



**THE *FRENCH COMICS ASSOCIATION*
BRINGS AN ENVOY OF INTERNATIONAL GRAPHIC NOVELS AND
THEIR CREATORS TO THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION (ALA)
ANNUAL CONFERENCE –
CHICAGO JUNE 22 – JUNE 26**

**7 European graphic novelists
with bestsellers in France and debuts in America
Featured on 6 panel discussions,
Plus afternoon forum on Education
Keynoted by US Ambassador for Children’s Literature**

Featuring: Guy Delisle, Marguerite Aboutet, Pénélope Bagieu, Jérémie Royer, David Etien, and Stefano Turconi & Teresa Radice

May 18, 2017, Chicago—The [French Comics Association](#) (FCA) is pleased to present acclaimed francophone and other international graphic novelists at the ALA annual conference, “the premier global library event bringing together the newsmakers, innovators, thought leaders, and influencers in the library field, from all over the world.” The FCA recognizes the importance of libraries in American schools, universities, and as community centers—and the influence and expertise of librarians, who have been advocates for the rising trend of graphic novel publishing. “We love librarians,” is the message from the FCA, and we invite them to discover the wide world of Bandes dessinées at ALA!

The *French Comics Association* will offer a rare opportunity to meet internationally best-selling authors and illustrators, along with their French and North American publishers. Six panel discussions, on topics ranging from memoir and comics journalism, the trend of comics-to-film, and how education innovators use pop culture in the classroom, will feature Francophone and Italian graphic novelists, Americans such as the Ambassador for Children’s Literature **Gene Luen Yang, picturebook author and “rockstar librarian” Betsy Bird**, award-winning creators **Jessica Abel** and **Matt Madden**, and industry experts including **French librarian Pascal Mériaux, comics scholar Carol Tilley**, and comics publishing experts **Mark Siegel, John Shableski** and **Meg Lemke**.

Come and meet the artists at the [American Library Association](#) convention, where the French Comics Association will exhibit and sell books, with author signings daily at booth #1229 from June 23-26.

At the 2015 San Diego Comic Con, comiXology CEO David Steinberger called for “the ‘French Invasion’ of comics in the English language market.” In Fall 2016, FCA’s inaugural month-long Comics Framed Festival brought “an incredible lineup of talent” (The Beat) to New York City. Now, the Association lands in Chicago, recognizing its historical and contemporary status as a great Midwestern city of literature, to celebrate graphic novels at the largest annual gathering of librarians in the world.

“Since the early 1900s, graphic novels have remained a firmly-rooted staple of Franco-Belgian culture and an essential element of French creativity,” said **Philippe Ostermann, Head of the French Comics Association**. “Our graphic novel industry is the third largest worldwide and French-language graphic novels have introduced major characters such as *Asterix*, *Tintin*, the Smurfs and *Lucky Luke* onto the global landscape. The Franco-Belgian graphic novel industry has developed a particularly strong presence in the American market, with between 60 and 100 translations published every year in the U.S. We are excited for the *French Comics Association* to give voice to major contemporary figures of Franco-Belgian comics and deepen their presence on the American landscape.”



Librarian Eva Volin reports in *Publishers Weekly* on the rising popularity of the graphic novel form, “I don’t believe graphic novels are a trend; I believe this is how the industry will be going forward.”

Just before the start of the convention (June 22), in partnership with Chicago Alternative Comics Expo (CAKE), the artists will perform in a live comics reading, joined by local cartoonists, with screen-projection of sequential art, at the Sector 2337 gallery in the Logan Square neighborhood of Chicago. This event is free and open to the public; books will be available for sale and signing.

To celebrate the opening of the convention (June 23), a private party will be held at the French Embassy. Press are encouraged to attend, please contact Meg.Lemke@gmail.com for an invitation request.

Opening parallel to ALA (June 24) is “100% Drawn in Europe,” a month-long curated art exhibit including Teresa Radice & Stefano Turconi, David Etien, and Jérémie Royer, at the [International School of Comics \(ICE\)](#), hosted by Executive Director Annalisa Vicari. The launch will feature a moderated talk by featured artists, a book signing, and party hosted by Italian Expo – free and open to the public.

And in a more intimate setting, hosted by [Reading Group Choices](#), “Speed-dating” book groups will meet cartoonists to learn how reading groups can get in on the graphic trend, at the Book Cellar in Lincoln Square (June 24).

On social networks throughout the festival and at the New York Comic Con event, special exhibition tours and book signings can be booked with the artists. Join us on Instagram #ComicsFramed, Twitter @FrenchBooksUSA and @FrenchComix and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/French-Comics-Association-286305961741400/>.

FRENCH COMICS ASSOCIATION SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday / June 22nd

Comics That Kiss Better

Cross-Cultural Celebration with Drinks, Drawings, and Bande Dessinée



7pm - 9pm (after-party location TBA)

At [Sector 2337](#) / 2337 N Milwaukee Ave., Chicago IL 60647

Co-hosted with **Chicago Alternative Comics Expo**. Welcome Guy Delisle, Marguerite Abouet and a host of other European Cartoonists to the Windy City! With Chicago-land favorites **Ivan Brunetti** and **Keiler Roberts**. Live readings of projected comics, emcee’d by **Aaron Renier**, plus book-signings, (cash) bar, and the chance to chat with incredible international artists.

Friday / June 23rd

American Library Association Conference at McCormick Place, Chicago

Exhibit hours 5:30 - 7:30pm

Sessions

Read More, Read Better: Learning with Comics and Graphic Novels



11am - 4pm
McCormick Center Room TBA

Afternoon educational forum on teaching with comics, co-sponsored by Pop Culture in the Classroom and the Children's Book Council, with keynote by National Ambassador for Young People's Literature Gene Yang. Interactive panels offered on topics like the grammar of comics, content-area literacy, teaching STEM with graphic nonfiction, and books that "Spark Change." Meet the creators: Guy Delisle, Marguerite Aboutet, Jérémie Royer, David Etien, and Teresa Radice & Stefano Turconi.

Signings

at Booth #1229

5:30-6:30pm: Guy Delisle. Open the conference by meeting "one of the greatest modern cartoonists" (*The Guardian*), creator of *Pyongyang*, *Jerusalem*, and *Hostage*.

Saturday / June 24th
Exhibit hours 9am - 5pm

At #ALAA17: Do it the French way. Stop by Booth #1229 for morning croissants and captivating comics.

Stages

The Rise of Graphic Novels for Kids in Europe and the USA

9:30 - 10:20am

Graphic Novel and Gaming Stage

European and American publishers and authors discuss the emergence of the format and its phenomenal rise internationally in the past decade. They will also look at the differences and similarities of working in comics in Europe and the USA. Introducing the Italian creative team Teresa Radice and Stefano Turconi, with their award-winning *Globetrotting Viola*, joined by their publisher Marco Bernardini, author and First Second editorial director Mark Siegel (*Five Worlds*), and Eisner and Caldecott Award winner Vera Brosgol (*Anya's Ghost* and *Leave Me Alone!*). Signing by Radice & Turconi, following panel, at Booth #1229

Sessions

Graphic Memoirs: How Non-fiction Graphic Novels Bring Real Lives to Life

10:30 - 11:30am

McCormick Center Room W175b

Featuring award-winning creators Guy Delisle (*Hostage*), Pénélope Bagieu (*California Dreamin'*) and Jérémie Royer (*Audubon: On the Wings of the World*). The graphic novel is a powerful vehicle for biography and memoir, as they can often get to the heart of the subject faster and more dynamically than prose. With images as the heart of the narrative, readers are allowed a far more intimate look into the subject's life. In this panel comics creators will explain how they approached their subjects, how they decided what to leave out and what to include, and the extent to which they inserted themselves into the narrative. As graphic narratives find a more prominent place in classrooms, graphic memoirs offer another access to the fascinating world of biography. Moderated by Meg Lemke. All authors will sign books, following session, at Booth #1229

Signings

At Booth #1229

10:30 - 11:30am: Teresa Radice & Stefano Turconi (*Globetrotting Viola*)



11:45 - 12:45pm: Guy Delisle (*Hostage*), Pénélope Bagieu (*California Dreamin'*) and Jérémie Royer (*Audubon*)

1 - 2pm: Marguerite Abouet (*Akissi and Aya of Yop City*) and David Etien (*The Baker Street Four*)

3 - 4pm: Pénélope Bagieu (*California Dreamin'*)

At partner publishers

2:30 - 3pm: Marguerite Abouet (*Akissi and Aya of Yop City*) at Nobrow booth #3121A

3 - 4pm: Guy Delisle (*Hostage*) at Drawn & Quarterly Booth #2716

3:30 - 4:30pm: Marguerite Abouet (*Aya of Yop City*) at Drawn & Quarterly Booth #2716

Events in Chicago

100% Made in Europe: An Art Exhibit

International School of Comics Chicago



4-6pm artist presentations

6-9pm refreshments and mingling

Location: 1651 W. Hubbard St, Chicago, IL, 60622

Launch party with opening group lecture, introducing a month-long exhibit featuring Teresa Radice and Stefano Turconi's *Globetrotting Viola*, David Etien's *The Baker Street Four*, and Jérémie Royer's *Audubon: On the Wings of the World*

Book Lovers Extravaganza

The Book Cellar, Lincoln Square

6:30 - 9pm

Location: 4736 N Lincoln Ave, Chicago, IL 60625

Hosted by [Reading Group Choices](#) at a popular independent bookstore: "speed dating" with authors. All readers are welcome—you don't need to belong to a book group to join, though you may want to start one after! Featuring Pénélope Bagieu (*California Dreamin'*)

Sunday / June 25th
Exhibit hours 9am - 5pm

Stages

How to Write for Children and Young Adults

9:30 - 10:20am

Graphic Novel and Gaming Stage

An overview of graphic novels for kids and teens, from classics like *Tintin*, *Boule & Bill*, to contemporary favorites such as Marguerite Abouet's *Akissi and Aya of Yop City*, and new releases like *The Baker Street Four* illustrated by David Etien and *Audubon: On the Wings of the World* by Jérémie Royer.



How do you think up a story for a three-year-old, an eight-year-old or a young-adult? When illustrators work with writers, how do they shape the art to the story--and open a young reader's imagination with the art? Moderated by rockstar librarian and children's author Betsy Bird (*Funny Girl*). Free signed prints and books for purchase. Signing will continue at Booth #1229.

French Comics on Screen: Film Adaptations of Franco-Belgian Graphic Narratives

3 - 3:50pm

Chapter One Stage

Comics have always inspired movies. Though Superhero characters such as Captain America, Batman, and The Fantastic Four have traditionally dominated the silver screen, a more literary trend is now evolving. Producers and directors have discovered new ways of telling stories. In this panel, leading international comic artists Marguerite Abouet (*Aya of Yop City*), David Etien (*The Baker Street Four*), and publishers Olivier Jalabart (Glénat) from France and Robert Ballantyne (Arsenal Pulp Press) from America discuss how graphic novels can offer new inspiration to the cinema - from very intimate stories (like *Blue is the Warmest Color*) to major sci-fi movies (*Valerian*) and animated features. Moderated by Matt Madden (Drawn Onward).

Free signed prints and books for purchase! Signing will continue at Booth #1229

Liberties at work and Creator's ownership

3:30 - 4:20pm

Graphic Novel and Gaming Stage

Join renowned international artists Guy Delisle (*Hostage*), Pénélope Bagieu (*California Dreamin'*) and Jessica Abel (*Trish Trash*) in a lively cross-cultural discussion around the differences in creative process and publishing cultures in France and the USA: freedom of choices, schedules, production, printing, etc. What does it mean to be a French Artist?

Authors will also consider the concept of ownership in France and in the USA: To whom does the work belong? What are the rights of an artist over their work? With Philippe Ostermann (Dargaud) and moderated by John Shableski (Eisner Foundation). Free signed prints and books for purchase. Signing will continue at Booth #1229.

Sessions

Universal Language of Comics: Culture and Creation Beyond America

1 - 2:30pm

McCormick Center Room TK

Comics are hugely popular throughout the world and every country has its own unique comics culture. The medium of comics, though, also allows a uniquely universal platform to bridge cultures and explore our common ground. A diverse panel of comics creators and professionals discuss how fan culture and creator processes differ beyond America and how the medium and its fans cross cultural divides. Featuring Marguerite Abouet (*Akissi*), Teresa Radice (*Globetrotting Viola*), and Nazeli Kyuregyan (Europe Comics). Book signing to follow session at Booth #1229

Signings

At Booth #1229

10:30 - 11:30: Marguerite Abouet (*Akissi*), Jérémie Royer (*Audubon*), David Etien (*The Baker Street Four*)

2:45 - 3:45: Marguerite Abouet (*Akissi*), Teresa Radice and Stefano Turconi (*Globetrotting Viola*)

4:30 - 5:30pm: Guy Delisle (*Hostage*), Pénélope Bagieu (*California Dreamin'*) and Jessica Abel (*Trish Trash*)



At partner publishers

1:30 - 2pm Jérémie Royer (*Audubon*) at Nobrow booth #3121A

Monday / June 26th
Exhibit hours 9am - 2pm

Signings

At Booth #1229

Pre-signed books available and additional author signings to be announced!

ABOUT THE FRENCH COMICS ASSOCIATION

The French Comics Association brings together many of the major publishers of French comics, including Dargaud, Casterman, Delcourt, Dupuis, Futuropolis, Gallimard BD, Glénat, Le Lombard, Rue de Sèvres, and Soleil. As part of its mission to promote Franco-Belgian comics in the United States and worldwide, the association aims to promote comics translated into English, to support the U.S. publishing industry, and to stimulate cultural exchanges on the basis of literature and visual narratives.

The ALA exhibition is part of ambitious projects led by the association in the United States. The target audience of the Association's programming is Americans interested in reading, art, comics and French culture. The association aims to reach a wide audience beyond comics fans and in this framework, partnerships will be developed with various venues to spread the word throughout the USA.

The French Comics Association works in partnership with the Centre National du Livre, the Bureau International de l'Édition, the Syndicat National de l'Édition and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the U.S.

<http://frenchcomicsassociation.com/>

ABOUT THE CULTURAL SERVICES OF THE FRENCH EMBASSY

The Cultural Services of the French Embassy provides a platform for exchange and innovation between French and American artists, intellectuals, educators, students, the tech community, and the general public. Based in New York City, Washington D.C., and eight other US cities including Chicago, the Cultural Services develops the cultural economy by focusing on six principal fields of action: visual and performing arts, literature, cinema, the digital sphere, French language and higher education.

www.frenchculture.org

PRESS INQUIRIES AND INTERVIEW REQUESTS: contact Meg Lemke /
Meg.Lemke@gmail.com