all night with me trying to hit those deadlines. I was not alone even though we were thousands of miles apart, we were all in the trenches and that meant the world to me; when I was exhausted it got me through the night.

That's who these guys are, they are hard working, and will be right there at your side the whole step of the way."

—Wes Hartman

"I WAS NOT ALONE EVEN THOUGH WE WERE THOUSANDS OF MILES APART, WE WERE ALL IN THE TRENCHES..."



PREVIEW



ASPEN AND BIG DOG INK



In early 2015, Aspen Comics and Big Dog Ink joined forces to help introduce the BDI brand and its host of properties to a wider audience. For the next few years, along with BDI creator Tom Hutchison, Aspen would reprint and also produce brand new material and comics for several of BDI's most popular titles including SHAHRAZAD, CRITTER and THE LEGEND OF OZ: THE WICKED WEST. BDI has since returned to self-publishing and is set to debut several new and returning titles in the near future!



ASPEN MEMORY
TOM HUTCHISON
PUBLISHER/
WRITER

The Legend of Oz: The Wicked West, Critter, Shahrazad

"The three years BDI spent under the Aspen umbrella were simply incredible. I can't thank Frank, Peter, Vince (and their entire crew and fan base) enough for embracing us and helping us spread the word about our work! We wish Aspen Comics and the Michael Turner legacy nothing but the best in 2018 and beyond!"

—Tom Hutchison



"Gratitude.

I don't think I have ever expressed how grateful I am to my family at Aspen. They are my friends no matter the distance and no matter the time. They are my brothers and sisters that I know I can call whenever I need someone. They are INSPIRATION, CREATIVITY, MASTERFUL LEADERSHIP, ARTISTRY...I could

ASPEN MEMORY
PILI YARUSI
ASPEN FAMILY
Inspired the "Pili" character in *Soulfire*

and would go on but I am on a deadline. :)

My brother, Sam Campos, introduced me to this ragtag group of awesomeness back in 1998 in Hawaii when they were still with a company called Top Cow and Michael Turner (their fearless blue-eyed leader with the goofy smile and even more impressive creative mind and open heart) was still jumping off cliffs and impressing girls with his mad Kung-Fu skills. (show-off) Peter Steigerwald with his happy local-boy attitude and this immense and impressive knowledge of the written word and his kaleidoscope brain of crazy color and amazing creativity. Plus he just gives the best hugs. Frank and Kelly. That was probably the first time I'd ever met a TRUE POWER COUPLE. I don't think they even realized it back then...how POWERFUL they were together. They both looked like the were going to conquer the world...or at the very least the cliff at La'ie Point. I fell in love with all of them immediately and this was just their first trip to Hawaii. This new family came to visit Hawaii time and time again and grew each time. And I always happened to be home in O'ahu from Hilo, Hawaii or New York City. And every time they all visited... it was like a recharge... just hanging out with these magnificent people. As soon as I moved to LA...I had an automatic and ever-growing family! Vince, Mark, Micah, Beth and Joel (I was their roommate for a time), J.T., Koi, Talent, Christina, Josh, Chris, Marcus, Alex, David, Joe...

There are so many memories to choose from 1998 to now...almost twenty years later. So I am going to choose Gratitude.

I got a call from my brother, Peter, one day and he asks if they can name one of the characters in *Michael Turner's Soulfire* after me. I was floored. And of course, I said yes! Because who says no to that! The character is the daughter of a Hawaiian Kahuna who the main characters travel to Hawaii to meet. Sound familiar...??? This character, "Pili", ended up being more than a back ground character in one issue...she has appeared time and time again and has been drawn by Michael Turner, Peter Steigerwald, Micah Gunnell, Siya Oum...and so many other amazing Aspen artists. So, thank you to my family, my 'Dhana,' at Aspen Comics. I know I've thanked you before but I don't think I've expressed how grateful I am to you all for your friendship, love and Aloha. I miss you all...all the time.

Huge hugs and so much Aloha. Your Hawaiian Sister."

—Pili'aloa "Pili" Yarusi

PREVIEW COPY



20 years on and I still remember the first time I came across Michael Turner's art. And why shouldn't I, since it has turned out to have a huge impact on my life.

ASPEN MEMORY
SIMON ROHRMÜLLER
ASPEN FAN
International fan since Aspen's first comic book

It was in the fall of 1997; I was 15 and accompanying my grandmother on a trip to Germany. One day we went to a mall, and while she went shopping for clothes I stayed at a magazine shop, looking at what comics Germany had to offer that Sweden (where I live) didn't. Very vividly I can still recall this one book (the cover) that leaped out at me from a spinning rack – *Witchblade* #13. Thumbing through, it was unlike any other comic I'd seen; the art was spectacular and caught me at once. I bought it immediately. Since it was in German I didn't understand many words, but that didn't keep me from looking it through, over and over again. Once back home in Sweden I eventually managed to hunt down the American books and the rest is, as they say, history (I still have that *Witchblade* #13 in my collection. While it might not be the most valuable book I own, it's probably one of the most appreciated). I followed Michael while at Top Cow, and as he parted from them to form Aspen Comics, and onwards.

I had the pleasure of meeting Michael on two separate occasions. The first time was in 2006 at San Diego Comic Con, where I'd been queuing for well over an hour just to exchange a few words with him and to get a signature. It was brief, but it was very memorable, and the moment was immortalized on camera. And though he

rarely did sketches anymore at conventions as big as this one, when he realized I wanted his signature on the inside of the leather bound copy of *Fathom* I'd brought, and not the outside (where he just now already had signed it) he took the time to not only sign it anew (on the inside), but to also draw a sketch in it. It's a small and simple one, but he drew it for me and I'll treasure it forever. It's a great testament to Michael's devotion to his fans.

The second time I met him was in 2007, at Wizard World Los Angeles. He was recovering from chemo and even though no one would've blamed him had he not shown up at the convention, he came anyway. Not just for the panel, but he stayed for signings down on the convention floor as well. The queue was daunting. It circled the Aspen booth and cut over an aisle where it continued to circle halfway around another booth before it was capped. But Michael stayed put through it all and made sure everyone in it got the signature(s) they wanted. I even remember seeing a sketch or two being made (a *Thomas the Tank Engine* amongst them was a kick).

It was after the panel, during the walk down to the convention floor, Michael and I exchanged a few words. Again, it was brief, mostly because I didn't want to hassle him (and I was a tad too star-struck, I admit), but I wished him the best of luck and

a speedy recovery.

Though these two meetings were indeed brief, they were enough for me to experience something that I've heard recounted from numerous other fans time and time again; Michael made you feel like you mattered, and the time he spent with a fan was with that fan, only that fan, and no-one else mattered at that moment, only them. Michael was a great source of inspiration for me and continues to be to this day. Not just his art, but as a person. As an aspiring artist myself, the way he treated his fans has set the bar for how I try to treat whomever comes over to my table at conventions. I want them to feel as appreciated as Michael did his fans. I want their moment talking to me to be as positive and memorable as the moments I spent with Michael, because every fan is unique and should not be taken for granted, because without fans I wouldn't be there signing. So the least I can do is to give them my time and attention. Michael knew that, and that is why he's still so fondly remembered to this day, and will continue to be so for many years to come.

Of course, it's no surprise that the same sense of appreciation toward the fans lives within everyone at Aspen. Though I live in Sweden, and never really had a connection with any of the crew at Aspen beyond a "mere fan", I've had the privilege to not only

visit the studio on almost every occasion I've been state-side, but also to hang out with the guys creating these wonderful books, both at conventions, as well as in private (and even lost a bit of money to them during the occasional poker-game). I've many stories to share about the good times I've spent with the gang, but suffice to say there's a reason each panel starts and ends with a heartfelt "Aloha". The size of their hearts is beyond measure and they really love their fans through and through, in short: they have Aloha, as did Michael.

Finally, I owe a great deal of thanks to Aspen Comics for some of my most dear friends. The Aloha-spirit of the gang transcended into the digital world and onto their (now defunct) message boards, where a tight-knit community was formed and fans from all over the world would come to hang out. Through that community I befriended people of various nationalities, several of whom I'm not only still friends with today (more than a decade later), but I also have met in person numerous times in spite of the geographical distances between us, and have come to regard as my extended family.

All this, because of a comic book on a spinning rack in Germany, more than 20 years ago...

—Simon Rohrmüller



Ekos

Ekos holds a very special place in the history of Aspen Comics. Originally created by Michael Turner and brought to life with co-creator and superstar writer Geoff Johns, a six-page introductory 'trailer' comic debuted in 2003 as part of a competition between itself and Michael Turner's other brand new property, *Soulfire*. Fans voted between the two to decide which property Michael and Aspen would debut first. *Soulfire* narrowly edged out *Ekos* and became the flagship title it is today. *Ekos* resides on the shelf since Michael's passing and still remains one of the most inquired about comics Aspen has ever produced.



PREVIEW COPY

OUTSIDE PROJECTS



Dead Man's Run

From the mind of *The Walking Dead* Producer Gale Anne Hurd and acclaimed storyteller Greg Pak, comes the pulse-pounding story of one man's terrifying journey into the depths of pure evil!

Hell is a prison from which none escape. It is a concrete reality in the middle of the California desert surrounded by razor wire, gun towers and guards that will eat your soul. However, when a young cartographer named Sam Tinker begins an epic battle against the mysterious Warden and all the horrors of her domain in a desperate attempt to rescue his sister Juniper—the only innocent in Hell—things really turn unpleasant! Joining forces with the worst of the worst, Sam learns firsthand what it's like to visit the world of the damned.

With *The Walking Dead* occupying most of their time, Gale Anne Hurd's Valhalla Entertainment still have some great ideas on possibly developing *Dead Man's Run* into a feature film. Though no follow-up series is currently planned, the thought of reuniting the team of Greg Pak and Tony Parker would surely be welcome any day of the week!

TRADE PAPERBACKS



DEAD MAN'S RUN
COMING SOON



THE SCOURGE



The Scourge

The Scourge was sort of gifted to Aspen by Gale Anne Hurd and writer Scott Lodbell. The one sentence pitch was "Gargoyles take over Manhattan!" Who could say no to that from the producer of *The Terminator*?!

New York City has seen its fair share of tragedy and chaos, yet nothing can prepare the Big Apple for an outbreak of deadly, murderous gargoyles! When an epidemic of catastrophic proportions infects the sprawling metropolis, turning average, everyday citizens into the violent creatures of legend, John Griffin, a New York City S.W.A.T. officer must turn the city upside down to save not only his personal life, but also the city itself. *The Scourge* is an intense, action-packed horror survival story highlighting one man's struggle to survive amongst insurmountable odds!



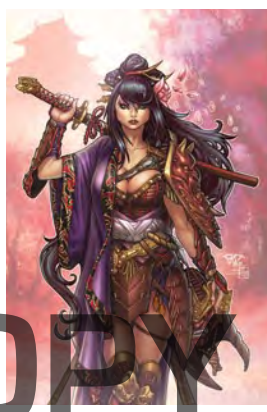
Idolized

Welcome to the mind-bending comic book series about a television show where super-powered teens and 20-somethings are competing for the ultimate dream-prize: a guaranteed spot in that world's top super-group, The Powered Protectors. The chance of winning offers fame, fortune, massive endorsement deals and, of course, a chance to actually save the world. Kids who dream of being worshipped as the next great, iconic hero would be falling all over themselves to get on—and hopefully even win—the show. Against this backdrop, *Idolized* is the story of Joule, a girl with fledgling superpowers and a dark past, who seeks revenge, and ultimately finds redemption, over the course of competing in this televised superhero competition show. However, Joule will discover that success does not always guarantee happiness—or your life!

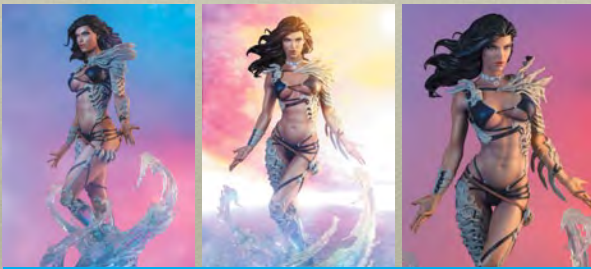


Oniba: Swords of the Demon

Enter the world of feudal Japan, where bloody clan warfare and powerful bloodlines rule the land along with ancient evil beyond mortal comprehension! Within this brutal climate, one woman is faced with a choice that could forever change the face of history. Yukiko, a samurai turned ronin, must attempt to battle the perils of her brutal past while surviving a horrific uprising that proves to be more supernatural than she could ever have anticipated! Look for *Oniba: the Sword of the Demon* to return in the near future!



PREVIEW COPY



Sideshow Collectibles Aspen Matthews Premium Format Statue

ASPEN EVOLUTION FOUR: BEYOND

Los Angeles, CA. Our present course both celebrates Michael Turner's legacy, while ushering in a new era of superstar creators and talent that form the basis of the current Aspen Comics! *Aspen Universe: Revelations* saw the combining of Aspen's properties into one cohesive Aspen Universe. Our library of titles has expanded into multiple libraries across the nation and the digital realm across the globe! Thanks to you—the reader—Aspen Comics has charted our course onward towards our next milestone!

ASPEN UPCOMING

Over the course of 15 years, Aspen Comics have filled the comic shop shelves with a wide variety of fantastical stories, and awe-inspiring art. This year, as we continue building the Aspen Legacy, and celebrate the past and present, we'd like to give you a sneak peek into what we have coming in the very near future.

Beginning in February, we have the long-awaited third volumes of two of Aspen's most popular series, *Charismagic*, and *Shrugged!* Written by Aspen's own Vince Hernandez and Frank Mastromauro respectively, we're proud to have these fan-favorite series starting off our 15th anniversary with a bang! We're also excited to announce all returning series in 2018 will be accompanied by 25¢ Primer issues in the same month, to help catch you up on the story so far! Speaking of returning series, J.T. Krul brings back Aspen's fantasy epic, *Jimi* with volume 3 this March, along with the accompanying 25¢ Primer!

Also debuting in February, we have the first of our brand new titles, *Portal Bound!* Written by Aspen veteran Mark Roslan, and newcomer Gabe Carrasco, this series features the first of our 12-page zero issues, available for every brand new property in 2018, and priced at only \$1.50!

Make sure to mark your calendars for Saturday, May 5th, which is Free Comic Book Day! Aspen Comics will be participating in this nation-wide event where you can grab FREE comics from any participating comic retailer! This year, we're premiering two brand new properties: *NuWay*, written by J.T. Krul, and art by Alex Konat, and *Dissension* by writer/artist Jordan Gunderson, both to debut in Summer 2018!

Of course, our three biggest titles: *Michael Turner's Fathom*, *Michael Turner's Soulfire*, and *Executive Assistant: Iris* are all celebrating the most significant anniversaries of the year! June 2018 marks exactly 20 years of *Fathom*, and we couldn't be more excited to have legendary writer Ron Marz teamed with acclaimed artist Siya Oum bring Michael Turner's underwater world to life in the new *Fathom* Volume 7! Then, coming in July is the 15-year anniversary of Aspen's fantastical world of magic and technology, *Soulfire!* Writer J.T. Krul and artist Chahine Ladjouze take the reigns on this volume 7, which is set to be the biggest *Soulfire* tale yet! And celebrating her 10 year anniversary, everyone's favorite assassin, *Executive Assistant: Iris* Volume 5 will be hitting store shelves in May, written by fan-favorite writer Blake Northcott, and art by rising talent Donny Tran! All three of these incredible series will be celebrated with additional trades, 25¢ Primers, and more!

Aside from our iconic books, our brand new Sideshow Collectibles Aspen Matthews Premium Format Statue will be available late this year! Aspen fans everywhere pre-ordered this gorgeous 22" collectible statue last Fall, and this year is your chance to get our first ever collaboration with Sideshow Collectibles! Pre-order through SideshowToy.com, or your local comic book shop!

We've barely cracked the surface of what's to come from Aspen Comics in 2018, with other great new products and series to be announced, and we couldn't be happier to have you all along for the ride! To all our amazing fans, new and old, thank you from the bottom of our hearts.



Aspen's Free Comic Book Day Offering



Shrugged Vol.3



Charismagic Vol.3

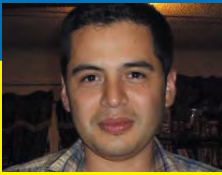


Portal Bound Vol.1



Jimi Vol.3

PREVIEW COMIC



It's great to see Aspen hitting a big milestone. Growing up in the 90s, Image Comics was my first love. It's what first got me into comics. Through Image I discovered my love of comics and the works of Michael Turner. His *Witchblade* was fantastic,

ASPEN MEMORY
GIOVANNI BORUNDA
ASPEN FAN
Aspen fan for life

and then to see him really hit a home run with *Fathom*... it was exciting buying each new issue.

Michael had a sense of the spectacular and the beautiful. He could draw amazing women that had a great sense of personality. There was no creator like him out there, and I followed his career from Top Cow to the formation of Aspen Comics and sadly to his passing. Even though I stopped collecting comics for a few years I always went back to his comics for inspiration.

Flash forward to a few years later. I was in a bad place. I decided to follow my dream and go to film school in my late 20s while working full time. It was a big step for me. It was hard but I kept good grades and a good work performance until one day I was laid off from my job of 8 years.

Suddenly I found myself not sure of what I was going to do with my life, and how I was going to pay my bills and eat. Life seemed really down and I was lost. I

wasn't sure if I should continue following my dreams to be a storyteller or take what ever job came along and leave school.

It was during that time when I started going through my old comics and started re-reading my Michael Turner comics, and I fell in love with comics again. It was like I was seeing his work with new eyes. I would notice his details, his storytelling with pictures and his pure talent. It was around the same time Aspen was celebrating 10 years with the "10 for 10" launch, and I had picked up *All New Fathom* and was hooked. I loved it. It reminded me of the *Fathom* comics I loved in high school. I started going online and reading all I could about what Aspen had been up to since I stopped collecting comics years before.

I started understanding more about Michael Turner as not just a comic book rock star but also a person. A person who struggled, a person who wouldn't give up and wasn't afraid to follow a

dream. I also read more about how the other members of the Aspen team took a big chance in following Michael over to Aspen. I guess for the first time I didn't see Aspen just as a comic company but actual people and it really opened my eyes.

Then something happened, I remembered my first love. At 9 years old I wanted to draw comics and tell stories. That's where my heart was. I wanted to create comics again.

Almost like if the universe was trying to tell me something, Frank, Peter and David from Aspen were having a signing at Phat Collectibles in a few weeks. I was beyond excited.

The day of the signing, I drove over an hour by myself to Orange County to a comic store I had never been to and waited in line. The first person I met was Frank Mastromauro and I started talking to him about how awesome the new comics were and he was beyond nice. I

started telling him how the story of Aspen's creation really picked me up at my lowest point. That I couldn't be afraid to follow my dreams. Sometimes bad stuff happens but you have to go forward. It was really amazing just having an honest talk with a creator and realizing that we're all human with dreams, fears and struggles, but we have to keep going forward. Like Michael did.

Even though I never got to meet Michael personally, his work has inspired me to dream when I was a kid and Aspen Comics reminded me that it was possible to follow your dreams. Thankfully I've met more members of the team including Peter Steigerwald (I was too nervous to ask for a sketch at the signing lol), J.T. Krul and of course Vince Hernandez. That's why I'll always have a ton of respect for the Aspen crew and always support your work.

Much respect.

—Giovanni Borunda

THANK YOU

ارکش
Danke
Merci
Gracias
Mahalo
ありがとうございます
고맙습니다

F. Mastromauro
From all of us at Aspen!

PREVIEW COPY