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David Bowie comic

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SEE HIS LIFE IN A COMIC ...

Nejib, HADDON HALL - invented WHEN DAVID BOWIE, Bao Publishing, 2013
144 pages, 270x190x20mm, 712 gr, color, € 16,00

Lorenzo Bianchi and Veronica Vinci Carratello, DAVID BOWIE - THE MAN OF THE STARS, NPE, 2014
128 pages, 247x168x10mm, 334 gr, black and white, € 12.00

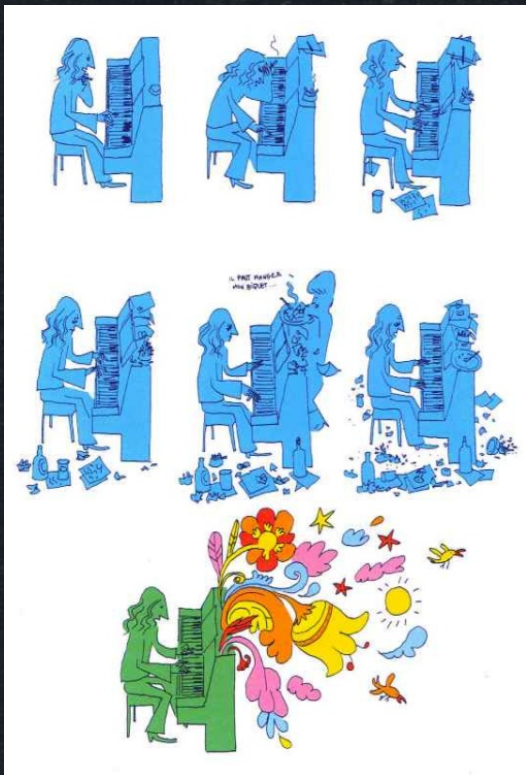
Various Authors, DAVID BOWIE TRIBUTE, Storm Entertainment, 2017
28 pages, [digital edition], color € 3.49

Matteo Guarnaccia, DAVID BOWIE PLAY BOOK, 24 hours Culture, 2016
96 pages, 350x270x18mm, 680 gr, black and white, € 24.90

*See my life in a comic
Like the way they did the Bible
With the bubbles and action*

The little details in color
(New Killer Star, 2003)

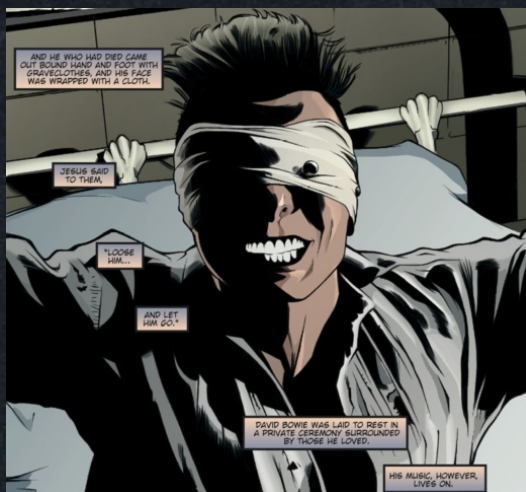
Bowie starred in a comic? Some might turn up their noses. Yet no one can really ignore some editorial publications of the last years that see David star of real comics. In fact in the past his figure was heavily influenced some stripes and the characters in them (from the Joker cartoonist Grant Morrison up to the thick undergrowth of oriental manga). It could not happen otherwise with an artist so mainstream.



What it gives the title to the work before the French-Tunisian designer Nejb in 2013 is the name of the Victorian villa rented by Bowie on the outskirts of London in the late '60s. It is Haddon Hall that leads to the story, because she is the true protagonist of this comic original pastel colors, almost complete free blacks and characterized by bold color exploration and comic spaces: each page is basically no boundaries (and thus of conventional panels usually seen in the strips) and the many characters who populate Haddon Hall they roam free for pages, if necessary, becoming one with the written dialogues. **The balloon is filled with a thin as graceful irony. It's basically a fairy-tale storytelling**, accentuated by the appearance of the characters at that time not even touched that dimension (John Lennon and Syd Barrett), but that the author inserts with (in) credible verisimilitude. The narrative magic and surreal but also pervades the real and most important events of those intense years lived by Bowie with his wife and her "court" made up of friends, family and musicians: **the relationship with Angie, musical experimentation, those of sex and soft drugs, the death of his father, the rivalry with Marc Bolan and above all the creation of the first masterpieces record (*the Man Who Sold the World* , *Hunky Dory* and *Ziggy Stardust*)** with the help of key figures such as the American Tony Visconti former Hull gardener: the legendary Mick Ronson! Nejb "puts design" on several occasions over the relationship with his brother Terry, successfully forging with humor and delicacy a David aspect of life that probably poetic and magical had absolutely nothing. The narrative is interspersed with significant flashbacks and interludes fantasiosissimi. In one of the last pages you finally arrive at the birth and emergence of the bizarre Ziggy Stardust. And that's when the Haddon Hall mansion back to talk to the reader, anticipating that in a few months she would be all over. But what matters for us is that for the character David Bowie, was not

the beginning.

The artistic debut Nejb and the fact that two Italian authors in their early twenties sfomassero a graphic novel dedicated to the British singer in 2014 could only mean one thing: the artistic legacy of ashes David Bowie were not completely dormant . Quite the contrary. Besides the recent *The Next Day* , and despite the excessive recording silence that lasted from the middle of the previous decade. ***The Star* is a book that tells the biography of David for images in a nonlinear fashion.** It starts with an episode about the success of *Let's Dance* , through the artistic renaissance of the early 90s, the seminal album in Berlin and of course Ziggy. Until 2013. What is striking visually of these strips in black and white is the accuracy of the drawings, showing skill and precision in faithfully reproducing the visual sources, the costumes, the hairstyles, the locations and the look changes. One can also understand how they are designed the costumes, or from the residence details in Mustique, or infinitely varied appearance of the protagonist. It was not something easy to do, especially considering that they have to do with "one" that changed the skin and look at a supersonic speed. But perhaps it is more likely that the authors are a blast, and that was precisely the reason for the choice of making David the subject of a graphic novel. The part of the design is always safe and marked, the cartoons are dense and detailed. **From a narrative point of view it seems to have wanted to bring out the human side of David Jones : his fears and frailties, his very human weaknesses and idiosyncrasies.** This is done with a certain naivety and perhaps too much creative license, but probably could not be otherwise, having to do with a public figure so enigmatic and all things considered confidential. These closely adherent biographical elements to reality are instead inserted in a frame narrative fantastic and supernatural nature, in which we see a mysterious figure, overlying the time and space, observe fascinated terrestrial Bowie, intervening occasionally to guide it towards its creative destiny of greatness and success. The result is a bit 'confused, except that some tables seem partly almost anticipate the latest video-visual testimonies of *Black Star* . **For fans of the comic at the same time are fans of the White Duke *The stars of the man* is practically a required purchase** , already in its second edition (economy version). Consider also that in the appendix you can find biography, discography, more information on the costumes, the testimonies of Italian musicians and an exclusive interview with the guitarist Carlos Alomar.



There is very little to say instead of *Tribute* . Digital and the next version of *Fame* (which was published by BlueWater Comics, also on paper), now updated to *Blackstar* . It consists essentially of a **fast as mediocre summary for images of musical life and Bowie staff** . Too many really narrative ellipses and overly faithful transposition of the graphic images to the real picture. Missing a totally authorial customization and we can not think of a blatant commercial operation shamelessly.

That Matthew Guarnaccia is a strange operation published last year. It is not so much of a comic, as much as a **real play book paper with drawings depicting - or rather are inspired by - the imaginary nutritissimo bowiano** , the first musical steps in the '60s up to the sensational triumphs of the Eighties. The author draws this book after having already edited one of Bob Dylan, but already shows the cover of a very high (perhaps excessive) internalization of the thousand faces of David, the symbolism and costumes created in twenty years of honorable service. **Guarnaccia in his drawings distorts the face and body of the singer with a personal style that touches the kitsch and inevitably**

collides with the image that everyone has of David. There is no disputing the effectiveness visual and artistic inspiration, but honestly it is hard to imagine a little a potential audience who decides to cut, paste and paint the outlines and the paper-dolls contained herein. Perhaps the concern of the writer is dictated by the sacred veneration of fans with which caters to his musical myth, but one suspects that the same Bowie with his talent would have made a smug laugh by opening this "magic book", and perhaps he would throw himself enthusiastically, scissors and colors to create some new hybrid alter-ego.



These four outputs editorial surely do not exhaust what is going to appear in terms of graphic design dedicated to (or inspired by) David Bowie. Then the Internet is a vast sea where occasional sightings of new and interesting projects. Among all, **the working progress of Con Chrisoulis** (<http://www.conchrisoulis.com/story/rebel-rebel/>), titled *Rebel Rebel* , it proves to be particularly successful both on a purely visual level but also the narrative . We choose the best comics to our palate. After all this too, it was oddly planned by David in *New Killer Star* : the Gospel of life, set in colorful designs and many details. All tragically comical.

Matteo Tonolli

CON CHRISOULIS PRESENTS
REBEL REBEL
 THE GRAPHIC BIOGRAPHY OF DAVID BOWIE

I never, ever saw the word gay when I first got over here to America. Nobody understood the European way of dressing and adopting the asexual, androgynous everyman pose. I wasn't the first one, though, to publicize bisexuality. Dean. James Dean did.

Very subtly and very well. I have some insight on it. Dean was probably very much like me. Elizabeth Taylor told me that once. Dean was calculating. He wasn't careless. He was not the rebel he portrayed so successfully. He didn't want to die.



He used to stand on Times Square to earn money so he could go to Lee Strasberg and learn how to be Marlon Brando. He had quite a sordid little reputation. I admire him immensely – that should take care of any question you may have about whether or not I have any heroes.



But he did believe in the premise of taking yourself to extremes, just to add a deeper cut to one's personality. James Dean epitomized the very thing that is so campily respectable today – the male hustler. It was part of his incredible magnetism. You know, that he was... a whore.



Published in 1958, Walter Ross' novel *The Immortal*, about a wild young actor called Johnny Preston, was clearly based on James Dean's life, who had died just three years earlier. So infatuated was David Bowie with the book that when he was photographed by Terry O'Neill, for the needs of *Diamond Dogs* in 1974, the book lay by his platform booted foot.

Quotes from a David Bowie interview with Cameron Crowe for *Playboy* (Sep 1976)

Recommended viewing:

David Bowie sporting the James Dean look, as depicted on the cover of *The Immortal*, in Uli Edel's film *Christiane F.* (1981)

Recommended listening:

Tin Machine's 'Baby Universal' from the album *Tin Machine II* (1991)

Courtesy © With Chrisoulis

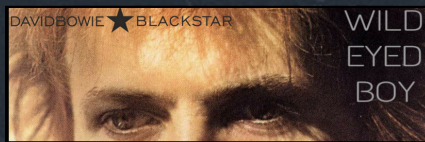
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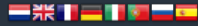


May 11, 2017

David Bowie Blackstar Fanzine
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