Gothic for Girls

Misty and British Comics

Julia Round

Today fans still remember and love the British girls’ comic Misty for its bold visuals and narrative complexities. Yet its unique history has drawn little critical attention. Bridging this scholarly gap, Julia Round presents a comprehensive cultural history and detailed discussion of the comic, preserving both the inception and development of this important publication as well as its stories.

Misty ran for 101 issues as a stand-alone publication between 1978 and 1980 and then four more years as part of Tammy. It was a hugely successful anthology comic containing one-shot and serialized stories of supernatural horror and fantasy aimed at girls and young women and featuring work by writers and artists who dominated British comics such as Pat Mills, Malcolm Shaw, and John Armstrong, as well as celebrated European artists. To this day, Misty remains notable for its daring and sophisticated stories, strong female characters, innovative page layouts, and big visuals.

In the first book on this topic, Round closely analyzes Misty’s content, including its creation and production, its cultural and historical context, key influences, and the comic itself. Largely based on Round’s own archival research, the study also draws on interviews with many of the key creators involved in this comic, including Pat Mills, Wilf Prigmore, and its art editorial team Jack Cunningham and Ted Andrews, who have never previously spoken about their work. Richly illustrated with previously unpublished photos, scripts, and letters, this book uses Misty as a lens to explore the use of Gothic themes and symbols in girls’ comics and other media. It surveys existing work on childhood and Gothic and offers a working definition of Gothic for Girls, a subgenre which challenges and instructs readers in a number of ways.

Praise for the Book:
“Julia’s Gothic for Girls is a wonderful book, highly recommended by all here at Sector 13. It sets a new standard for books on british comics.” - Sector 13

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About the Author:
Julia Round is principal lecturer in the Faculty of Media and Communication at Bournemouth University, United Kingdom. She coedits the academic journal Studies in Comics and co-organizes the Annual International Conference of Graphic Novels and Comics. She is author of Gothic in Comics and Graphic Novels: A Critical Approach and coeditor of Real Lives, Celebrity Stories: Narratives of Ordinary and Extraordinary People Across Media.