

Comics Forum Presents:

RUMMAGING AROUND IN ALAN MOORE'S SHORTS

Guest Editor: Maggie Gray

One sign of the rude health of comic book studies is the growing body of scholarship that focuses on, encompasses, or takes as its starting point, the work of acclaimed and prolific British comics writer Alan Moore. However, while Moore scholarship has moved on from an almost exclusive focus on landmark comic *Watchmen* to encompass overlooked or less popular works like *A Small Killing* or *Tom Strong*, and even unfinished epic *Big Numbers*, it still concentrates overwhelmingly on what Charles Hatfield calls 'comics in the long form', major ongoing serialised comics and self-contained graphic novels.¹

Yet this means that the wealth of Moore's 'short form' works has been overlooked. These include the underground and newspaper strips, cartoons and illustrations with which he began his career as a freelance cartoonist; the back-up features in *2000AD* and Marvel UK anthologies where he claims he learnt the craft of comics writing; one-off collaborations with figures like Peter Bagge, Bryan Talbot, Hunt Emerson, Richard Corben, and Harvey Pekar; contributions to fanzines, benefit anthologies, annuals and spin-offs; and even diffuse work in other media (short prose stories, poems, essays and articles, pin-up art, CD covers etc.).

Looking more closely at such works not only enables us to plug gaps in Moore scholarship and flesh out our understanding of his career, ideas and practice, but also to challenge the privileging of the long form in comics scholarship in general.

In this spirit, we are looking for succinct contributions of 1,000-1,500 words, for a series of Comics Forum blog articles on Moore's shorts to be published throughout September 2012 on the Comics Forum website (<http://comicsforum.org>).

If you are interested in contributing, please email a brief abstract (c.100-200 words) and a short biography of yourself (c.50-100 words) to Maggie Gray at: comicsforum@hotmail.co.uk. The deadline for abstracts is June 1st 2012, and you will receive notification of acceptance or rejection by June 18th.



¹ Hatfield, C., 2005. *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, pp.4-6.

