

FLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPside

## WOMEN IN COMICS: THE MINI-INTERVIEWS

As we celebrate “Women in Comics” this month, we present four capsule interviews—excerpts from longer discussions—speaking with four top female creators. And when you’re finished here, be sure to log-on to **PREVIEWS** world.com for full interviews with these and many more talented creators!



### MAYU SHINJO

**MY JOB** Mangaka

As a Japanese comic artist, she is not only responsible for writing and drawing her work, but she leads a team of art assistants who support her. She is team manager, teacher, and lead artist.

**MY WORKS**

*Ai Ore!* (Vol. 1: FEB111189)  
*Demon Love Spell* (Vol. 1: SEP121239)



**PREVIEWS:** What elements in shojo manga do you think are appealing to female readers?

**Mayu Shinjo:** I think sexiness and glamour are things that are always appealing. Even if I draw a “cute” male character, he should always have some sex appeal and charm. That never changes.

**P:** Many of our readers are interested in learning how to become “mangaka”. Would you give them some advice?

**Mayu:** Let’s see. Becoming an assistant to a mangaka is the best way to learn the trade. Other than that, you need to draw every day. If you continue doing that... well, drawing is something we all have to keep doing on a consistent basis. So, in order to get ahead, you have to draw even more. You’ll hardly ever see a person who draws, say, once every six months making a debut. It must be a routine. If you publish a volume of your work once every two months or so... that is a lot of work, you see. It’s very hard. If you can do that on a regular basis, no matter how bad your artwork may be now, you can definitely make your debut.

## HOLLY GOLIGHTLY

**MY JOB** Writer/Artist; VP BroadSword Comics

In addition to coloring, lettering and overseeing production on Jim Balent’s series *Tarot*, *Witch of the Black Rose*, Holly also covers all duties on her own creation, the romantic/comedy vampire manga, *School Bites!*

**MY WORKS**

*School Bites: Independent Studies Collection TP* (FEB130883)  
*Magic of Sabrina the Teenage Witch TP* (AUG110817)

**PREVIEWS:** In your opinion, how has the comic book industry evolved in terms of gender?

**Holly Golightly:** The industry is a business, and if an individual wishes to work in a business, it should be passion of it that drives them... I started my first company at 21 — again — I don’t think about my gender when running a biz — just my work and wanting to get it out to the public in a fair and happy way. Entering the Comic Book Industry at 30... yeah there were a lotta guys and a few gals... I guess it’s still that way. The evolution comes with breaking away from the mainland. For these new evolutions to thrive I’d ask the stores and the readers to support them... Then you’ll see a whole buncha variety flourish!

**P:** Did you have a mentor or a hero in industry?

**Holly:** Frank Thorne was my hero growing up. He drew what I looked like and the character acted the way I wished I could. When I decided to follow my dream as a comic book creator he was one of very few that embraced me with the fun and fantasy that comics mean to me. He is and will always be my Wizard! But business-wise, when I was 21, I read a book called “*Growing a Business*” by Paul Hawkins... it was a Holistic approach to entrepreneurship. I high recommend it to those running any industry!





FLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPsideFLIPside

## LIZ PRINCE

### MY JOB Writer/Artist

Liz has been an autobiographical comic artist for the last 15 years, self-publishing comics and 'zines, and has had work published by BOOM! Studios and Top Shelf Productions.

### MY WORKS

*Alone Forever GN* (DEC131293), *Will You Still Love Me If I Wet the Bed? GN* (JUL053179), *Adventure Time: Marceline & The Scream Queens Vol. 1 TP* (MAR130946)

**PREVIEWS:** How did you get interested in comics? How did you find your way into working with larger companies?

**Liz Prince:** I honestly can't remember a time in my life where I wasn't obsessed with comics. From the age of 5 I knew I wanted to work with cartoons in some way, and when I discovered comic books at the age of 8 I knew I had discovered my medium. Self-publishing was the stepping-stone that I used to get my work into the hands of publishers like Top Shelf; I believe it shows dedication to comics beyond wanting recognition, which



is important for a publisher to see.

**P:** What stereotypes do you see surrounding women in comics? How could people of all genders go about breaking those stereotypes?

**Liz:** I don't know if I see what I would call a "stereotype" in play, as much as there is an assumption that our experience, as female creators, is distinctly different from those of our male counterparts. I'm looking forward to the day when mention of me as a creator is not preceded the delineation that I am a woman, because that implies that my work is different or that my fan base is different or that my overall experience is different because of my gender; all of which may be true, but until a male gets asked how gender has affected his experience in the industry, then it's not an equal playing field.

## KRISTY VALENTI

### MY JOB Editorial Associate

Kristy is an Editorial Associate at Fantagraphics Books, and has also edited and written for *The Comics Journal*.

### MY WORKS

*Pretty in Ink: North American Women Cartoonists 1896-2013* (SEP131173), *Nijigahara Holograph HC* (DEC131161), *Wandering Son Vol. 6 HC* (NOV131088)



**PREVIEWS:** How long have you been working with sequential art? What titles, companies, and creators have you worked with over your time in comics?

**Kristy Valenti:** I started working for Fantagraphics in 2004. Also, I wrote a column, mostly about self-published and small press comics, for *comiXology*, from 2007-2012. Given that my background is in comics history, criticism, and archiving, I've worked with writers like Trina Robbins, Patrick Rosenkranz, Bob Levin, Marc Sobel, and Bill Schelly.

**P:** What do you feel the benefits are for the larger industry by having a better mix of genders at all levels of comics production? Did you have a mentor or a hero in industry?

**Kristy:** The pat answer is to say just hire the most qualified people (Fantagraphics has gotten bigger since I started working here, so I work with a lot more women, like our publicist Jacq Cohen, our marketing manager Jen Vaughn, and designers like Keeli McCarthy.) Karen Berger and Diana Schutz were very influential. Chynna Clugston used to do little comics about her editor at the time, Jamie S. Rich, in the backs of *Blue Mondays*. It made being an editor seem like an attainable goal.