

# INKING, LETTERING, FINISHING!



Story and Art by John Christmas  
Excerpt from *Giants of Main Street Anthology*

## To Ink or Not to Ink

Inking creates depths, texture and a certain life for illustrations. There are several methods and tools used for inking but the most important thing is to practice. Ink everything, every day, and you'll become amazing.



There's lots of different ways to finish a comic. Leaving it in pencil, watercolouring, computer rendering, and multicoloured liners are just some ideas. Chose the medium that best fits your story.



Story and Art by Edison Yan  
Excerpt from *Giants of Main Street Anthology*

## Colour VS. Black & White

This is usually decided by the budget of your final format for the comic. Colour printing is expensive. A cheaper alternative to having full colour is only using one or two spot colours. Any format that can be scanned to be reproduced is fine. The image below is watercoloured, some prefer markers, others digital painting.



Story by Anise Shaw. Art by Wei Li  
Excerpt from *21 Journeys* Anthology



## Halftones/Screen Tones

This brings all the depth of colour or shading with only pure black and white patterns. Screen tones can be done manually by cutting and pasting screen tone sheets over comic pages or digitally with various programs.



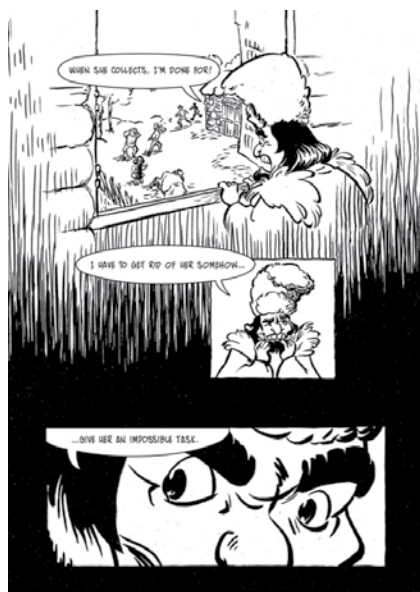
She's made so well.

## Tips to Inking

The page below takes place in the dark but the whole panel isn't black. You get a greater sense of mystery from the high contrast. The panels with white backgrounds act like focus points; the space around the character is as important as the characters.



Ink helps to set the mood; choosing when to silhouette characters is important for dramatic effect, like in the page below left. The page on the right shows a transition in the man's feelings; when the page fades to black, we get the sense he is filled with dread.



Conveying things like glass, water, or ghosts can be extremely difficult. Some people use wavy lines like in the ghost spider on the right. Sometimes thinning down the line and having it partly broken creates a sense of seeing through something, like through the surface of the water or through a glass. Look at your favorite comic artists for reference then experiment to discover what works best.



Story and Art by Reetta Linjama  
Excerpt from Gurukitty's *Ghost Stories* Anthology  
and *One Upon a Time* Anthology

## Lettering

Choosing the right font can change the whole feel of the dialogue and sound effects that go into your comic. This is not something you throw in last minute without any thought. Good lettering tells the story before you even read the words. Most comic artist prefer using all capitals sans-serif fonts (fonts **LIKE THIS** not like this) because they resemble handwriting and there are no parts of the text that dip below or stick out above, which creates a uniform appearance.



The narration is done in a different font, which helps set it apart from dialogue. The font used and the lack of capitals, except to highlight certain words the narrator deems important, tell a lot about the character narrating the story.

Story by Kolja Liquette. Art by Toren Atkinson. Lettering by Ed Brisson  
Excerpt from *Giants of Main Street Anthology*



Sound effects emphasise the action. Here is where font choice becomes key to telling how you should feel about that sound. The “Aaaagh!” in the panel below would have looked awkward if it was in a bubbly round font.



Story and Art by Jeff Agala  
Exert from *Giants of Main Street Anthology*

Sometimes sound effects need to be done by hand. In the example below, it’s a made up language; in other cases you may not find the font that feels the feeling that you want to convey.



Story and Art by Jonathon Dalton  
Excerpt from *Giants of Main Street Anthology*

Speech bubbles don't have to be round; for example, they can reflect the panic the character is feeling. Square bubbles are usually used for narration but there are no rules. A robotic character speaking in square bubbles makes him sound more mechanical while if a character is yelling, having a sketchy or deformed bubble emphasizes their anger. In the bottom left panel, the sound effect leads you into the darkness to the source of the sound, raising your curiosity.



Story and Art by John Christmas  
Excerpt from *Exploded View* Anthology

Some people prefer the look of all hand lettering. There is a charm and flow to it that you can't get out of computer fonts.



Story and Art by Colin Upton  
Exert from 21 Journeys Anthology



Story and Art by Eric Uhlich  
Exert from 21 Journeys Anthology



Story and Art by Mara Coman  
Excerpt from *Moved 24H* comic



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