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An Interview with Misfit City's Kiwi Smith and Kurt Lustgarten

BY FABIENNE PAYET · PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 29, 2017 · UPDATED SEPTEMBER 29, 2017



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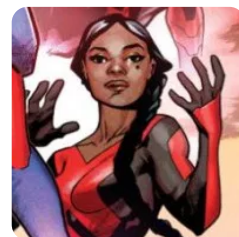
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Boom! Studios' Misfit City has become a favorite with the team here at Outright Geekery. Recently, we had the opportunity to chat with writers Kirsten "Kiwi" Smith and Kurt Lustgarten about their love for 80's adventure movies, how that influences Misfit City, and much more.

OG: Congratulations on the new arc for Misfit City! What can you tease about the upcoming story?

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Kiwi: Thank you! We're excited to hear what you think. You'll be learning a lot more about Black Mary, and what her treasure is...and maybe even what happens when the girls find it!

Kurt: Also, if you're a Halloween fan like I am, we made sure to add a dose of Halloween-y chills for the October and November issues. I try to make Halloween last all autumn if I can...

OG: As a lifelong fan of The Goonies, I absolutely love Misfit City. How did you decide to base Misfit City on The Goonies?

Kiwi: It's Kurt's favorite movie of all time, so when we were up in Washington state visiting my parents, we took a detour to Astoria, Oregon, where they filmed *THE GOONIES*. As we rolled into town blasting Cyndi Lauper's theme song from the movie, it got us thinking about what it must be like for kids who grow up in a town famous for a classic kids' adventure movie—and how many tourists they have to deal with. We started brainstorming about what would happen if these cynical kids ended up finding a real treasure map. By the time we got home to Los Angeles, we had a bunch of ideas for the story and where it was going.

OG: Do you relate to the Misfit City characters or locale at all? If so, how?

Kiwi: I'm from the Pacific Northwest and in addition to Astoria, Cannon Cove is loosely inspired by elements of my hometown, Port Townsend, Washington. It feels wonderful to be writing about small town teenagers in the PNW when I was a small-town teenager in the PNW, dreaming of getting out and going somewhere else.

Kurt: I fell in love with the Northwest when Kiwi introduced me to it, and am delighted to be writing a story set there. There are mountains to climb and hikes and trails and rocky coastlines and it brings out the adventurer in me. That's probably why I relate most to Wilder, because she's called to adventure. She doesn't want to stay inside—she wants to get out and chop it up.



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Kiwi: I relate most to Karma because of her innocent, wide-eyed quality. She's all intuition and emotion, which is my bread and butter.

OG: I love comics with a strong group of women at its core (thank you for that!). Did you base the girls on people you know?

Kiwi: Dot was inspired by one of my best friends in high school, Alene Moroni. Although she and Dot look different, they share a similar love of knowledge and a sarcastic streak, and Dot's mom is a librarian just like Alene's mom.

Kurt: Karma is inspired by a combo of Kiwi and Anna Faris —bubbly and loving.

Kiwi: And Pippin is based on our actual dog, Pippin. Although in real life, she is fawn colored, not grey.

OG: How did you all meet each other and decide to work together?

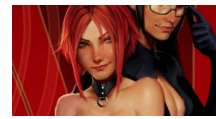
Kiwi: Kurt and I met in 2009 as fellow writers, and then we started dating long-distance with him in New York and me in LA. He moved out to LA in 2012 and as we started co-habiting, we couldn't help but start writing together. We worked on a female buddy heist movie screenplay, and on a TV pilot, things here and there in addition to our own separate writing projects. Then when I met Shannon Watters at BOOM! Studios and we started talking about ideas, I pitched her this GOONIES idea that Kurt and I had, and she loved it. Once we started writing, Shannon introduced us to Naomi's work, and we fell in love with her and her talent... even though we've never met in person!

OG: We don't really have the adventure genre we had in the '80s. Do you feel people nowadays are missing out on it?

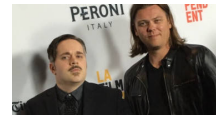
Kurt: I miss it terribly. That's one of the reasons I feel like this book is important. It will hopefully inspire kids to get out and explore, and also satisfy those of us big kids who yearn for those types of stories. I'm just as guilty of this as anyone, but I feel too often that when we question



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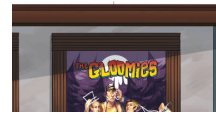
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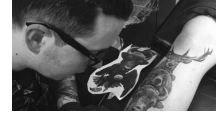
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things we immediately look to the internet for answers, instead of physical libraries or the world around us. There's a tactile, interactive element that has been on the wane.

OG: Do you have any recommendations for people who want to delve deeper into the genre?

Kiwi: If you crave '80s female adventure-comedy, I'd check out the movies ROMANCING THE STONE, OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE, and JUMPING JACK FLASH. From a slightly later but still nostalgia-inducing time period, I'd recommend the original French LA FEMME NIKITA (1990), CHARLIE'S ANGELS 1 & 2, and HANNA (2011).

Kurt: THE MONSTER SQUAD is my other all-time fave in the kids' adventure genre. EXPLORERS and THE LOST BOYS are some other classics, while MY SCIENCE PROJECT and BMX BANDITS (teenage Nicole Kidman on a bike!) are a couple fun curiosities. There sadly aren't a lot of female driven '80s-esque adventures, but if you're in dire need, GOLD DIGGERS: THE SECRET OF BEAR MOUNTAIN starring Christina Ricci and Anna Chlumsky will have to suffice.

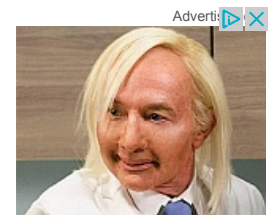
OG: Will we be seeing any more possession like what happened to Dot? I like the ghost/spirit aspect of the story.

Kurt: I'm so glad to hear you say that! We were pleasantly surprised to find people enjoyed the spirit stuff so, yes, you will definitely see more of that in the coming issues.

OG: Will you be attending any more cons this year?

Kiwi: No more cons this year, but we'll all three be doing a signing at Skylight Books in LA on November 18 to celebrate the release of Vol. 1! It's the first time we'll have met Naomi and we're gonna have a slumber party at our house just like Macy, Wilder, Dot, and Karma would. Naomi's gonna get to meet real-life Pippin for the first time!

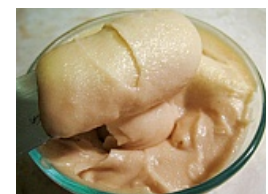
Kurt: And if you happen to be on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington state, we're doing a



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signing the day after Thanksgiving at Avalon Comics in Silverdale.

OG: Where can fans find you on social media?

Kiwi: @kiwilovesyou on Twitter, and I just started my Instagram so be patient with me: @kiwilovesyou.

Kurt: @myladyisahobo on Twitter, and @kurtlustgarten on Insta.

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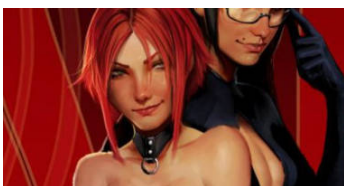
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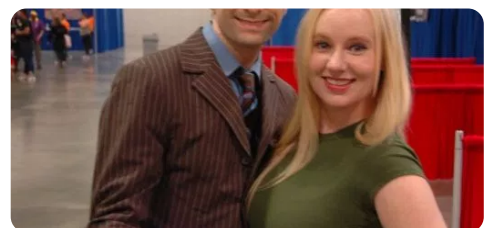
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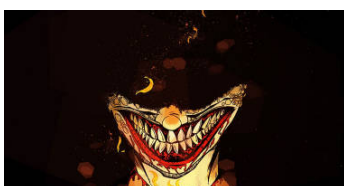
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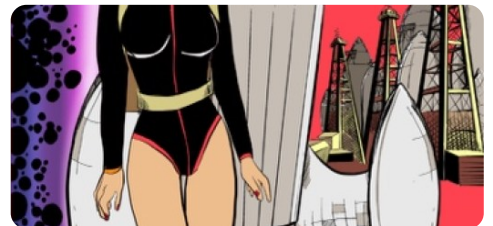
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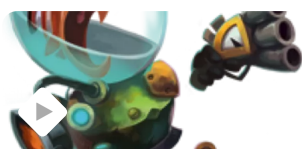
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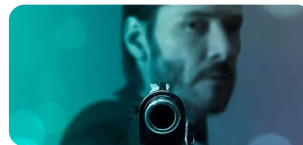
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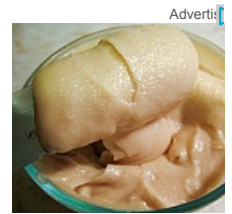
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