

MCV

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Sex symbols

Steve Wright explores the erotic world of comic artist Patrick Fillion.

Most gays and lesbians would admit that, at some time in their life, they've tried to draw Superman or Wonder Woman. Significantly fewer would admit to drawing their favourite superhero in the raw; let alone dare to dream of drawing naked superheroes for a living.

For Canadian Patrick Fillion, however, his love of men and comics has led to just that; a successful business, Class Comics, that he launched together with his partner, Fraser, in 2004.

The independent publishing venture was initially established as an outlet for Fillion's own stories and art, but soon expanded to showcase many talented new erotic illustrators. Their flagship character is a statuesque semi-human called Camili-Cat; the last of an alien race known as Felinoids.

Readers of Camili-Cat comics tend to be attracted to one of two main elements of the on-going series: either the character's outsider status (Camili-Cat is a lone hero attempting to pull together the remaining shards of his lost identity) or his unbridled physicality (he does so with an elephant-sized, uncut cock bouncing freely about throughout his adventures).

Compared to another of Fillion's characters, however, Camili-Cat seems positively tame. Living up to his name, the superhero Naked Justice sports nothing more than a face mask (to preserve his secret identity, obviously), gloves and thigh-high boots while battling evil with the lightning-infused ejaculate that flows from his extremely ample member.

Given that comics play such an important role in Fillion's life today, it's no surprise to learn that he first encountered the artform at an early age.

"I was very young and I didn't speak a word of English," says Fillion, who was born in French-speaking Quebec. "Then I saw an *X-Men* comic with the character Storm on the cover. There was something about her in particular... she's strong and very powerful."



Naked Justice Downtown, by Patrick Fillion

Fillion was instantly hooked. Comic books, "really motivated me to learn English," he recalls. "Some teachers couldn't believe I was reading that kind of 'garbage', but it helped me learn a lot quicker."

By the time puberty began to kick in, comics were also providing Fillion with an outlet to explore his homosexuality.

"By the age of 11, I was drawing naked guys, unsure of what it all meant," he says. Like his characters, Fillion was leading a double life.

"In one life [my characters] had regular adventures, which I shared with friends and family, and in another, they were having superhero adventures in the buff."

Comics even played a role in Fillion's eventual acceptance of his homosexuality, thanks to a particular issue of *Spider-Man*:

"[The villains] tore at his costume and shredded it until only little scraps were left to cover the poor hero. I remember cherishing that issue of *Spider-Man* and pulling it out often, to relive the shredding of the costume. Spidey just seemed so beautiful to me, and so noble."

Class Comics owes its current success to a variety of cross-promotional endeavours, ranging from X-Tube videos advertising their new titles, to a regular Boytoons blog. A recent partnership with Diamond Comic Distributors, who also distributes titles by big-hitters such as DC and Marvel, means Fillion's titles are more readily available. Additionally, by publishing portfolios showing off the work of new illustrators ("If we could hire all of them and be a little gay Marvel I would love it," he gushes) Fillion is ensuring that those of us with a toon fetish will surely be sated.

And all this from someone who hasn't attended art school.

"I applied to Emily Carr here in Vancouver. They turned me down and told me that I could *teach* cartooning!"

www.patrickfillion.com
www.classcomics.com
www.boytoons.blogspot.com

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