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## Glossy Or Not: Dodgem Logic #1 & Waxpoetics

By CHRIS ESTEY | Published: JANUARY 22, 2010

*Glossy Or Not* is a new column about worthy magazines and booklets and zines, as opposed to the authors, books, and events I usually cover in my *Scribes Sounding Off* column, or the reviews/interviews about Continuum's 33 1/3 series in its own *Odyssey*. The basic premise comes from the idea that there are only a handful remaining of really good periodicals, and that many KEXP listeners would probably like to know which ones are worth purchasing, and which match the station's intelligently eclectic aesthetic with coverage of same. We hope you enjoy this new semi-regular feature!



Music-loving comic fans were scampering for a random treat this holiday season, as England's own Alan Moore, four color Faustian comics scribe (*Watchmen*, *V For Vendetta*, *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*), Victorian pornographer-graphic novelist (*Lost Girls*), musician (often with David J of Bauhaus and others), magician, et al, put out a fanzine. On paper. Really nice, vibrantly-illustrated pages with really attention-grabbing articles. Like "Northamptonshire Rock Scenes From '57 Til Lately" (with an accompanying mix CD, Nation of Saints), "Stitch This!" for crafters, lots of cartoons about love and disease, and vegetarian recipes.

Not a "zine," which was how pompous post-grunge kids needed to describe the diluted medium they content-provided one line record reviews for (claiming they were not "sniff" "fans"), but the colorful, political, personal expression of the underground magazine. A fanzine. And though they were indeed proto-blogs, not some essence of same either on a nostalgic website or in the doting Proustian comments of an artful page-flow; but the strangely tall and vividly colorful UK version of rock and arts appreciation and criticism self-publications which were first breathed into life by the first round of American rock critics (*Crawdaddy*, *Back Door Man*, the ever-loving *BOMP!*), eventually becoming *Rolling Stone* and *Creem*, which sprung up alongside the more radical and ferocious *OZ* and *International Times* in England (and somehow spawned the *Anglophile* and neutered *Trouser Press*, selling first The Who and later The Jam back to the States).

Rock fanzines were at one time hot-houses of pop-culture creativity and implicit social awareness, drawing the personal approach and basement apartment-level writing from science fiction fanzines and pulp mags, hyperbole from Marvel Comics, beatnik lingo and hippie surrealism and guest editorials by their feminist friends, bed-sit record collectors, and perfervid "gig" attendees.

Moore's own *Dodgem Logic* is the peculiar voice of a mystery tramp, a provocateur who has been immensely influential on a few generations of mainstream and underground comics creators since the early 80s, beginning with his home island and then starting with the Swamp Thing in the States.

This led to the medium-morphing, made-into-movies titles mentioned above — but that energy doesn't come from just reading the exploits of superheroes, just as real rock journalism didn't just come from covering what was popular in the charts. As the sub-title on the bottom of his retro-futuristic experiment exclaims, "Colliding Ideas to See What Happens." *Dodgem Logic* has an extraordinary long history of the underground press by the publisher (tapping into the pamphlets from Protestant reformers who wanted to make the Bible readable for the working man, to the safety pin and glue days of *PUNK* and *Sniffin' Glue*) and worth more than the fanzine itself — which, oh yeah, despite lots of great weird psychedelic punk artwork and really good middlebrow cultural theory, comes in at less than five bucks for purchase. Hit your local comics store to see how the small, personal voice can be as compelling and timeless in periodicals (or any kind of media) as it can be in song.

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