



**2024 Comic Con Schedule &
Guest Artist Biographies**

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Artist Biographies

Friday, March 1st

4:00 - 5:00PM

**Virtual Workshop: Draw with Nickelodeon
featuring [Alexia Valentine](#)**

Learn how simple shapes can combine to make ANY of your favorite cartoon characters. Regardless of skill level, all participants will be energized and ready to draw anything they can imagine using simple shapes!

5:00 - 8:00PM

Teen Party at moCa

Teens in grades 6-12 are invited to the Kids' Comic Con Teen Party! This fun event features a cosplay contest, trivia and games, and drawing and writing with guest artists. Sponsored by the Cleveland Institute of Art and hosted by [Candibee Cosplay](#).

Saturday, March 2nd

10:15 - 11:10 AM

Drawing Dangerous with [Gilberto Rivera](#)

We invite students to explore the art of crafting compelling villains, teaching them to distinguish between right and wrong through their characters' journey. We'll equip them with techniques to illustrate intimidating figures that are larger-than-life, and yes, scarier than ever! Join us and master the thrilling art of villainous creation. We start with drawing fundamentals and end with the character's journey.

All Grades

Make Your Own Origami Paper Dolls with [Sevita Lochan](#)

Grab some paper and coloring supplies and get ready to decorate and fold your own origami dolls! Make dolls of yourself, friends, or your own characters!

All Grades

Create Characters Using Shapes & Silhouettes with [Miguel Hernández](#)

Learn simple steps in creating memorable characters using simple shapes and silhouettes.

Grades 6-12

Characters + Chaos + Constraints = Comics with [Matt Haberbusch](#)

Participants will make a one-page comic using randomized characters and randomized topics. Learn how to trust your own innate ability to make stories from anything!
Grades 6-12

Clay Character Creation with Lake Erie Ink Staff

Bring your original characters to life with modeling clay!
All Grades

Telling Stories from Your (Incredibly Interesting) Life with [Brad Ricca](#)

Do you want to tell stories? Are you not sure where to start? How about with yourself? In our workshop we will talk about how to write stories that begin in your own real life before becoming . . . something else. We will talk about beginnings, middles, and ends, and will start (and share!) our work.
All Grades

11:15 - 12:10 PM

From Character to Story with [50*Fifty Comix](#)

Tap into your passion for comics and get ideas to develop a new character, learning from the collaborative team of 50 Fifty Comix Publishing. Outline your character's story using the webbing method, and make a one-page comic.

All Grades

OuBaPo: Workshop of Potential Comics with [Matt Haberbusch](#)

In this workshop, we'll come up with possible constraints for comics (e.g. draw with your non-dominant hand, or draw everything only with circles), and we'll make as many one-page comics using whatever constraints each participant wants to use!

All Grades

Comics Club with [Juan Fernandez](#)

Join a session of the Community Art Center's monthly comics club! Create a page of comics, drawings, or poetry for a publication to be released for free at the following workshop in April. The comics club is a great casual way to learn to juggle words with images in unexpected ways with artist Juan

Fernandez.

All Grades

Ink Your Comic Pages Like a Manga Artist with **[Sevita Lochan](#)**

Have you ever wondered how your favorite manga artists draw their comic pages? Did you know that most manga artists still ink their pages with paper and ink? Bring a sketched page of your own comic, drawing, or feel free to draw something while at the workshop. We'll show you the ins and outs of using manga nibs, inks, how to clean them, and of course, how to draw a manga page with them!

Grades 6-12

Origins and Powers with [Gilberto Rivera](#)

Unlock the secrets of superhero storytelling in our 'Origins and Powers' workshop. Join Gilberto as he helps you create compelling origin stories, unleashing the power of creative writing and character development in the process, balancing powers and weapons that make sense for your character.

Grades 6-12

Clay Character Creation with Lake Erie Ink Staff

Bring your original characters to life with modeling clay!

All Grades

Put the Best Face On with [Miguel Hernández](#)

Learn how to draw facial expressions that show your character's personality and emotions.

All Grades

1:00 - 1:55 PM

Superhero Sagas: Origin Stories, Adventures & Comics with [Carrie Polenske](#) & the Superhero Project

Flex your creative might as you explore a new pantheon of superheroes created by the kids and teens of The Superhero Project! Once you connect with one of our characters, you'll create fan fiction stories, drawings, letters or comics. If you'd like to share them, the actual superheroes - youth impacted by serious illnesses, disabilities, and complex mental health or medical needs - will receive copies of your incredible and imaginative work which is sure to bring them a smile!

All Grades

Collage Comic Trading Cards with [Maya Watkins](#)

Create a piece of art you can carry in your pocket! Participants will create mini artworks through drawing and collage. Trade with friends or start your own collection.

All Grades

Storyboard Drill Downs with [Katie Starr](#) and [Meg Zimmerman](#)

Create a storyboard for your comic in multiple timings, first 10 minutes, then 7, all the way down to 1 minute. The faster pace of this process is designed to extract the essentials of your story, removing all unnecessary details to get a pure story that you can work on. By thumbnailing your story multiple times, you will also see how your idea can take on a new look to enhance the action or drama. So, if you have a new idea and you don't know what it looks like, or you're stuck on an old idea and need some fresh work, drilldown with us to make that idea a reality.

Grades 6-12

10 Artistic Rules to Live By with [Gary and Laura Dumm](#)

Learn how to draw with confidence! Students will learn practical tips, and will apply their knowledge by making a one panel comic.

All Grades

2:00 - 2:55 PM

Mad Lib Comics with [Kate Atherton](#)

For this workshop exercise, I will bring some pre-laid-out comics pages with bubbles of dialogue and panels but NO characters. It will be a sort of Mad Lib (TM) for comic artists! The participants will select who their characters are (they could be dragons, aliens, or their best friends) and draw what the scenario is behind the dialogue.

All Grades

Turn Your Character into a Chibi Trading Card with [Michelle Littlejohn](#)

Nowadays, every known superhero has a cute version of themselves. We will talk about what makes a character cute and then transform them into a memorable trading card.

All Grades

Comic Fight! with [Katie Starr](#) and [Meg Zimmerman](#)

Make the coolest character you can, then have them face off with another cool character made by someone else in the group! Create a collaborative comic with your opponent detailing how the fight between your two characters plays out. Anything you can imagine, can happen! But fate decides the outcome! (Via rock paper scissors!) Bring your fighting spirit and imagination to COMIC FIGHT!

Grades 6-12

Crazy Cars with [Od Perry-Richardson](#)

Character design is one of the most important parts of creating engaging and interesting characters. In the Crazy Cars workshop, attendees will choose from an assortment of different zany, irregular, cool, and unique cars to design the character who would drive it!

All Grades

Retro Comics with [Jeremy Stoll](#)

Create a one-page comic inspired by comics from the turn of the century and learn how comics were made and evolved throughout history and around the world.

Grades 6-12

1:00 - 2:55 PM

Snack Sized Comics with [John G](#)

The workshop will be teaching how to make a one page comic explaining how to prepare the students' favorite snacks. They will learn how to lay out a page with a beginning, middle and end to the complete story.

Grades 6-12

Life Size Comic Collaging with [Perris Mackey](#)

Participants will assist me in the creation of a life size superhero. We will be using comic book and magazine clippings along with glue sticks and mod podge to complete our image.

All Grades

3:30 - 4:15 PM

Artist Panel

Panel will be moderated by [Valentino Zullo](#) and [Dawn Arrington](#). Featuring guests [Lynnesha Hamilton](#), [Miguel Hernández](#), [Fern Haught](#), [Vijay Shah](#), [Kate Atherton](#), and more!

All Grades & Adults

Artist Biographies

Dawn Arrington

Dawn Arrington is the founder and executive director of Comics at the Corner, a literacy program founded on the principles of equity, choice, and representation. Dawn has spent the past 5 years distributing culturally representative comic books and graphic novels in communities with noted high low-literacy rates. Dawn's mission is to promote book choice, book ownership, and book representation.

<http://www.comicsatthecorner.com/home>



Kate Atherton

Kate Atherton is a comics artist and illustrator living and working in Cleveland, Ohio. She attended Rhode Island School of Design and has a BFA in Illustration. She just earned her MLIS (Masters of Library and Information Science) at Kent State this past year and works as a librarian in the Heights Library system. She also works as a freelance artist and theatre artist in Cleveland and self published her first full length book "Survival" in the summer of 2022.

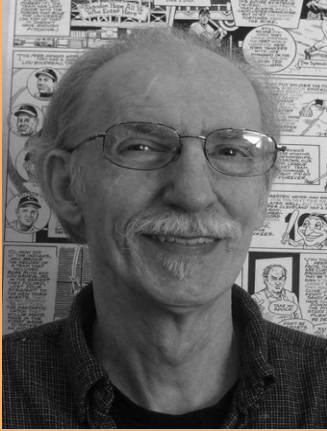
<http://kateatherton.com/>

Brandi "Candibee" Blocker

I'm a cosplayer, event planner, and inner child protector. I focus on creating whimsical and campy events for all ages!

<https://linktr.ee/candibee parties>





Gary & Laura Dumm

Gary and Laura are night and day...Gary is the “black & white guy” doing layout and pen & ink drawings. Laura is the “color girl” digitally coloring comics and painting. Each one of them has had a 50 year+ career in their own mediums.

<http://dummart.com/>



50*Fifty Comix Publishing LLC

Lynnesha Hamilton & Keith Blackwell

50 Fifty Comix Publishing was established in 2021 by A graphic Designer, a Middle School educator and a business manager and philanthropist. We came together to create a comic and a company for the artist from the artist. We continue its growth and compassion by partnering with local creative spaces and in turn hope to educate and inspire the continuing of creative writing with the next generation.

<http://www.50fiftycomix.com>



Juan Fernandez

Poet, cartoonist and comics scientist. Juan works as an educator to create spaces for those who love comics and want to dip their toes into swirling images and words together to communicate. He is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University and an MFA Recipient of the Center for Cartoon Studies. He lives in Hiram with his wife, son and two cats. /// Online at juanjosefernandez.com

John G

John G is an illustrator and cartoonist responsible for the autobiographical comics *Tales to Demystify*. He has taught many comics workshops for all ages, focusing on the language of visual storytelling.

<http://shinercomics.net/>



Matt Haberbusch

Matt Haberbusch is an indie/alternative comics maker in Cleveland. He enjoys the nervous creative energy of timed group drawing exercises and has co-organized a public local comics making group for adults, Comics in the Circle. He has made comics for Cleveland Scene, Vagabond Comics, CWRU's The Observer, and he has exhibited self published work at Genghis Con. He also loves writing, drawing, and making personal comics in his trusty composition notebook, a practice he has learned from Lynda Barry and would recommend anyone take up.

<http://matthaberbusch.com/>



Fern Haught

Fern Haught (they/them) is an illustrator and author currently based in Cleveland, OH. They love to tell stories about queer people set in fantasy worlds. Their picture books and graphic novels often incorporate magic and focus on characters and their relationships. *The Baker and the Bard*, their debut graphic novel, is releasing in March of 2024 with Feiwel and Friends.

<https://fernhaught.com/>



Miguel C. Hernández

Miguel C. Hernández is a comic artist, designer, instructor, and storyboard artist with many years of experience and extensive portfolio of various projects and mediums.

<https://www.studiojsart.com/>



Michelle Littlejohn

Hello! My name is Michelle Littlejohn, also known as Starrelish. I am an illustrator and comic book artist from Cleveland, Ohio. I make stickers, prints, pins... I also enjoy crafting! I took to anime in the early 90's. The Japanese and Korean cultures maintained a strong influence throughout my life as I grew in art styles.

<https://starrelish.com/>



Sevita Lochan



I am a comic artist and author living in the Cleveland area, and also the founder of a small children's press, "Lumipress", where I am in the process of publishing my own comics and books. My major inspirations are Japanese manga and anime, but I love to incorporate my own Western flair and inspirations into my art style as well. My work includes; "Four Corners", "Charu", and "The Arliden Prodigy".

<http://www.sevitalochan.com>

<http://www.lumipress.com>

Perris Mackey

My name is Perris Mackey but in the art world I go by p_ThaNerd. I am a traditional collage artist. I take damaged comic books and recycled magazines and I upcycle them into handmade collages of my favorite characters.

<http://www.immortalnerd.com/>



Od Perry-Richardson

Od Perry-Richardson is a Cleveland-born illustrator and graphic designer. With a love for comics from a young age, he enjoys creating stories as much as he enjoys reading them.

<http://odcomix.com/>



Carrie Polenske



I have been an educator for North Olmsted City Schools for 26 years, teaching English Language Arts and Social Studies to primary, intermediate and middle school students. I love teaching, and especially drawing out creativity in my students! I am proud to have worked with Lisa Kollins and *The Superhero Project* for the past three years, incorporating imagination, writing, art, and helping countless children to find their inner superhero who makes our world a better place!

Brad Ricca

Brad is an award-winning writer of six books, including *SUPER BOYS* and the Eisner Award-nominated graphic novel *TEN DAYS IN A MAD-HOUSE*, illustrated by Courtney Sieh. He lives in Shaker Heights with his family.

<http://brad-ricca.com>



Gilberto Rivera

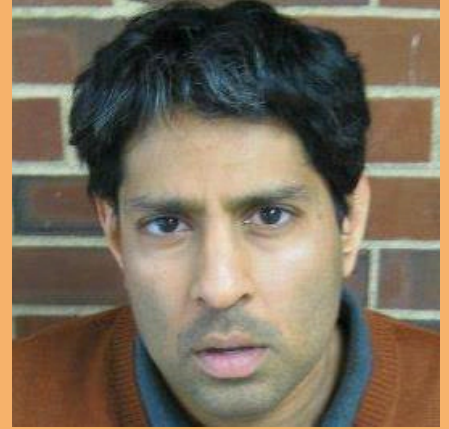
Gilberto is an artist, educator, and film producer with over 18 years of work in the industry. He has produced for Cuyahoga Community College, T-mobile, Crime Stoppers, NBC, MTV and Bandai. He now teaches a vast curriculum of art and media classes for NarrativeBoom.com. His "Superhero in you" workshops have been in many Cleveland area schools, Cleveland Public Library and JDBCAC.

<https://narrativeboom.com/>

Vijay Shah

Vijay Shah, the son of Indian immigrants, grew up in Shaker. Shah has worked in publishing around the country. Recently, he collaborated on the historical comic, Man on a Mission: James Meredith and the Battle of Ole Miss.

<https://www.uapress.com/product/man-on-a-mission/>



Katie Starr

Katie Starr is a comic artist who enjoys reminiscing about anime and cartoons in digestible one-page zines. She is also a co-founder of Comics in the Circle, a local social comics-making group for amateur and professional adults in Cleveland. You can read her current work Pronomore, about two normal parents who gave birth to an anime protagonist, for free on her website.

katiestarr.substack.com

Dr. Jeremy Stoll

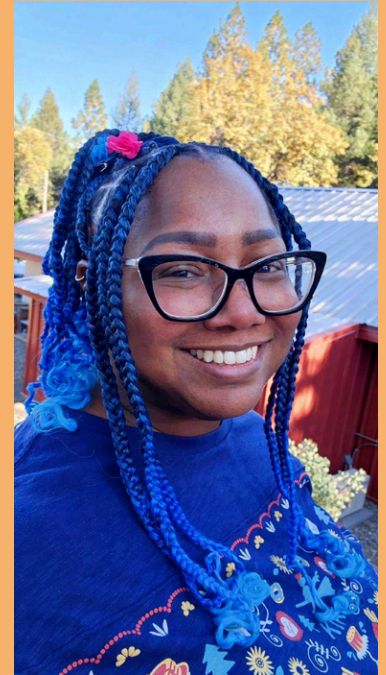
Jeremy Stoll (they) is a comics creator, researcher, and Associate Professor of Science & Social Science at Columbus College of Art & Design. Stoll's scholarship on comics in India has appeared in the co-edited book, The Comics World: Comic Books, Graphic Novels, & Their Publics (with Benjamin Woo), as well as The International Journal of Comic Art; Marg, A Magazine of the Arts; Cultures of Comics Work; and The Routledge Companion to Comics. As a comics creator, they are committed to visual storytelling on the ineffable in life - including Someone Left: A Comics Poem on Grief and work in Rainbow Reflections: Body Image Comics for Queer Men.

<https://www.instagram.com/GreatBearComics/>



Alexia Valentine

Alexia Valentine is a Freelance Designer and Production Coordinator of Nickelodeon's Emmy Award Winning Series: The Loud House. She has been creating art her entire life up and down California's coast from airbrush work in San Francisco to watercolor painting at Disneyland. Now, she designs characters for the Loud House Series and upcoming movie, as well as the Casagrande Comic book Series. Alexia lets her spirit of curiosity guide her through life, which usually means trying lots of new things and gaining a ton of new hobbies. Sewing, cosplaying, crocheting, voice acting, illustrating children's books, and her fleet of wacky pets keeps her busy and on her toes.



Maya Watkins

Born and raised in Cleveland, Maya has been involved with Lake Erie Ink since 2015. She has a passion for history, writing, and art, and loves learning about new types of art.

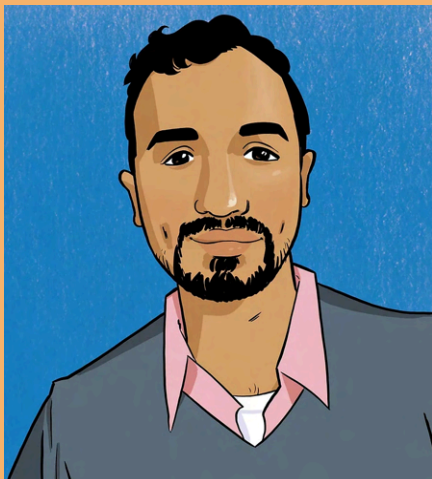
Meg Zimmerman

Meg Zimmerman is a person that enjoys making Funny Little Guys and often puts them in comics. Those Funny Little Guys then go on adventures and tell humorous jokes. There has been very little evidence of this but it is nevertheless, true.

humdrumanarchy.substack.com



Valentino Zullo



Valentino Zullo is the Anisfield-Wolf Fellow at Ursuline College and the American Editor of the Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics. He leads the Get Graphic program at the Ohio Center for the Book at Cleveland Public Library where he was the Scholar-in-Residence.

<http://www.vzullo.com/>