

A GUIDE TO DARK HORSE MANGA



D A R K H O R S E 

DARK HORSE COMICS

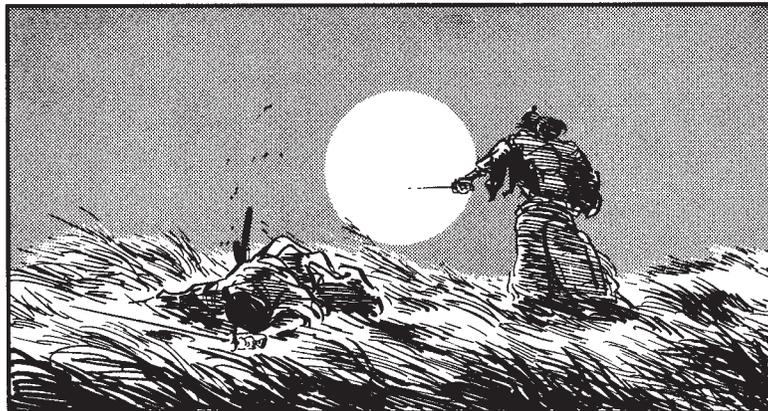
CELEBRATES **20** YEARS OF MANGA

DARK HORSE COMICS

CELEBRATES **20** YEARS OF MANGA



INTRODUCTION



Lone Wolf and Cub. See page 30.

Long before the term “manga” was used in the industry, and long before manga had become a buzzword, a trend, and a hot seller, Mike Richardson had one ideal for his company in mind: publish the best comics from around the globe, regardless of their country of origin. It was a rainy day in May, 1988, when Kazuhisa Iwata’s *Godzilla* advance copies arrived at the (then-small) Milwaukie office. Given the market dictum of the time, a cursory glance might have led one to believe that this was just another comic book—the term “manga format” didn’t exist, and the whole “flopped/unflopped” controversy (reading left to right versus right to left) wouldn’t exist for another fifteen or so years—but this comic book marked Dark Horse’s first step into the manga publishing world.

It’s not shocking, given the current rush to publish manga, that just about every publishing company has a manga imprint, and over twelve manga-only publishing companies have sprung up since 2000. But great manga isn’t just a selling tool. Simply because a book is manga doesn’t necessarily mean that it will be a blockbuster bestseller. Here at Dark Horse, where we’ve been publishing manga for over twenty years, we appreciate that the strength of a property lies not in its genre or nationality, but in its overall excellence.

And it seems that both professionals and fans agree! In their blog on activeanime.com, fellow manga publisher Del Rey included two Dark Horse titles—*MPD-Psycho* and *Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service*—in their list of top-ten picks of the year. *Publishers Weekly* gave *MPD-Psycho* the number-two spot on their “Top Ten Manga of 2007” list. Shoujo-style standout *Translucent* was lauded by Pop Culture Shock, which praised that “sometimes humorous, sometimes bittersweet, this lovely coming-of-age story is a shoo-in for YALSA’s 2007 List of Great Graphic Novels for Teens.” *Eden*, an intracompany favorite, receives constant recognition, and indeed might be the most critically acclaimed series of 2007, with *Wizard* magazine naming it “The Best Manga of 2007,” *Newtype* magazine calling it “the best manga that American money can buy,” and Newsarama hailing it as “The Best It’s-New-To-Me Manga of 2007.” There are certainly many readers in the marketplace today who are discovering Dark Horse—or rediscovering, as the case may be—thanks to the strength of Dark Horse’s manga line.

It would be hard to discuss Dark Horse's role as a manga publisher without talking specifically about our long-standing involvement in publishing the best seinen (mature readers) manga series out there. As a company that has always championed creator rights, we've always endeavored to protect the original visions of the creators behind our manga titles, and have earned a strong reputation in the industry as a publisher that does not censor artwork or pull any other punches when bringing quality mature-readers Japanese works to the English-speaking market. But we don't just focus on seinen titles . . . Our manga line also offers top-notch humor, romance, fantasy, science fiction, and adventure titles for all ages!

Most people have already discovered Dark Horse through our product lines, our projects themselves, and their multinational motion-picture counterparts. But for those who are new to us, we are proud to present this guide to Dark Horse manga as a way to introduce you to some of the amazing multicultural entertainment we have to offer.

DEFINITION OF TERMS



ANIME—A general term for animated Japanese television shows and movies.

BUNKOBON—A smaller manga format, such as that in which *Lone Wolf and Cub* is produced.

FLOPPED—A throwback to when manga was first introduced to the North American direct market. “Flopping” involves transposing Japanese comics pages so that instead of reading in the Japanese fashion—from right to left—they read in the left-to-right manner familiar to Western audiences.

JOSEI—Manga intended for adult women.

KODOMO—Manga intended for children.

MANGA—A general term for Japanese comics, sometimes used incorrectly to denote all Asian comics.

MANHWA—Korean comics. Although often grouped into the “manga” category, these titles have a distinct culture and style that sets them apart from Japanese comics.

OTAKU—A self-imposed term for a die-hard manga fan.

SEINEN—Manga intended for adult men.

SERIALIZATION—The process by which ongoing series are distributed in weekly or monthly installments before being collected in trade paperback (TPB) format.

SHOUJO—Manga intended for young women/teens.

SHOUNEN—Manga intended for young men/teens.

TANKOBON—Today's “standard” manga TPB format.

UNFLOPPED—The original format of Japanese comics pages, which reflects the Japanese right-to-left reading style. The current standard for publishing manga is to leave work unflopped.



MPD-Psycho. See page 32.



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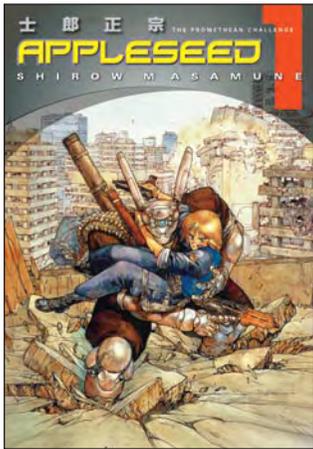
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APPLESEED



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Shirow Masamune*

Artist: *Shirow Masamune*

Format: *B&W (ID contains full-color sections), softcover, 5 3/4" x 8 1/4"*

Age: *14+*

Volumes: *Appleseed vols 1–4, Appleseed: ID, Appleseed: Hypernotes*

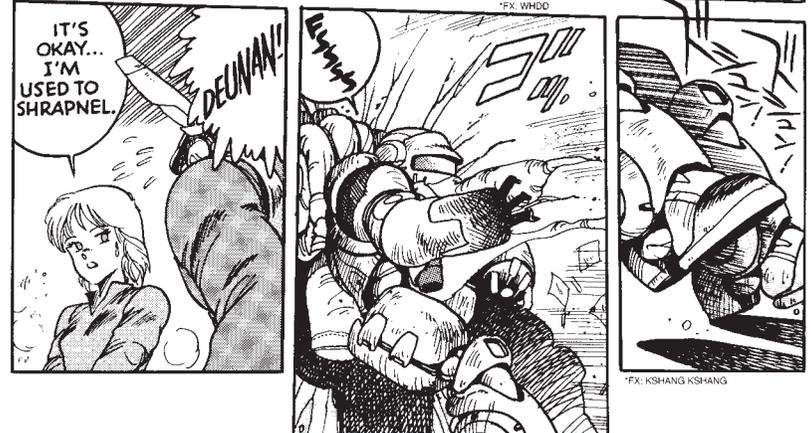
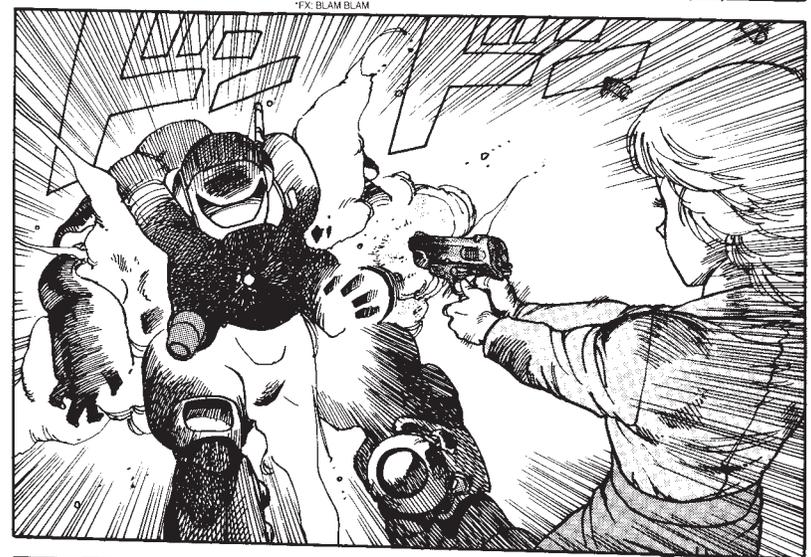
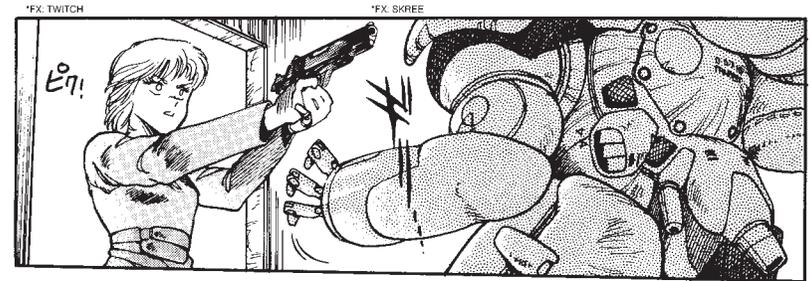
Sales: *Series sales over 115,000*

NOTE

World War III is over, and nomad soldier Deunan Knute and her cyborg partner Briareos struggle to

survive in the abandoned cities and demilitarized zones of a postwar wasteland, the Badside. Matters appear on the upswing, however, when they are found and brought to Olympus, an urban utopia and centerpiece for the reconstruction of civilization. Deunan and Bri join the Olympus police, a force that seems hardly necessary in such a paradise. But, like in most pretty pictures, perfection is an illusion, and Olympus's peaceful facade hides a dark secret, a violent struggle between humans and cyborgs that could once again plunge the world into war . . . and genocide.

Written and drawn by Shirow Masamune, creator of *Ghost in the Shell*—one of the highest-grossing anime of all time—*Appleseed* has garnered wide acclaim for its masterful blending of high-octane action and science fiction with thought-provoking questions about philosophy, sociology, and politics. Shirow packs *Appleseed* volumes 1–4 with heavy-hitting, mecha-battling, police-procedural tales, while in *Appleseed: ID* and *Appleseed: Hypernotes* he takes his readers on a guided tour of the people, places, organizations, and, of course, technology that make the universe of *Appleseed* the sci-fi hotspot that it is, as well as examining his own creative process. Several cinematic incarnations of the *Appleseed* franchise, including the most recent, *Appleseed: Ex Machina*, produced by John Woo, have given this property a continuing cultural relevance.





ASTRO BOY



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Osamu Tezuka*

Artist: *Osamu Tezuka*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 4 1/2" x 6 3/4"*

Age: *8+*

Volumes: *1-23*

Sales: *Over 150,000 copies sold*

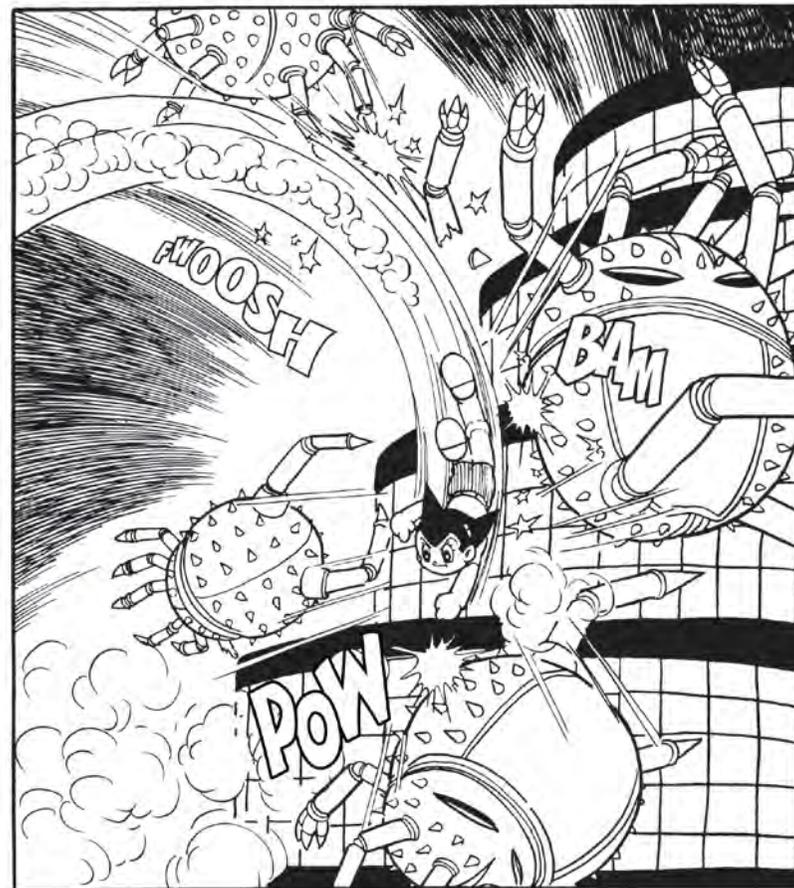
NOTE

Dark Horse proudly presents one of the crown jewels of international graphic fiction—*Astro Boy*. Created by the late Osamu Tezuka, the “God of Manga,” a revered animator and cartoonist who created over 150,000

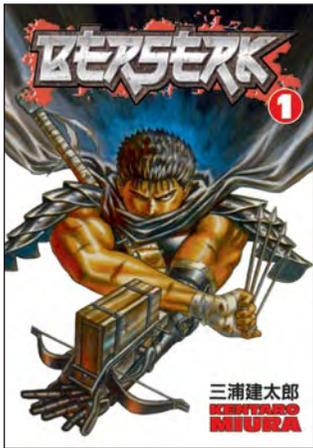
pages of comics in his career and is considered the Walt Disney of Japan, *Astro Boy* was the first manga series to be adapted to animation. *Astro Boy* became a worldwide phenomenon, making Astro Boy the Mickey Mouse of anime and manga—a jet-powered, super-strong, evil-robot-bashing, alien-invasion-smashing Mickey Mouse, that is! Exciting, whimsical, and touching, *Astro Boy* hearkens back to the classic era of comics and animation, featuring stories that readers young and old will enjoy!

An impressive cornerstone in the foundation of Japan’s “robot culture,” *Astro Boy* remains hugely popular today, with a live-action movie slated for release in North America in 2009!

- *Astro Boy* Volumes 1 & 2 are now available as a collected, value-priced omnibus edition to help get you into manga’s most beloved series right away!
- There is a feature-length *Astro Boy* motion picture slated for release in 2009!
- Dark Horse’s most popular all-ages manga title!



BERSERK



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kentaro Miura*

Artist: *Kentaro Miura*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *18+*

Volumes: *1–28 (ongoing series)*

Sales: *Over 500,000 copies sold*

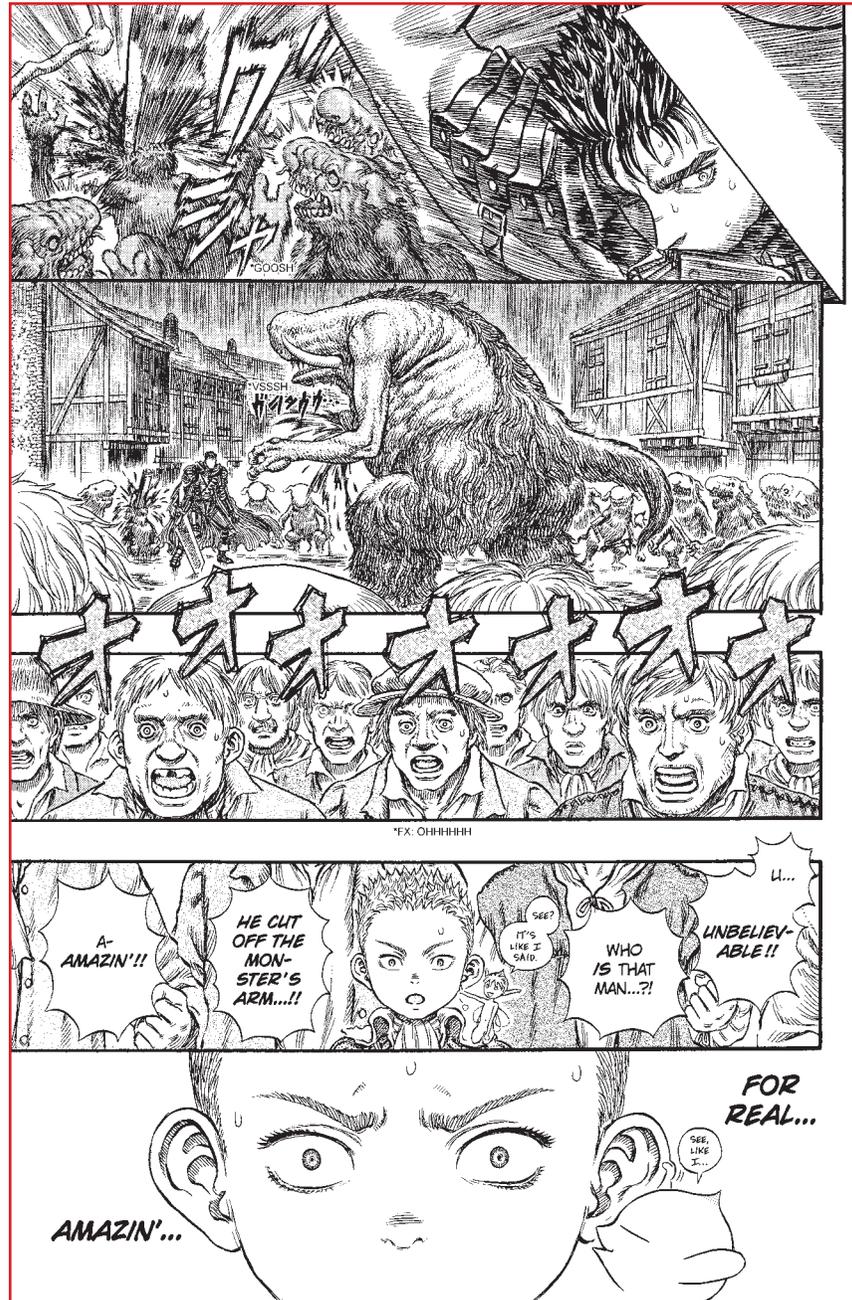
NOTE

His name is Guts, the Black Swordsman, a feared warrior spoken of only in whispers. Bearer of a gigantic sword, an iron hand, and the scars of countless battles and tortures, his flesh is also indelibly marked with the

Brand, an unholy symbol that draws the forces of darkness to him and dooms him as their sacrifice. But Guts won't take his fate lying down; he'll cut a crimson swath of carnage through the ranks of the damned—and anyone else foolish enough to oppose him! Accompanied by Puck the Elf, more an annoyance than a companion, Guts relentlessly follows a dark, blood-stained path that leads only to death . . . or vengeance.

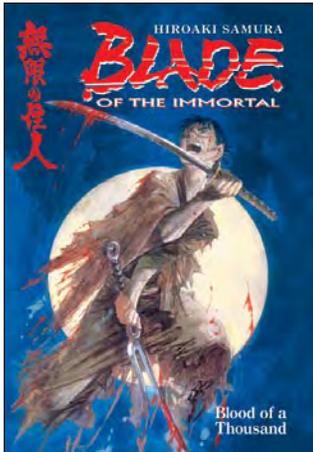
A mainstay in Japan, with over ten million copies sold, *Berserk* is Japanese publisher Hakusensha's number-one seinen title and the wellspring for an internationally popular anime series. One of manga's great epic action/fantasy sagas, *Berserk* can be likened to Western classics like *Beowulf* and *Lord of the Rings* in scope and scale. But *Berserk* also proudly embodies manga mayhem at its most extreme; violent, horrifying, and mercilessly funny, *Berserk* is not for the squeamish or the easily offended. *Berserk* asks for no quarter—and offers none!

“Miura’s illustration captures the primal fear of the dark with forms that are chilling when masked in darkness and horrifying when revealed.” —Ain’t It Cool News





BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Hiroaki Samura*

Artist: *Hiroaki Samura*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 3/8" x 8 1/4"*

Age: *16+*

Volumes: *1-20 (ongoing series)*

Sales: *Over 450,000 copies sold*

NOTES

Manji is one of the most skilled samurai in all of feudal Japan. He is also immortal, condemned to a life of combat until he spills the blood of a thousand

evil men. But along with eternal life comes the need to make an eternal living, and so Manji works as bodyguard for Rin, who seeks to personally avenge her parents' murders at the hands of one of Japan's deadliest swordsmen, Anotsu Kagehisa. But even with Manji's help and her own burning thirst for retribution, can Rin ever stand against such a powerful and ruthless adversary? And in her quest to kill Anotsu, does she risk becoming more like him?

Winner of the coveted Eisner Award for Best U.S. Edition of Foreign Material in 2000, as well as countless other awards both in Japan and the U.S., *Blade of the Immortal* is a stunning reinvention of the classic samurai epic, a complex blending of historical drama, modern street idiom, personal horror, and the supernatural. Progenitor of genre-bending hits like *Samurai Champloo*, this series is a masterpiece of comics storytelling.

- Dark Horse plans to release a collector's-edition *Blade of the Immortal* art book and the first-ever *Blade of the Immortal* novel in 2010!

*Please note, the facing page reads left-to-right. It has been flopped at the creator's request.



BLOOD+



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Asuka Katsura*

Artist: *Asuka Katsura*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *14+*

Volumes: *1-5*

Sales: *First printing immediately sold out; over 18,000 copies sold in the first two weeks. Over 50,000 since first release in 2007.*

NOTE

Set several decades after the events in the popular *Blood: The Last Vampire* anime movie, *Blood+* follows

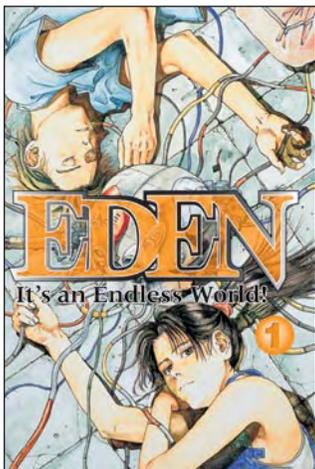
the now-amnesiac Saya Otonashi, who lives as a seemingly normal high-school student with her adoptive family in Okinawa. Horrible nightmares are the only hints at the violent life she once led, but her past is about to catch up with her and awaken the merciless warrior within. Chiropterans—powerful shape-changing creatures who feast on blood—threaten humanity once more, and a mysterious organization called the Red Shield needs Saya's deadly sword skills and mysterious powers to aid in the fight against these beasts. As her forgotten abilities begin to reawaken and she seeks to regain her memories, Chiropteran warriors guided by a mysterious new enemy threaten Saya and her loved ones.

Asuka Katsura's manga series successfully expands upon the original Production I.G./Aniplex feature, delivering moments of jarring violence and thrilling action in a tale that spans several centuries. *Blood+* is a multimedia sensation, with an animated series now airing on Adult Swim. Dark Horse is also proud to present translated editions of the *Blood+* novels! For more on these titles, please turn to page 56!

"Blood+ the manga is an absorbing action horror series that shakes up the vampire myths to offer a compelling journey of self-discovery and growing horror for one lost girl." —Active Anime



EDEN



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Hiroki Endo*

Artist: *Hiroki Endo*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *18+*

Volumes: *1-11 (ongoing series)*

Sales: *Over 40,000 copies sold*

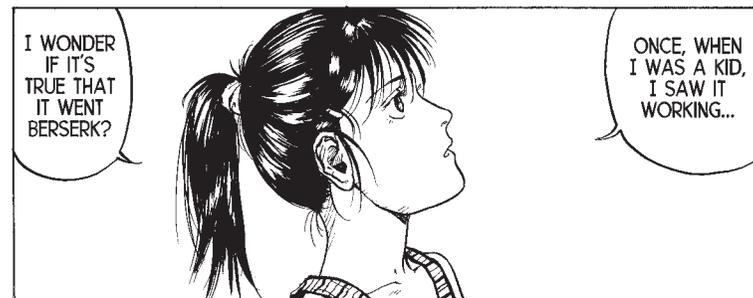
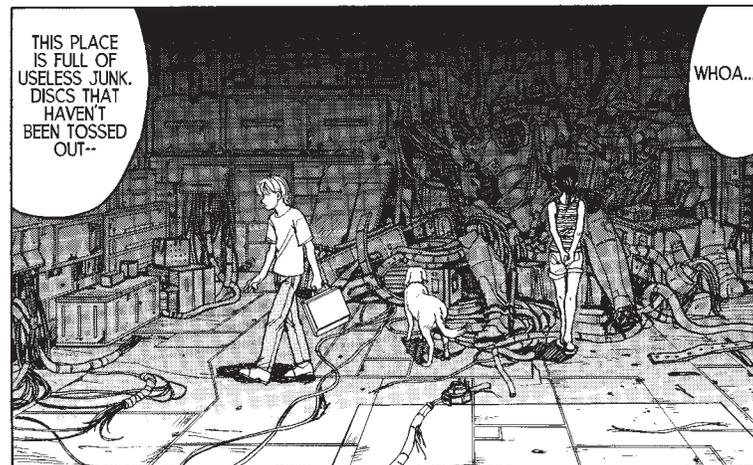
NOTE

In the near future, a brutal new virus that hardens the skin while dissolving internal organs wipes out a huge portion of humanity. Those who aren't immune are either severely crippled or only able to live thanks to cybernetically enhanced bodies. Taking advantage

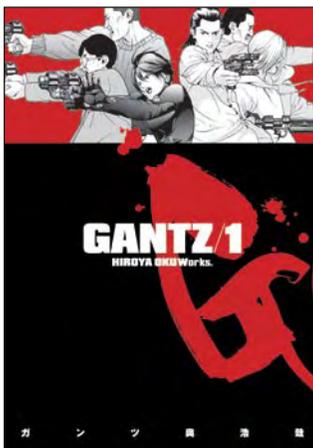
of a world mired in social, political, and economic chaos, a paramilitary force known as Propater topples the United Nations and seeks world domination. Elijah, a young survivor searching for his mother, travels toward the Andes Mountains with an artificially intelligent combat robot named Cherubim. When he is kidnapped by a group of supposed freedom fighters who have plans to use Cherubim to their own ends, a brutal and poignant coming-of-age story begins as Elijah is forced to come to terms with the realities of the world he lives in and the truth about his own family's place in it.

Graphic and philosophical, *Eden* is a cyberpunk powerhouse, both a brilliant love song to the postapocalyptic survival genre and a deep exploration of man's role in the natural order, in which endearing heroes face a constant struggle for survival and violent surprises wait around every corner.

Hiroki Endo's *Eden* receives constant critical recognition, and may be the most acclaimed manga series of 2007, with *Wizard* magazine naming it "The Best Manga of 2007," *Newtype* magazine calling it "the best manga that American money can buy," and Newsarama heralding it as "The Best It's-New-To-Me Manga of 2007."



GANTZ



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Hiroya Oku*

Artist: *Hiroya Oku*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: **18+**

Volumes: *1-4 (ongoing series)*

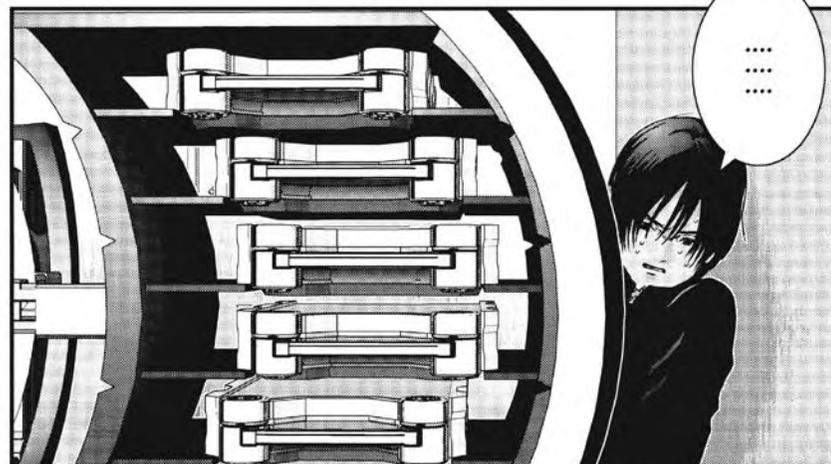
Sales: *Over 25,000 sold since release in 2008.*

NOTE

The last thing Kei and Masaru remember was being struck dead by a subway train while saving the life of a drunken bum. What a waste! And yet somehow they're still . . . alive? Or semi-alive? Perhaps reanimated by the alien orb that delivers them a nasty message: "Your lives are over. What you do with your new lives is up to me!" This orb, called "Gantz," intends to make them play its twisted games of death, pitting them and a bunch of other ordinary citizens who've recently met a tragic semi-end against all kinds of odd alien creatures. The missions they embark upon are often dangerous. Many die—and die again, yet one agonizing question remains: how long must they stay in the game?

Gantz has been one of the most popular adult manga series in recent memory, a dark and action-packed exploration of the moral conflicts of violence, teenage sexual confusion and angst, and our fascination with death. Running weekly in the Japanese magazine *Young Jump*, which has had a record circulation of over three million readers, *Gantz* has not only boasted impressive TPB sales numbers. It has also inspired a hit anime series, which has sold over 300,000 units!

"Drawn with eye-popping realism, Oku's scenes range from infanticide to bestiality to painful adolescent awkwardness, raising standard geek fare to a new level of sophistication." —Entertainment Weekly





GUNSMITH CATS (REVISED OMNIBUS EDITIONS)



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kenichi Sonoda*

Artist: *Kenichi Sonoda*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *18+*

Volumes: *1-4*

Sales: *Over 150,000 copies sold*

NOTE

Rally Vincent and Minnie-May Hopkins are experts in their respective fields of marksmanship and explosives,

but they're so cute you'd never know it, and neither would the perps unlucky enough to be their prey! Whether they're chasing bail jumpers or fending off the mob, you can bet on a healthy supply of guns, bombs, car chases, and more guns!

Kenichi Sonoda's sexy stories about these two bounty-hunting girls on the dangerous streets of Chicago have always been a favorite of manga fans. So when the new omnibus editions saw print in Japan, we knew they should find a home at Dark Horse, where we've been publishing *Gunsmith Cats* manga since 1995! These giant-sized, revised omnibus editions are action packed, unaltered, and sure to please gun nuts, auto buffs, and manga maniacs alike, and mark the first time these stories have been published unflopped in North America!

"... Gunsmith Cats is a superb series worthy of just about anyone's collection." —*The A.V. Club*





GUNSMITH CATS: BURST



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kenichi Sonoda*

Artist: *Kenichi Sonoda*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *18+*

Volumes: *1-3 (ongoing series)*

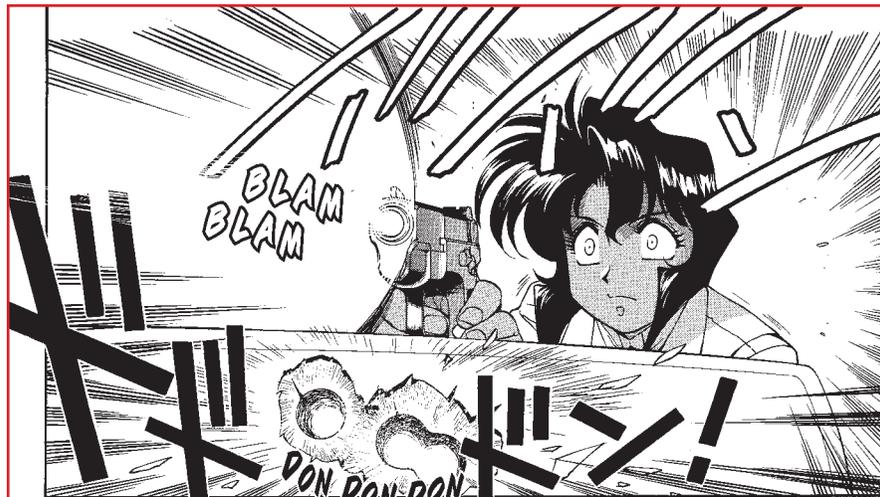
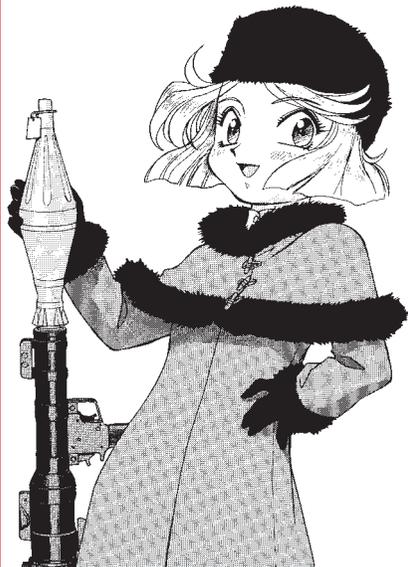
Sales: *Over 25,000 copies sold*

NOTE

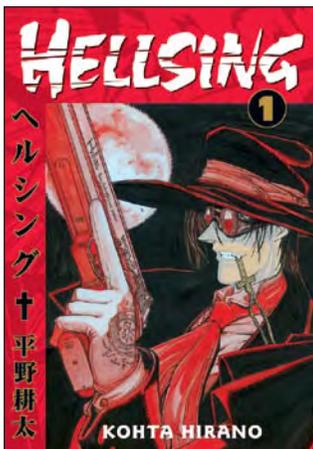
Gunsmith Cats: Burst finds Rally Vincent and Minnie-May Hopkins, the gun-slinging, bomb-wielding young bounty hunters made famous in Kenichi Sonoda's hit manga series *Gunsmith Cats*, back at work, back in action, and back in trouble!

"... it's great to see a combination of detailed machinery and cute anime faces. Throw in some guns and some fantastic action sequences and Dark Horse have themselves a winner."

—About Heroes



HELLSING



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kohta Hirano*

Artist: *Kohta Hirano*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *16+*

Volumes: *1-9 (ongoing series)*

Sales: *Over 625,000 copies sold*

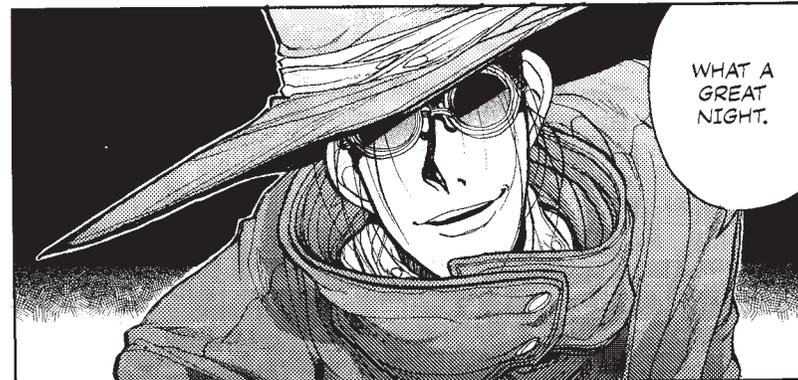
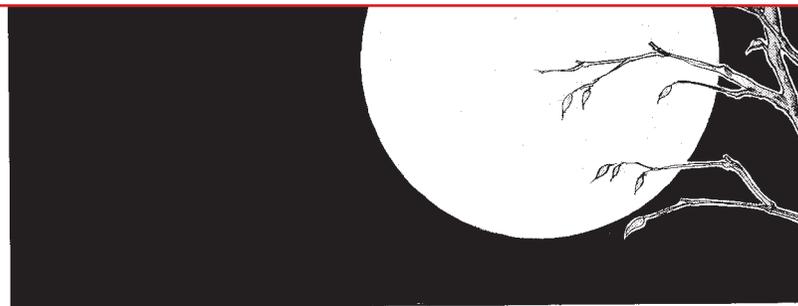
NOTE

The Hellsing Organization, a secret agency charged with defending Queen and country from all manner of supernatural threats, wages a clandestine war on all vampires, ghouls, and other monsters foolish

enough to stalk the British Isles. They've got all the experience, know-how, and . . . er . . . "equipment" necessary to handle all the things that go bump in the night. What "equipment," you ask? How about an ancient vampire wielding a big pistol loaded with special silver bullets? That oughta do the trick! But with a world war of the undead looming on the horizon, does the Hellsing Organization have what it takes to avert an apocalypse heralded by the march of a horde of Nazi vampires and their ghoulish legions?

Earth-shaking destruction and gore-soaked supernatural battles fill the pages of this dark and creepy-cool manga. The inspiration behind two mainstream hit anime series, *Hellsing* and *Hellsing: Ultimate*, this manga title never ceases to draw new readership and satisfy all of its die-hard fans.

"The characters are magnificent to behold in action when they get into a frenzy, from crushing heads beneath their boot heels to impaling an enemy with an untold number of blessed blades. Needless to say, Hirano does violence right." —Animerica





KUROSAGI CORPSE DELIVERY SERVICE



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Eiji Otsuka*

Artist: *Housui Yamazaki*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *18+*

Volumes: *1-8 (ongoing series)*

Sales: *Over 30,000 copies sold*

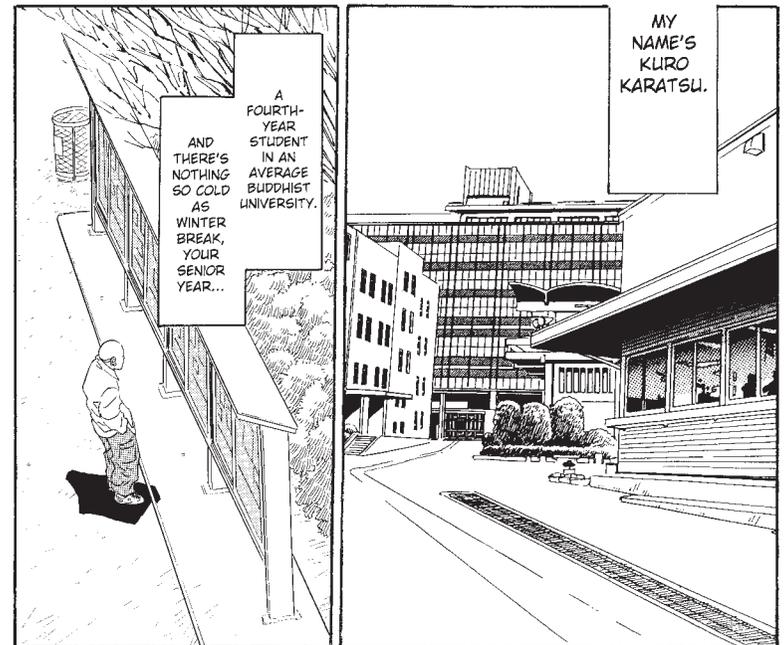
NOTE

Your body is their business! Five young students at a Buddhist university find little call for their job skills in today's Tokyo . . . among the *living*, anyway. But all that stuff in college they were told would never

pay off—you know, channeling, dowsing, ESP—gives them a direct line to the dead . . . the dead who are still trapped in their corpses and can't move on to their next reincarnation without a little help! And so the enterprising five form the Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service. Whether suicide, murder, accident, or illness is to blame, they'll carry your body wherever it needs to go to free your soul! The kids from Kurosagi can smell a customer a mile away—it's a good thing one of the girls majored in embalming!

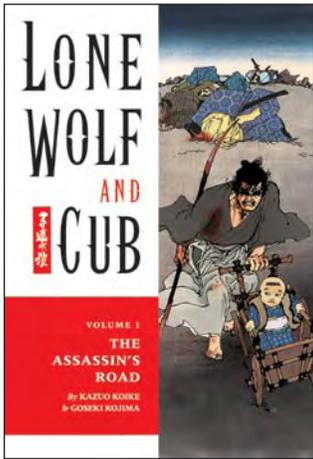
"While there is cruelty, gore, violence, and implied unnatural sexual acts, the manga is also a complex and slyly ironic social commentary. Acquire this manga for adult collections for the naturalistic artwork that shows attention to human emotion, the social observation, and the banter between members of the delivery service." —Library Journal

"Nobody does horror-comedy comics better than Otsuka and Yamazaki." —Booklist





LONE WOLF AND CUB



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kazuo Koike*

Artist: *Goseki Kojima*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 4" x 6"*

Age: *16+*

Volumes: *1–28*

Sales: *Over 1,000,000 copies sold, making LW&C*

Dark Horse's best-ever-selling manga title!

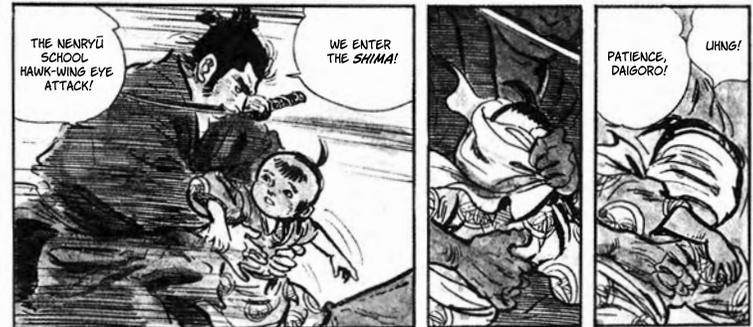
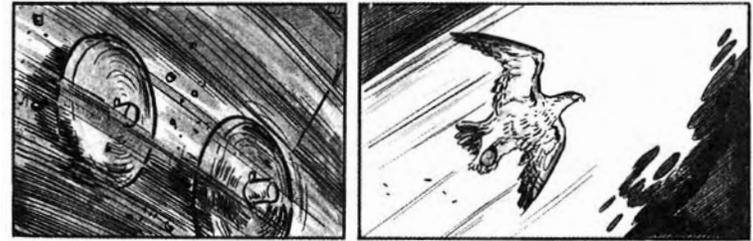
NOTE

Ogami Itto, the shogun's highly respected executioner, is forced to flee his former life and toil in exile after the cruel betrayal of his family by a fellow clan. Taking

with him his infant son, Daigoro, Itto must survive as an assassin for hire, finding what work he can along the road as he sets out on a quest for vengeance and redemption. Through unimaginable violence, across hundreds of miles of blood-soaked roadbeds, over years of tragedy and anguish, Itto and Daigoro undertake a cursed journey in a world where honor is all but forgotten and warriors are obsolete. It's a bloody battle all the way to the finish, with dramatic twists and turns right up to the final page!

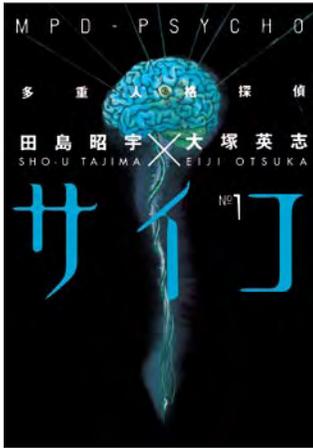
An epic samurai adventure of staggering proportions—weighing in at over seven thousand pages!—*Lone Wolf and Cub* has long been acknowledged worldwide as one of the single greatest works of graphic fiction ever created. The brilliant writing of series creator Kazuo Koike and the groundbreaking cinematic visuals of the late Goseki Kojima combine to create unforgettable images of stark beauty, kinetic fury, and visceral thematic power. *Lone Wolf and Cub* has garnered numerous awards, including the prestigious Eisner and Harvey Awards, and has influenced generations of visual storytellers both in Japan and in the West. It is with great pride that Dark Horse presents this series, one of the great landmarks of graphic fiction, published in its entirety for the first time in North America.

**Please note, the facing page reads left-to-right. It has been flopped at the creator's request.*





MPD-PSYCHO



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Eiji Otsuka*

Artist: *Sho-u Tajima*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *18+*

Volumes: *1-11 (ongoing series)*

Sales: *Over 40,000 copies sold*

NOTE

Police detective Kobayashi Yosuke's life is changed forever after a serial killer notices something "special" about him. That same killer mutilates Kobayashi's girlfriend and sets off a multiple personality battle

within Kobayashi that pushes him into a complex tempest of interconnected deviants and evil forces. When he joins forces with the Isono Criminal Research Lab, he might just have a chance at unraveling the disturbing puzzle that seems to connect each inventive atrocity they are faced with to the next . . . but only if he can keep his other personalities in check!

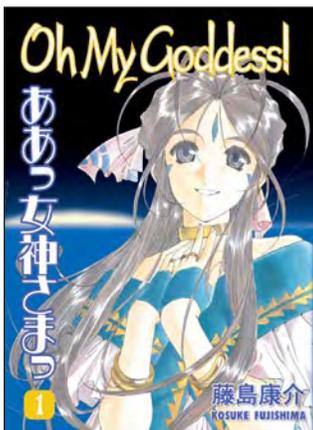
MPD-Psycho, one of the most-requested manga series in recently memory, has found a fitting home at Dark Horse Manga, where it is presented uncut and uncensored in all of its controversial and unflinchingly grotesque glory! Awarded *Publishers Weekly's* number-two spot in their "Top Ten Manga of 2007" list, *MPD-Psycho* is a smash hit that has sold over four million copies in Japan and inspired an equally hair-raising and horrifying television series, Takashi Miike's *MPD-Psycho*. An uncontrollable, unstoppable urban horror show that has earned extensive praise for its consistently shocking plotlines and clean, arresting art style, *MPD-Psycho* is the manga event of the decade!

"Attention to detail makes the horror of this psychological detective series creepier." —*Publishers Weekly*





OH MY GODDESS!



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kosuke Fujishima*

Artist: *Kosuke Fujishima*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *12+*

Volumes: *1-31 (ongoing series)*

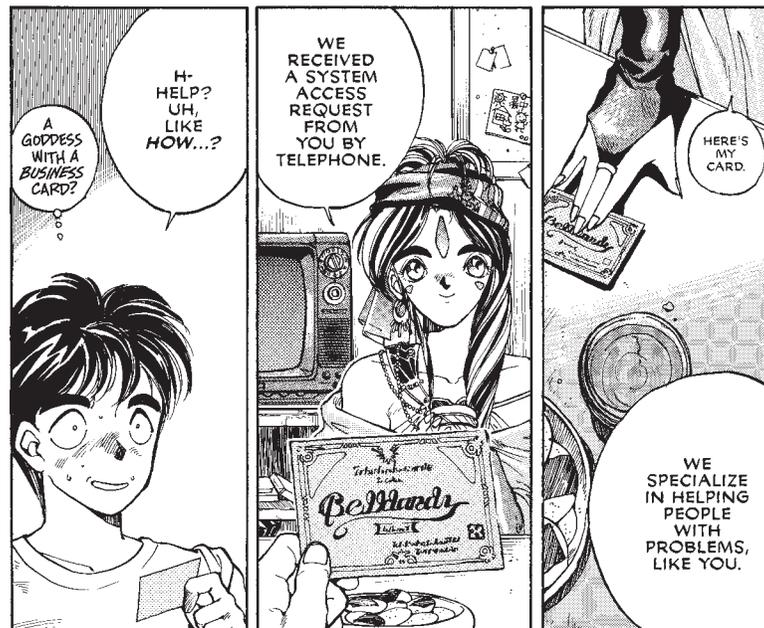
Sales: *Over 450,000 copies sold*

NOTE

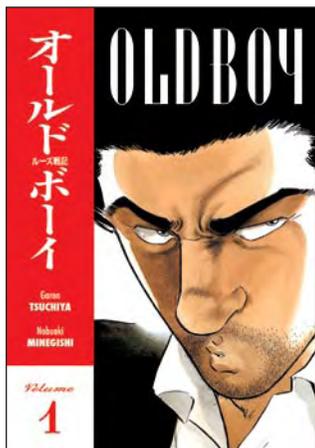
Alone in his dorm on a Saturday night, Nekomi Tech's Keiichi Morisato dials a wrong number that will change his life forever. Reaching the Goddess Technical Help Line, he is granted one wish by the

charming young goddess Belldandy—a wish for anything in the world. But when Keiichi doesn't take her seriously and wishes that she stay with him forever, complications are bound to ensue . . . the first being that the new couple gets tossed out of Keiichi's male-only dorm! As the hapless student and his mysterious "foreign beauty" ride around looking for a new place to stay—risking the many dangers of seeking shelter with an otaku convinced Belldandy is an imaginary woman, and a Zen priest convinced she's a sinister witch—Keiichi's still got his classes on Monday morning! How is his new "exchange student" companion going to be received on the N.I.T. campus? A little too well for Keiichi's life to ever return to normal! And things are only going to get worse when Belldandy's sisters move in . . .

Dark Horse is proud to re-release *Oh My Goddess!* in the much-requested original Japanese right-to-left format. Featuring beautiful new covers and eight pages per volume of gorgeous full-color material, these new editions of *Oh My Goddess!* are sure to please. The longest-running manga series in English, *Oh My Goddess!* is well known as one of the foremost relationship-comedy comics in the U.S. market. Popular among both male and female readers, *Oh My Goddess!* continues to attract fan letters and art and is highly recognized, with its anime counterpart a perennial bestseller for Media Blasters and ADV.



OLD BOY



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Garon Tsuchiya*

Artist: *Nobuaki Minegishi*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Age: *18+*

Volumes: *1-8*

Sales: *Over 60,000 copies sold*

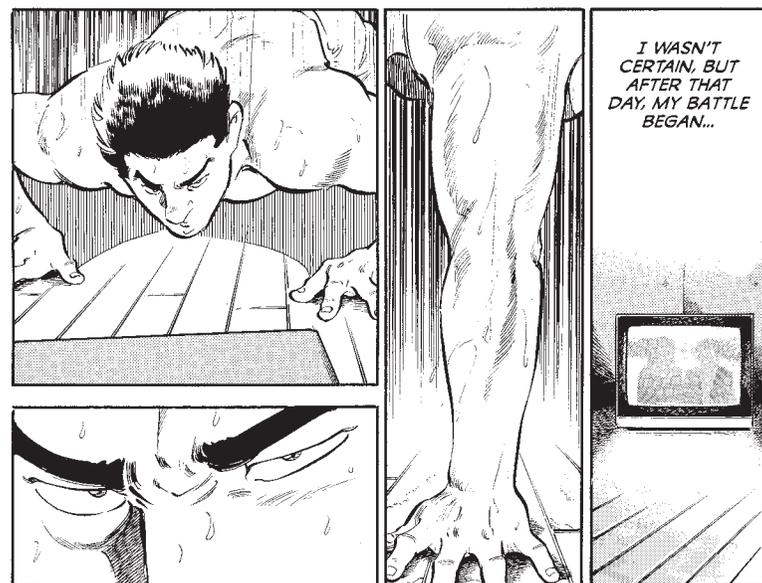
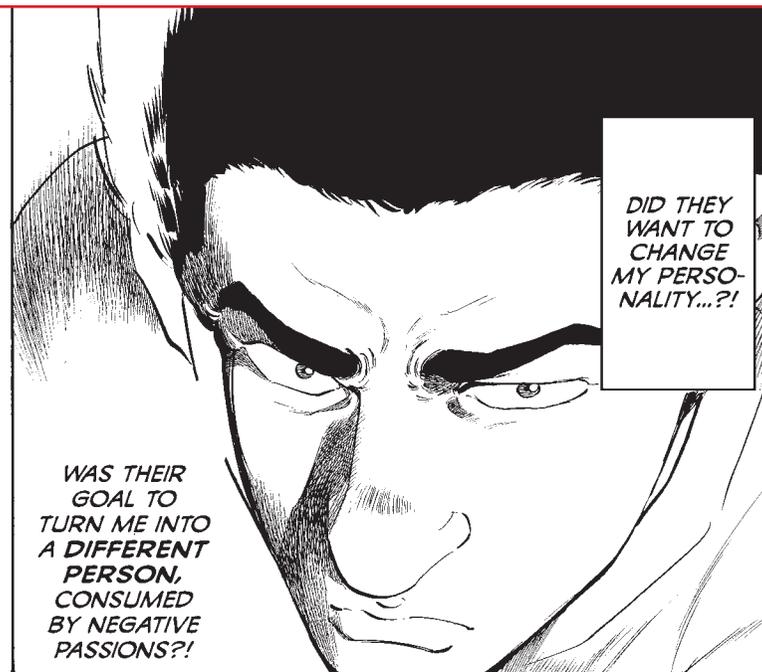
NOTE

Ten years ago, he was taken. For ten years, he was confined in a private prison. For ten years, his only contact with the outside world was a television set and the voices of his jailers. Never told why he was

imprisoned, or by whom, in time he lost himself. He changed . . . transformed himself into something else . . . something hard . . . something lethal. But just as suddenly as it began—and with just as little explanation—his incarceration has ended. Sedated, stuffed inside a trunk, and dumped in a park, he has been released. When he awakes, he is free to reclaim what's left of his life, but all that's left is an unwavering desire for answers and revenge.

An intense, bare-knuckled urban thriller in the tradition of *Pulp Fiction* and *Payback*, and a captivating hard-boiled whodunit true to the finest film noir, *Old Boy* was the inspiration behind acclaimed Korean director Chan-Wook Park's 2003 release *Oldboy*, a film which was awarded the Grand Jury prize at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival. The *Old Boy* manga also holds the honor of being the first recipient—in 2007—of the Eisner Award for Best U.S. Edition of International Material: Japan!

• A Hollywood remake of the manga, starring Will Smith and directed by Steven Spielberg, is set for release in 2010.



ORION



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Shirow Masamune*

Artist: *Shirow Masamune*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 3/4" x 8 1/4"*

Age: *16+*

Volumes: *1*

Sales: *Over 20,000 copies sold*

NOTE

In the mighty Yamata Empire, magic and technology are one and the same. Now, the empire is preparing its ultimate feat of psycho-science: the destruction of all the negative karma in the galaxy! But will this mystical

purification be the salvation of humanity—or the trigger of its ultimate destruction? Only one being can save the empire from its folly: Susano, the god of destruction. Wild, arrogant, and homicidal, Susano has come to teach the world the true nature of power!

Shirow Masamune, creator of *Appleseed*, *Dominion*, *Intron Depot*, and *Ghost in the Shell*, has earned a huge worldwide following with his unique, eclectic, and visually stunning blend of science fiction and fantasy. *Orion* is Shirow at his wildest, and is now for the first time in America published in right-to-left reading format, as originally published in Japan. This book also includes a variety of great bonus features, including an art gallery, *Orion* glossary, and notes on the text composed by Shirow himself!

“... a wild blend of science fiction and fantasy where technology meets magic...” —*Publishers Weekly*



PATH OF THE ASSASSIN



半蔵の門 PATH OF THE ASSASSIN

VOLUME 1
SERVING IN THE DARK
BY KAZUO KOIKE & GOSEKI KOJIMA

FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kazuo Koike*

Artist: *Goseki Kojima*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 4" x 6"*

Age: *18+*

Volumes: *1-15*

Sales: *Over 85,000 copies sold*

NOTE

If you think you have a tough job, try taking a pudgy, protected youngster, and making him into the leader who will unite Japan under his single rule! Hattori Hanzo, the fabled master ninja, has been assigned this difficult task, and must protect Tokugawa Ieyasu,

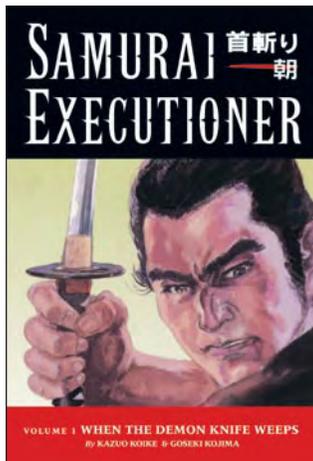
the young shogun-to-be who is destined to unite Japan into one great nation. But protecting his young master doesn't just mean guarding him from physical harm; it also means being the secret caretaker of Ieyasu's reputation, and serving as Ieyasu's teacher in the ways of the world!

A touching and action packed coming-of-age story of two young men bound to a nation's potential future at a time when Japan was in transition from a warlike feudal state into an era of bureaucracy and infighting, *Path of the Assassin* offers up a fascinating look at a turning point in Japanese history. Another quasi-historical tale from the masters of Japanese samurai manga, *Lone Wolf and Cub* creators Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima, *Path of the Assassin* is published in the popular pocket-sized manga format and packs historical fiction and fine art in yet another classic samurai series from Dark Horse.

“... Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima weave an intriguing, sexy, and charming story of young lives passing into very unusual adulthoods...” —Active Anime



SAMURAI EXECUTIONER



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kazuo Koike*
Artist: *Goseki Kojima*
Format: *B&W, softcover, 4" x 6"*
Age: *18+*
Volumes: *1-10*
Sales: *Over 150,000 copies sold*

NOTE

From the highly respected, Eisner Award-winning team behind *Lone Wolf and Cub* comes *Samurai Executioner*, the back story of Kubikirii Asa, better known to *Lone Wolf and Cub* readers as Decapitator Asaemon! This manga follows the infamous decapi-

tator's life before his fatal duel with Lone Wolf, when he was bearer of the sword Onibocho and the man charged with the duty of testing swords for the shogun.

Expect the same legendary drama, frantic action, and stoic samurai stature, combined with exemplary art and storytelling, that made *Lone Wolf and Cub* one of the most popular and influential comic books in the world. But make no mistake, *Samurai Executioner* is very different from its brother, *Lone Wolf and Cub*, sometimes frighteningly so! Wrapped tightly around a core of crime fiction, *Samurai Executioner* draws readers into a world of harsh, violent crime, and the forces up against it.

"Slashing violence, convincingly rendered gore, nudity (non-frontal), and sex (gritty, but not pornographic) occur in virtually every story, but what distinguishes all is the dazzling plentitude of angles of vision, the masterly use of shading, and tremendous energy in Kojima's strictly black-and-white artwork." —Booklist

**Please note, the facing page reads left-to-right. It has been flopped at the creator's request.*





TRANSLUCENT



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Kazubiro Okamoto*

Artist: *Kazubiro Okamoto*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 3/4" x 8 1/4"*

Age: *12+*

Volumes: *1-3 (ongoing series)*

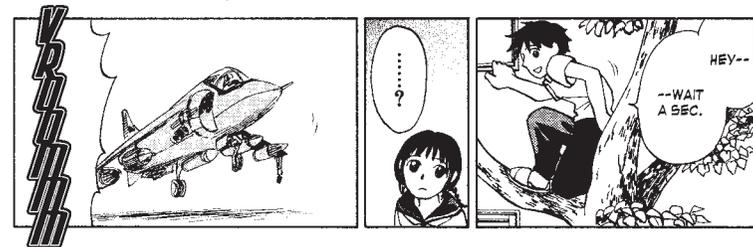
Sales: *Over 25,000 copies sold. The first volume sold 18,000 copies in one month!*

NOTE

Shizuka is an introverted girl dealing with schoolwork, boys . . . and a medical condition that is turning her invisible! She needs support from her friends and

family to stay solid, both literally and figuratively, and finds special comfort with Mamoru, a boy who is falling for Shizuka despite her condition, and with Keiko, a woman who suffers from this illness and has finally turned completely invisible. But as she struggles with her mysterious disease, it becomes clear that Translucent Syndrome isn't just a medical obstacle for her to overcome . . . It's also a metaphor for the ordinary lives of all of her fellow students as they try to work their way through their friendships, romances, and all the struggles that come hand in hand with growing up.

Writer and artist Kazuhiro Okamoto knows how important surfaces are to people, especially at such a pivotal time in one's life—when dreams are meant to be chased, despite all hurdles. With *Translucent's* shifting of variables between what people can see, what people think they see, and what people wish to see in themselves, Okamoto creates a deep and emotionally sensitive manga peppered with moments of surprising humor, heartbreak, and drama. Much like *Oh My Goddess!* in tone and attention to the depths of emotional experience, *Translucent* has crossover appeal to shoujo fans and readers of all ages.





TRIGUN



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Yasubiro Nightow*

Artist: *Yasubiro Nightow*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 3/4" x 8 1/4"*

Age: *12+*

Volumes: *1-2*

Sales: *Over 200,000 copies sold! Dark Horse's per-unit manga bestseller.*

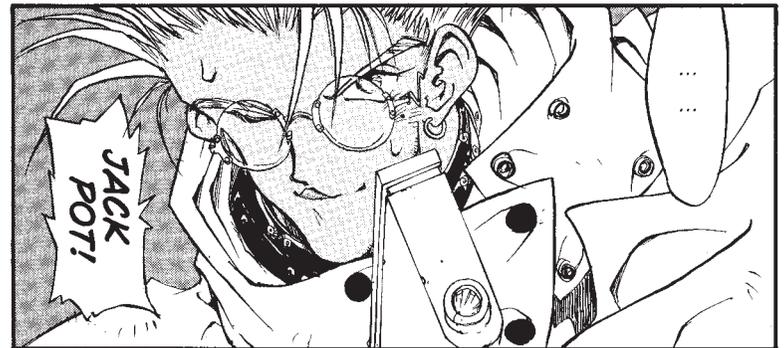
NOTE

It's something of a mystery why a sixty-billion double-dollar bounty has been placed on gunslinging pacifist Vash the Stampede's head, but one thing's for

sure—no matter what he does or where he goes, Vash can't seem to get away from all the money-grubbing, itchy-trigger-finger citizenry out to collect on that sixty-billion double-dollar payday! An unlikely hero in a forbidding world, Vash the Stampede has little to call his own other than a troubled past and an uncanny ability to dodge a gazillion bullets, but as he treks across the dusty, desert planet he calls home, he might just find some answers and allies—if he can manage to stay in one piece!

Action, comedy, science fiction, and western gunslinger action congregate within these pages, and this compound of genre-bending ingredients makes for a smash-hit manga favorite! Thanks to this series' immense popularity, and the anime's much-loved run on Adult Swim, *Trigun* has become a true staple for American otaku, so much so that you can't go to a single anime con in the U.S. without seeing fans dressed as *Trigun* heroes like Vash and Nick Wolfwood!

"Artistically this book is a joy to behold. . . it is apparent that Nightow knows guns and he pays a great deal of attention to detail in absolutely everything." —Manga Life



TRIGUN MAXIMUM



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Yasubiro Nightow*

Artist: *Yasubiro Nightow*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 3/4" x 8 1/4"*

Age: *12+*

Volumes: *1-14*

Sales: *Over 370,000 copies sold*

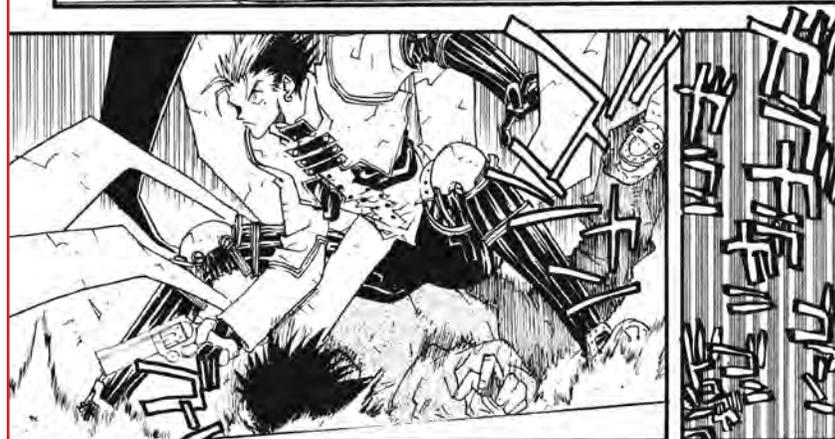
NOTE

Vash the Stampede disappeared for two years after the catastrophic events that wrapped up the first

Trigun manga series. But with good and bad alike trying to track him down, he couldn't stay lost for long. The Gung-Ho Guns, a hodgepodge group of assassins born and bred to kill Vash, are still in action and still after Vash's head, not to mention the mysterious "god gun" that's fused with his body. On the run once again, Vash and his motley band of allies must finally face up to Vash's mysterious past, and what that past means for their world's future!

Trigun Maximum goes beyond the story available in the anime and the first two top-selling manga volumes, bringing readers a whole new batch of hilarious high-noon hijinks, dastardly villains, and gun-slinging action, all in the name of love and peace!

"The art's raw, kinetic energy makes each page fascinating . . ." —*Publishers Weekly*



OTHER NOTABLE
& IMPORTANT JAPANESE
WORKS FROM DARK HORSE



THE ART OF YOSHITAKA AMANO



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Various*

Artist: *Yoshitaka Amano*

Format: *Various*

Volumes: *Yoshitaka Amano: The Collected Art of Vampire Hunter D, Coffin: The Art of Vampire Hunter D, Fairies, The Tale of the Genji, Worlds of Amano*

Sales: *Over 50,000 copies sold*

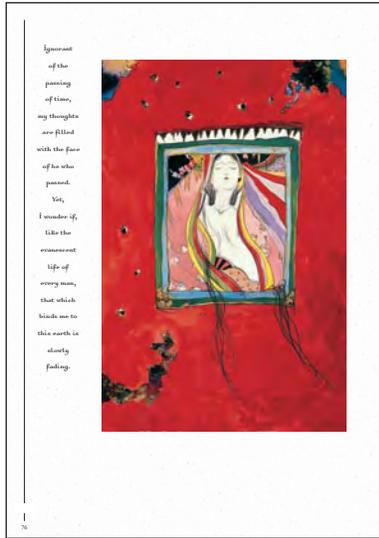
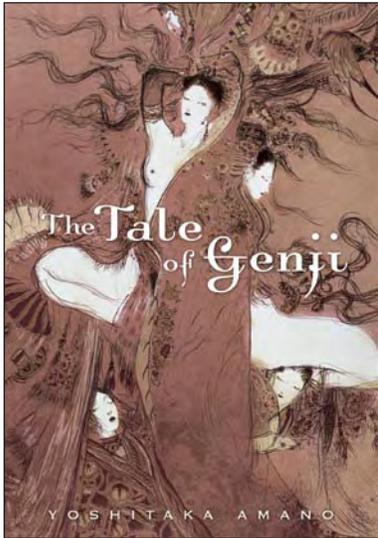
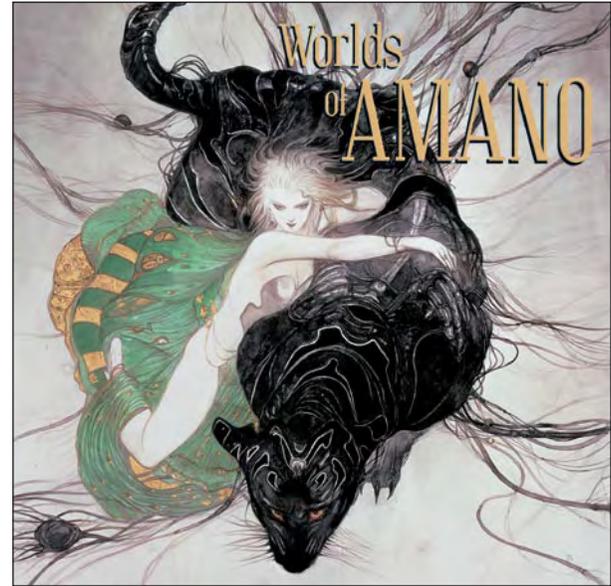
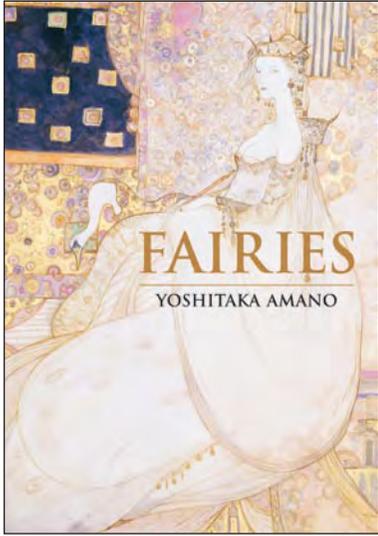
NOTE

These books provide a captivating look at the works of one of the most influential and prolific popular-culture artists working in Japan today: Yoshitaka

Amano. Amano has been praised around the world for his lush and evocative work. Eclectic, elegant, and haunting, his art draws viewers into a fantasy world of ethereal creatures, shadowy heroes, and surreal landscapes. Drawing on the numerous projects Amano has been involved with over the last thirty years, including many rarely seen illustrations, these titles capture the rare beauty and inspiration of his vision. Be it an illustrated examination of a novel's protagonist, a foray into videogame character design, or a re-imagining of a classic myth, whatever project Yoshitaka Amano turns his mind to he embraces with the full force of his artistic genius. Just a quick flip through any one of these books will attest to why Amano is one of the most highly regarded illustrators in Japan!

“What further distinguishes the publication from standard art books is how many of the pieces are shown in an altered state, at times reminiscent of pop art . . . There’s a conscious attempt to fuse these individual prints together into something more cohesive and unique.” —Mania







BLOOD+ ILLUSTRATED NOVELS



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Ryo Ikehata*

Artist: *Chizu Hashii*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Volumes: *1–4*

Sales: *Over 10,000 copies sold*

NOTE

Suffering from extreme amnesia, high-school student Saya Otonashi can't remember anything from her life beyond the last year. Living with a foster family outside a military base in Okinawa, Japan, Saya's attempts to live a normal life are shattered when a

Chiropteran, a horrific vampire-like monster, attacks her. Saved at the last minute by a mysterious man named Hagi, Saya is presented with a sword that awakens in her a warrior's skills and bloodlust, and sets her on a course that will lead her to the answers of her missing memories, and into battle against a race of creatures intent on destroying the world.

The epic adventure that began in the groundbreaking film *Blood: The Last Vampire*, and has continued through the worldwide phenomenon TV and manga series *Blood+*, is brought to life in this all-new series of novels adapting the hit show. Saya's journey of horror, magic, romance, and mystery will stretch across time and around the world, expanding on the television series with new characters, new adventures, and breathtaking action.

BLOOD+ FIRST KISS (excerpt)

On the entrance to OMORO hung a small wooden sign which read "Preparing for Business."

This time the door was ten times heavier than usual. The sound of the cowbell was jarring.

Saya had never once felt this way before when she had returned home.

It was gloomy. The walls behind the counter and the area around the sink were decorated with an American southern-style and Japanese pub-style knick-knacks.

The shop wasn't open, but she could see the figure of a man sitting at the counter.

The expressionless face that turned and looked at her was none other than the face of David.

"You are late."

"I know."

David looked up at George's bitter scowl, and then returned his probing gaze back to Saya.

"I am a member of an organization called 'Red Shield.'"

"Red . . . Shield?"

"Red Shield was established and acts in the pursuit of a certain purpose. On that night at school you saw something. That monster."

A chill ran down Saya's spine.

David knows about the grotesque beast.

"We call it a Chiropteran."

"Chiropteran . . ."

"It is a monster that feeds on human blood."

That's right. She had heard the cello player say the same thing.

That giant creature killed people and then sucked out their blood . . . that was what it looked like it was doing to Mr. Inamine.

"For a long time we have been gathering information and exterminating the Chiropterans. And so we need you, as our trump card."

"Me?"

"To be more precise, it is your blood—you are the only person with the blood that can reliably kill Chiropterans."

"My . . . blood?"

What could be so special about the blood that flowed through the veins under the surface of her skin?

And that otherworldly monster could be killed by something inside her body? This sudden self-awareness made her shoulders turn cold.



THE DAYAN COLLECTION



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Akiko Ikeda*

Artist: *Akiko Ikeda*

Format: *Full color, hardcover, 5 3/8" x 7 7/16"*

Age: **8+**

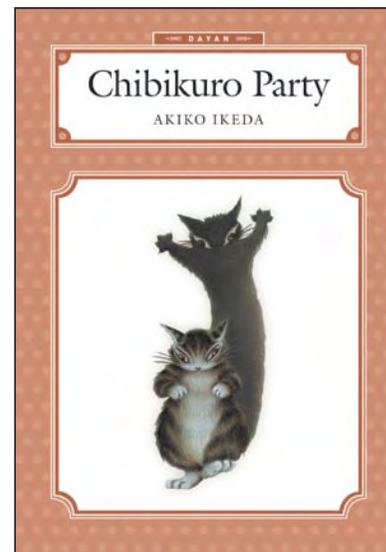
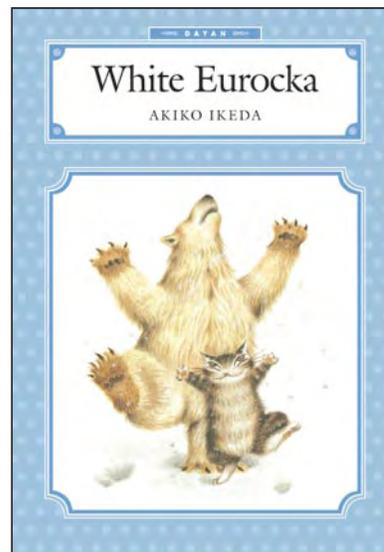
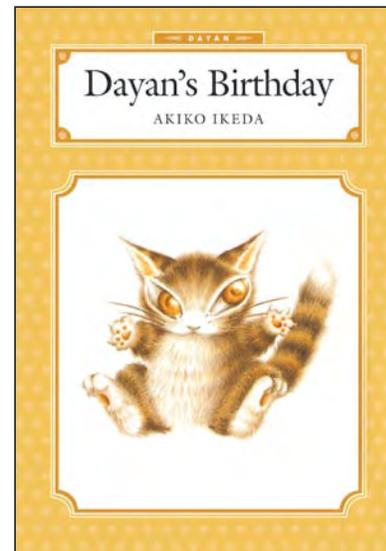
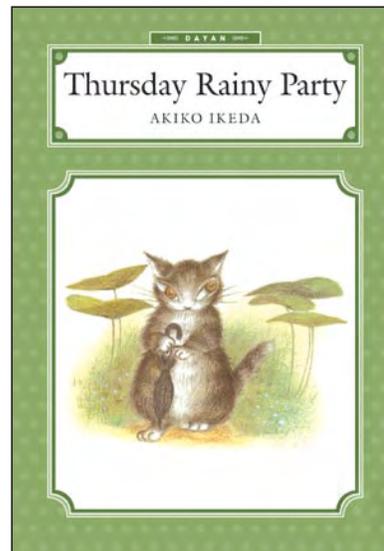
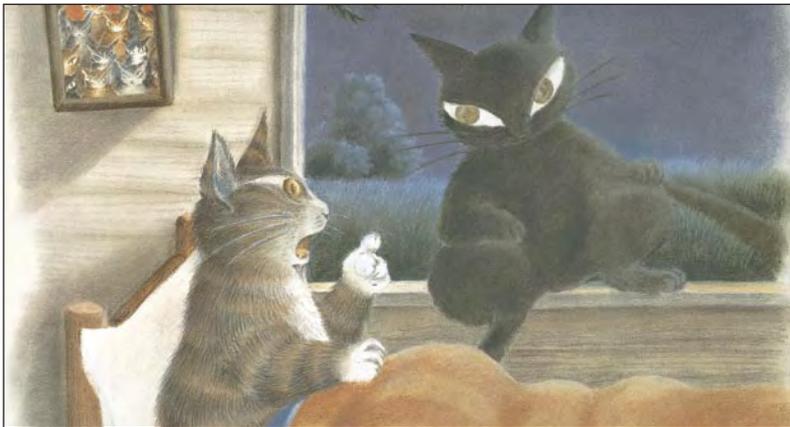
Volumes: *Dayan's Birthday, Thursday Rainy Party, White Eurocka, Chibikuro Party*

Sales: *Over 6,000 copies sold*

NOTE

The charming books in the internationally popular *Dayan Collection* series come to English for the first time! International best-selling author Akiko Ikeda

has made the tales of the mischievous cat Dayan and his woodland friends in the magical realm of Wachfield a sensation around the world. Dark Horse is very proud to bring these endearing, whimsical adventures to America in a series of adorable children's books that are sure to warm the hearts of readers of all ages!





THE DIRTY PAIR ILLUSTRATED NOVELS



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Haruka Takachiho*

Artist: *Yoshikazu Yasuhiko*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5" x 7"*

Volumes: *The Great Adventure of the Dirty Pair, The Dirty Pair Strike Again*

Sales: *Over 5,000 copies sold*

NOTE

Charged with keeping the peace and investigating crime among the stars, the Worlds Welfare Work Association (WWWA) prides itself on a reputation of safety and regard for life and property. If only

someone would tell that to Agents Kei and Yuri, code name “the Lovely Angels,” but better known as “the Dirty Pair.” Part female James Bond and part walking disaster, this duo gets the job done, though there are no guarantees that a city or two won’t get razed in the process!

Created by popular science-fiction author Haruka Takachiho in 1979, the Dirty Pair are among the most beloved characters in popular anime and science-fiction circles.

“Once again, Dark Horse brings us a beautifully translated book. The black-and-white illustrations by Yoshikazu Yasuhiko . . . are perfect for this spoof of 1970s era space operas, and bring back fond memories of campy shows like Vega\$ and Charlie’s Angels . . .” —MangaCast

THE DIRTY PAIR STRIKE AGAIN (excerpt)

“Wha-what’re we gonna do . . . ?” Yuri asked. She had a docile look on her face. Stay sharp! Why do you think we slugged through a year of tough WWWA training?

“Break out the Bloody Card!” I said to Yuri. Her eyes widened and she looked at me.

“You want to help them, right? If so, then we gotta cut that big guy down.”

“Uh huh . . .”

Yuri gave a tiny nod as she listened to what I said, and then she pulled out a single, silver-colored, playing deck-sized card. She held the Bloody Card, a 0.6 millimeter-thick card made from Tegnoid sheet metal. It has a razor-sharp edge running along all four sides. After being thrown it can stay in the air for up to two hours, thanks to its ion drive, and its direction can be controlled by a handheld transmitter. All it does is cut, and it does it well. If it’s going fast enough it can even slice through two millimeters of KZ alloy like a hot knife through butter. It’s a simple but effective weapon.

I continued speaking.

“From here we can’t tell if there is anyone else in the room, so set it to stay at an altitude of one meter, and to fly through the entire room. Those two are on their backs, so there’s no chance of them getting hurt.”

My gaze returned to what lay beyond the crack in the doorway.

“Throw it!”

Timing wasn’t an issue. You just had to get the Bloody Card moving. With a snap of the wrist Yuri sent the Bloody Card whirling into the room.

From above our heads we could hear a smattering of horrendous shouts. Blood rained down from above, painting the room a deep red. The casino security guard was still upright, but there was nothing but an empty space above his neck.

The Bloody Card also sliced through another three men. Each of their bodies had blood-soaked areas around their mid-sections. One had been penetrated right through his heart. Instant death.

GUNGRAVE ARCHIVES



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Softbank Editorial Division*

Artist: *Yasuhiko Nightow*

Format: *Full color, softcover, 8 ¼" x 12"*

Volumes: *1*

Sales: *Over 5,000 copies sold*

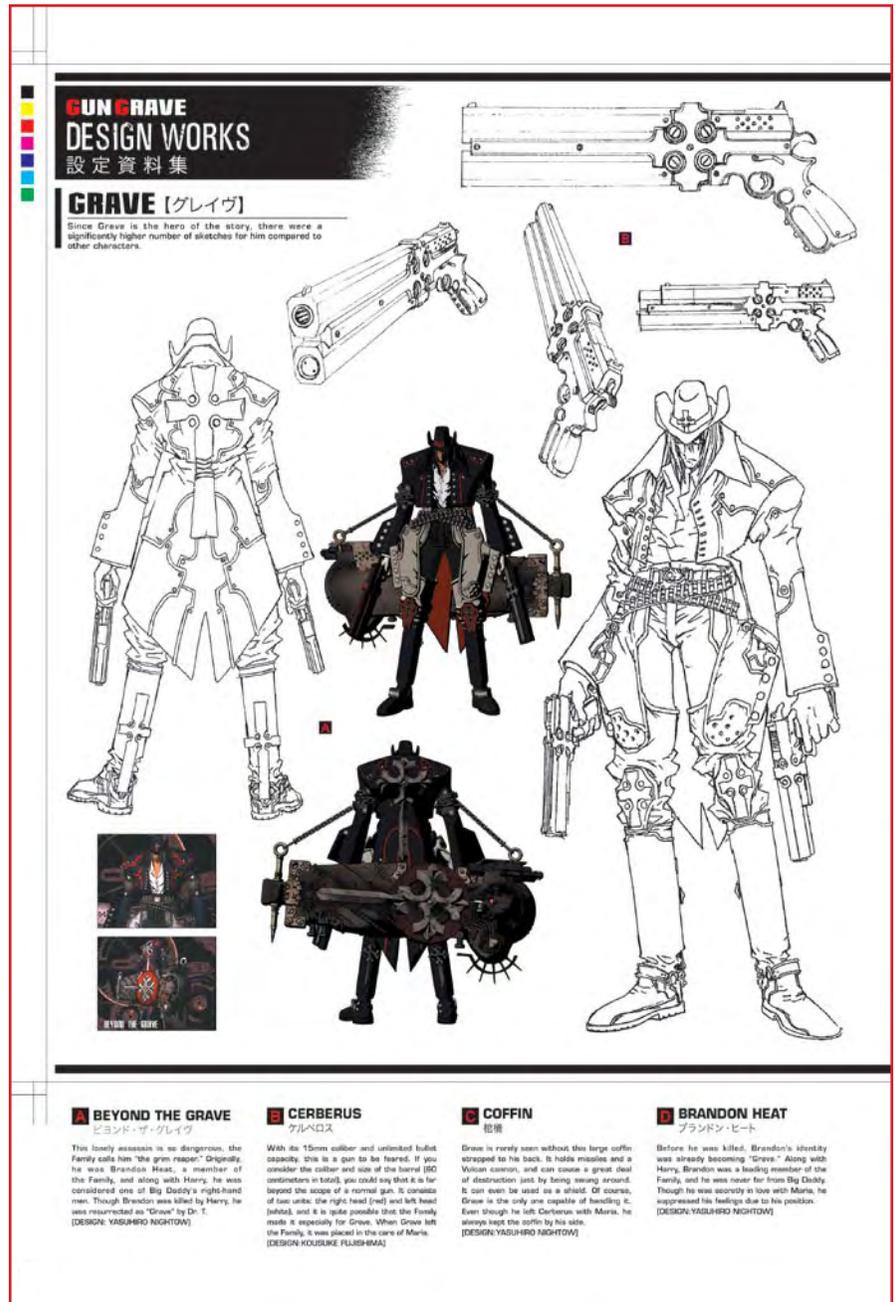
NOTE

First a hit first-person-shooter video game in Japan, *Gungrave* moved overseas to become an American Playstation 2 favorite as well before finally making the move to become a popular anime in both countries. Dark Horse is proud to bring America the works of

Trigun creator Yasuhiro Nightow, and the art book *Gungrave Archives* offers a new piece of the manga master's growing portfolio of works with an in-depth look at the videogame his work inspired!

This high-quality art book combines two art books previously available only in Japanese into one deluxe double-sized volume. Featuring two pull-out posters, concept sketches, character design notes, interviews, photographs of an exclusive, never-to-see-mass-production Grave figure custom made by famed figure modeler Takayuki Takeda, and much, much more, this book is a must-have for fans of *Gungrave*, Yasuhiro Nightow's work, and top-quality videogame design!

"Gungrave Archives is a treasure of art for fans of the anime, the games, and for fans of art in general. It holds an expansive variety of not only art, but insight behind it and the forming of the popular games and anime series." —Active Anime



1 BEYOND THE GRAVE ビヨンド・ザ・グレイヴ

This lonely assassin is so dangerous, the Family calls him "the grim reaper." Originally, he was Brandon Heat, a member of the Family, and along with Harry, he was considered one of Big Daddy's right-hand men. Though Brandon was killed by Harry, he was resurrected as "Grave" by Dr. T. (DESIGN: YASUHIKO NIGHTOW)

2 CERBERUS ケルベロス

With its 15mm caliber and unlimited bullet capacity, this is a gun to be feared. If you consider the caliber and size of the barrel (50 centimeters in total), you could say that it is beyond the scope of a normal gun. It consists of two units: the right hand (red) and left hand (black), and it is quite possible that the Family made it especially for Grave. When Grave left the Family, it was placed in the care of Maria. (DESIGN: YOSHIKANE FUKUDA)

3 COFFIN 棺

Grave is rarely seen without this large coffin strapped to his back. It holds missiles and a Vulcan cannon, and can cause a great deal of destruction just by being swung around. It can even be used as a shield. Of course, Grave is the only one capable of handling it. Even though he left Catherine with Maria, he always kept the coffin by his side. (DESIGN: YASUHIKO NIGHTOW)

4 BRANDON HEAT ブランドン・ヒート

Before he was killed, Brandon's identity was already becoming "Grave." Along with Harry, Brandon was a leading member of the Family, and he was closer to Iron Big Daddy. Though he was secretly in love with Maria, he repressed his feelings due to his position. (DESIGN: YASUHIKO NIGHTOW)



OH MY GODDESS! FIRST END NOVEL



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Yumi Tobma*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Volumes: *1*

Sales: *Over 5,000 copies sold*

NOTE

Keiichi Morisato was a typical college student, a failure with women struggling to get through his classes and in general living a pretty nondescript life. That is, until he dialed the wrong number and accidentally summoned the goddess Belldandy! Not believing Belldandy could really be a goddess capable

of granting his every wish, Keiichi wishes for her to stay with him forever. As they say, be careful what you wish for! Now bound to Earth and at Keiichi's side for life, the lives of this most unusual goddess and most lucky human will never be the same again.

Based on the internationally successful manga, film, and television series, *Oh My Goddess! First End* is the first novel in the franchise's history and is sure to be a sensation to all its English-speaking fans around the world!

"The dialogue in Dark Horse's translations is never an issue. It's truly the best in the business, end of story." —Anime News Network

OH MY GODDESS! FIRST END (excerpt)

Keiichi stretched and slumped back against the wall. One of his hands brushed against the chilly surface of his wall-mounted mirror.

Sighing deeply, he reached for a cigarette. He wasn't much of a smoker, but at least it gave his hands something to do. Just as he'd put one in his mouth, the timer he'd set began to beep.

"Oh, right . . . I'm supposed to call Aoyama . . ."

He pulled the phone over and dialed the number. It was an old rotary phone, and the dial made a soft whirring sound between numbers.

Before the phone had barely begun to ring, Keiichi heard someone pick up at the other end.

"Hello . . ." he started to say, but a woman's voice cut him off.

"Hello, this is the Goddess Help Line."

"Oops . . . I must have dialed the wrong number . . ." Keiichi had been expecting a male voice.

"I'll be there in just a moment to grant your request," the voice said. The line went dead before Keiichi had a chance to apologize for his mistake.

". . . hey!"

And just how did she intend to do that, when he hadn't given his name or address? Unless she had some way of tracing the call . . .

"Weird . . . Oh well, whatever . . ."

Keiichi was about to forget the whole thing and redial the phone when he heard a female voice above his head.

"Good evening!"

Startled, Keiichi looked up—straight into the face of an unfamiliar girl.

"!!!"

Even more unbelievable was the fact that the girl's upper body was protruding into the room from his mirror.

"What is your desire?"

It was the same voice he had just heard on the phone—that much was certain. But how had she managed to appear in his mirror? Keiichi turned pale with fright as the girl smiled sweetly and popped out of the mirror into the room.

"I am the Goddess Belldandy. I'm here to grant you a wish . . . but please keep in mind that you can only wish once."

"G-g-g-goddess?"

"May I ask your name?"

"U-uh . . . it's Keiichi . . . Morisato . . ."



ROMAN ALBUM: SAMURAI CHAMPLOO



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Various*

Artist: *Various*

Format: *Full color, softcover, 8 1/4" x 11 1/4"*

Volumes: *1*

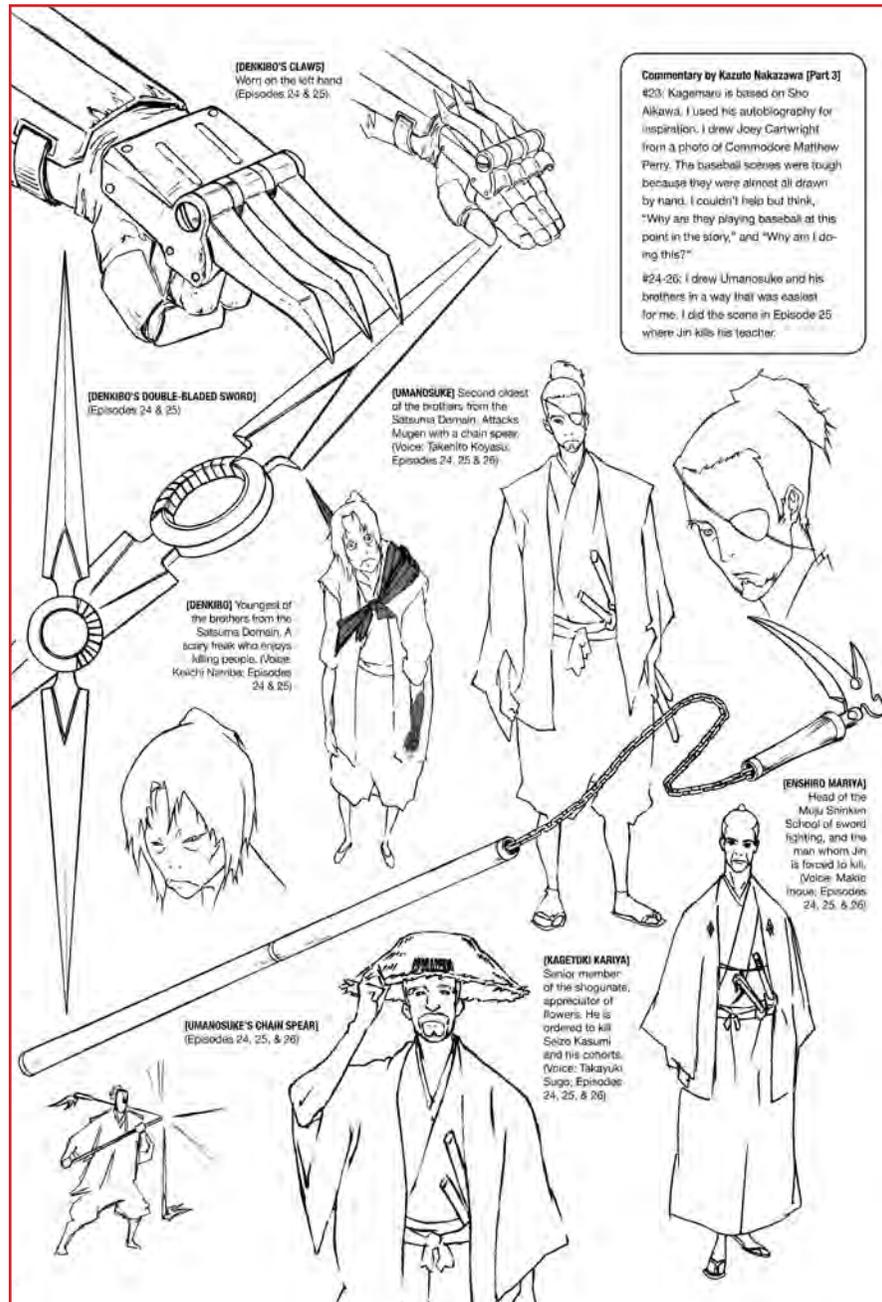
Sales: *Over 3,000 copies sold*

NOTE

A wildly entertaining blend of period samurai drama, modern hip-hop sensibilities, and nonstop martial-arts action, the *Samurai Champloo* anime series follows one girl's quest to find her father, and the crazy antics that ensue as she and the two bodyguards she's

convinced to accompany her on her journey trek across Japan. A hit anime sensation from the creators of the phenomenal *Cowboy Bebop* series, *Samurai Champloo* took Cartoon Network's Adult Swim audience by storm!

Dark Horse is very pleased to present the very first *Samurai Champloo* art book to English-reading fans, directly translated from the original—a volume that is part of the prestigious "Roman Album" Japanese art book line! *Roman Album: Samurai Champloo* includes in-depth profiles of main characters Mugen, Jin, and Fuu, a wealth of design notes and sketches, illustrated summaries of all twenty-six episodes, and a "Backstage Champloo" chapter featuring interviews with famed director Shinichiro Watanabe, character designer and chief animator Kazuto Nakazawa, and art director Takeshi Waki!



[DENKIRO'S CLAWS]
Worry on the left hand
(Episodes 24 & 25)

[DENKIRO'S DOUBLE-BLADED SWORD]
(Episodes 24 & 25)

[DENKIRO] Youngest of the brothers from the Satsuma Domain. A scary freak who enjoys killing people. (Voice: Keiichi Nanase, Episodes 24 & 25)

[UMANOSUKE] Second oldest of the brothers from the Satsuma Domain. Attacks Mugen with a chain spear. (Voice: Takanori Koyasu, Episodes 24, 25 & 26)

[UMANOSUKE'S CHAIN SPEAR]
(Episodes 24, 25, & 26)

[KAGETUKI KARIYA]
Senior member of the shogunate, appreciator of flowers. He is ordered to kill Seizo Kasumi and his cohorts. (Voice: Takayuki Sugo, Episodes 24, 25, & 26)

[ENSHIRO MARIYA]
Head of the Muji Shinken School of sword fighting, and the man whom Jin is forced to kill. (Voice: Makio Inoue, Episodes 24, 25, & 26)

Commentary by Kazuto Nakazawa [Part 3]
#20: Kagemaro is based on Sho Aikawa. I used his autobiography for inspiration. I drew Joey Cartwright from a photo of Commodore Matthew Perry. The baseball scores were tough because they were almost all drawn by hand. I couldn't help but think, "Why are they playing baseball at this point in the story," and "Why am I doing this?"
#24-26: I drew Umanosuke and his brothers in a way that was easiest for me. I did the scene in Episode 25 where Jin kills his teacher.



STYLE SCHOOL



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Various*

Artist: *Various*

Format: *Full color, softcover, 8 7/8" x 10 1/8"*

Volumes: *1-3 (ongoing series)*

Sales: *Over 10,000 copies sold.*

NOTE

Number-one seller on Amazon Japan in the art-magazine category, *Style School* (SS magazine in Japan) speaks directly to the thousands of young Ameri-

cans who've been inspired by Japanese illustration styles, showing them the philosophy and methodology involved in becoming well-rounded artists no matter what their style or medium of choice might be. The *Style School* series provides in-depth examination of the techniques employed by Japan's top manga and anime artists, and features step-by-step tutorials to help today's up-and-coming illustrators master the use of pen, brush, paint, marker, screen tones, computer modeling, and other tricks of the trade.

Also included in each volume are huge color and black-and-white gallery sections showcasing page after page of amazing illustration work submitted by the magazine's readers. And as a special bonus, included in each of our volumes of *Style School* are instructions on how North American readers can submit their work to be considered for publication in upcoming issues of SS magazine in Japan!

- The highest-selling pop-culture/art how-to book series in Japan.



the boy's hair
The boy's silver hair will gain the appearance of acidity simply by adding shadows.

1 Use the lightest of the light blues. Blot it, so even any areas of the hair where shadows hit. The pen lines from the left of the hair will cut, and the strokes will be under those lefts.

2 Add a blue area that is 1/2 of the top of the hair. Add a blue area that is 1/2 of the top of the hair. Add a blue area that is 1/2 of the top of the hair.

3 Place the shaded area with 1/2 from the pen, which will also strengthen the image of the hair. The back of the hair will be in black, to color the entire area.

the completed picture

Before used, several layers of colors to complete the picture. She used the pen to create the pinky finger test. The coloring was simple, but she added pink highlights in each of the light of the hair and areas the paper used. The use of light in color, because it creates the appearance and purity of the picture. Because Copic colors in so many colors, it becomes more interesting to those all and with it's fun to try to do different colorful patterns in the coloring, it's more from depending on you will to change and get into to create the effect of light. Creating a methodical image like this one is simple, even though it's a piece of simple work needed. How to not your own coloring technique!

the boy's pants
The pants are mostly blue but include orange, pink, and green to colorfully represent reflected light.

4 Add a blue area that is 1/2 of the top of the pants. Add a blue area that is 1/2 of the top of the pants. Add a blue area that is 1/2 of the top of the pants.

5 Find, use light green (G1) to color along the left edge, and use orange (G2) on the part of the pants that is not shaded. Use light to highlight the top, so we can see the light.

6 Add light green (G1) to the area above the light orange and a little. Use orange (G2) to create areas where the shadows can jump out nicely.

7 Add blue (B1) to the highlighted area. The color highlights are becoming more and more abundant. The pants are blue, but the pink strip adds a different expression, creating light highlights.

8 Place light orange (G2) at the edges to adjust the color. The orange is dark, so we're creating the impression of light falling from the opposite side.

9 Now use light orange (G2), blending it in with the bottom of the light orange (G2) to create a light area.

one point! the pinky finger test
During the coloring process, Babin frequently stressed that the difference between what color from the brush has been added for the second session, and to make sure consistent from previous highlighting work.



VAMPIRE HUNTER D ILLUSTRATED NOVELS



FAST FACTS

Writer: *Hideyuki Kikuchi*

Artist: *Yoshitaka Amano*

Format: *B&W, softcover, 5 1/8" x 7 1/4"*

Volumes: *1–12 (ongoing series)*

Sales: *Over 300,000 copies sold*

NOTE

In the year 12,090 A.D., humans must fight to survive against a race of vampires, the Nobility, which has controlled society for over three hundred years. The war against the vampires has taken its toll; cities lie in ruin, the countryside is fragmented into small villages and

fiefdoms which still struggle against nightly raids by the fallen vampires and their genetically manufactured demons and werewolves. Mankind's only real hope lies with the Hunters, warriors who have pledged their lives, swords, and guns to eradicating the Nobility. But some Hunters are better than others, and some bring their own kind of danger with them. One such Hunter is the enigmatic D, a man who tirelessly hunts the enemies of humanity, but who has much more in common with the monsters he hunts than those who hire him may ever realize . . .

Written by leading Japanese horror author Hideyuki Kikuchi, and beautifully illustrated by renowned Japanese artist Yoshitaka Amano, this immensely popular series has generated more than seventeen million printed books worldwide since it first hit the shelves in 1983!

“*Vampire Hunter D* gets an ‘A’ for its skillful blend of action, mystery, and horror.”
—Active Anime

VAMPIRE HUNTER D VOLUME ONE (excerpt)

The youth's mount started to walk away calmly.

Though she remained in her absentminded stupor for a bit, the girl scrambled after the youth with a speed that was hard to believe from such slender legs “Hold up. I apologize for that craziness just now. I just knew you were a Hunter. Better yet, you're a Vampire Hunter, aren't you?”

The youth finally turned his eyes to the girl.

“I'm right, aren't I? I wanna hire you!”

The horse stopped.

“That's nothing to joke about,” the youth said softly.

“I know. I know Vampire Hunters are the most skilled of all Hunters. And I'm well aware what fearsome opponents vampires are. Even though only one Hunter in a thousand is good enough to make the grade, your chances of fighting a vampire and winning are still only fifty-fifty, right?”

A tinge of emotion stirred in the youth's eyes. With one hand he pushed back the brim of his hat. Long and thin and cold, his dark eyes were quite clear. “I take it someone in your family or one of your friends has been attacked. How many times have they been preyed upon?”

“Just the once, so far.”

“Are there marks from two fangs, or just one?”

The girl hesitated for an instant, then laid her hand to the scarf around her neck. “See for yourself.” On the left side of her neck in the vicinity of the main artery, a pair of festering wounds the color of fresh meat swelled from the sun-bronzed flesh.

“So, how about it? Will you come with me?”

“Very well then. But in return, I want to be clear on one thing.”

“What? Just name it.”

“I'm a dhampir.”

The girl's face froze. This gorgeous man couldn't be . . .

“Is that okay? If you wait a while longer, another Hunter may come by.”

Swallowing the sour spit that filled her mouth, the girl offered a hand to the youth.

“Glad to have you. I'm Doris Lang.”

The youth didn't shake her hand. Just as expressionless and emotionless as when he first appeared, he said, “Call me ‘D.’”

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