Alan Moore (born 18 November 1953) is an English writer known primarily for his work in comic books including Watchmen, V for Vendetta, The Ballad of Halo Jones and From Hell.[1] Frequently described as the best graphic novel writer in history,[2][3] he has been widely recognised by his peers and by critics. He has occasionally used such pseudonyms as Curt Vile, Jill de Ray, and Translucia Baboon; also, reprints of some of his work have been credited to The Original Writer when Moore requested that his name be removed.[4]

Moore started writing for British underground and alternative fanzines in the late 1970s before achieving success publishing comic strips in such magazines as 2000 AD and Warrior. He was subsequently picked up by the American DC Comics, and as “the first comics writer living in Britain to do prominent work in America”,[3](p7) he worked on major characters such as Batman (Batman: The Killing Joke) and Superman (Whatever Happened to the Man of Tomorrow?), substantially developed the character Swamp Thing, and penned original titles such as Watchmen. During that decade, Moore helped to bring about greater social respectability for comics in the United States and United Kingdom.[3](p11) He prefers the term “comic” to “graphic novel”. In the late 1980s and early 1990s he left the comic industry mainstream and went independent for a while, working on experimental work such as the epic From Hell and the prose novel Voice of the Fire. He subsequently returned to the mainstream later in the 1990s, working for Image Comics, before developing America’s Best Comics, an imprint through which he published works such as The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen and the occult-based Promethea.

Moore is an occultist, ceremonial magician,[6] and anarchist,[7] and has featured such themes in works including Promethea, From Hell, and V for Vendetta, as well as performing avant-garde spoken word occult “workings” with The Moon and Serpent Grand Egyptian Theatre of Marvels, some of which have been released on CD.

Despite his own personal objections, his works have provided the basis for a number of Hollywood films, including From Hell (2001), The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (2003), V for Vendetta (2005), and Watchmen (2009). Moore has also been referenced in popular culture, and has been recognised as an influence on a variety of literary and television figures including Neil Gaiman,[8] Joss Whedon, and Damon Lindelof.[9] He has lived a significant portion of his life in Northampton, England, and he has said in various interviews that his stories draw heavily from his
Early life

Moore was born on 18 November 1953,[10] at St Edmund’s Hospital in Northampton to a working-class family who he believed had lived in the town for several generations.[2](p11) He grew up in a part of Northampton known as The Boroughs, a poverty-stricken area with a lack of facilities and high levels of illiteracy, but he nonetheless “loved it. I loved the people. I loved the community and … I didn’t know that there was anything else.”[2](pp13–16) He lived in his house with his parents, brewery worker Ernest Moore, and printer Sylvia Doreen, with his younger brother Mike and his maternal grandmother.[2](p14) He “read omnivorously” from the age of five, getting books out of the local library, and subsequently attended Spring Lane Primary School.[2](p17) At the same time, he began reading comic strips, initially British strips, such as Topper and The Beezer, but eventually also American imports such as The Flash, Detective Comics, Fantastic Four, and Blackhawk.[2](p31) He later passed his 11-plus exam, and was therefore eligible to go to Northampton Grammar School,[11] where he first came into contact with people who were middle class and better educated, and he was shocked at how he went from being one of the top pupils at his primary school to one of the lowest in the class at secondary. Subsequently, disliking school and having “no interest in academic study”, he believed that there was a “covert curriculum” being taught that was designed to indoctrinate children with “punctuality, obedience and the acceptance of monotony”.[2](pp17–18)

“LSD was an incredible experience. Not that I’m recommending it for anybody else; but for me it kind of – it hammered home to me that reality was not a fixed thing. That the reality that we saw about us every day was one reality, and a valid one – but that there were others, different perspectives where different things have meaning that were just as valid. That had a profound effect on me.”

Alan Moore (2003)[2](pp19–20)

In the late 1960s Moore began publishing his own poetry and essays in fanzines, eventually setting up his own fanzine, Embryo.[12] Through Embryo, Moore became involved in a group known as the Northampton Arts Lab. The Arts Lab subsequently made significant contributions to the magazine.[2](pp33–34) He began dealing the hallucinogenic LSD at school, being expelled for doing so in 1970 – he later described himself as “one of the world’s most inept LSD dealers”.[13] The headmaster of the school subsequently “got in touch with various other academic establishments that I’d applied to and told them not to accept me because I was a danger to the moral well-being of the rest of the students
Whilst continuing to live in his parents’ home for a few more years, he moved through various jobs, including cleaning toilets and working in a tannery.[14] In late 1973, he met and began a relationship with Northampton-born Phyllis Dixon, with whom he moved into “a little one-room flat in the Barrack Road area in Northampton”. [15] Soon marrying, they moved into a new council estate in the town’s eastern district while he worked in an office for a sub-contractor of the local gas board. Moore felt that he was not being fulfilled by this job, and so decided to try to earn a living doing something more artistic.[2](pp34–35)

Career

Early career: 1978–1980

Abandoning his office job, he decided to instead take up both writing and illustrating his own comics. He had already produced a couple of strips for several alternative fanzines and magazines, such as Anon E. Mouse for the local paper Anon, and St. Pancras Panda, a parody of Paddington Bear, for the Oxford-based Back Street Bugle.[3](pp16–17) His first paid work was for a few drawings that were printed in NME, and not long after he succeeded in getting a series about a private detective known as Roscoe Moscow published using the pseudonym of Curt Vile (a pun on the name of composer Kurt Weill) in the weekly music magazine Sounds, earning £35 a week. Alongside this, he and Phyllis, with their newborn daughter Leah, began claiming unemployment benefit to supplement this income.[2](p36) Not long after this, in 1979 he also began publishing a new comic strip known as Maxwell the Magic Cat in the Northants Post, under the pseudonym of Jill de Ray (a pun on the Medieval child murderer Gilles de Rais, something he found to be a “sardonic joke”). Earning a further £10 a week from this, he decided to sign off of social security, and would continue writing Maxwell the Magic Cat until 1986.[2](pp36–37) Moore has stated that he would have been happy to continue Maxwell’s adventures almost indefinitely, but ended the strip after the newspaper ran a negative editorial on the place of homosexuals in the community.[16] Meanwhile, Moore decided to focus more fully on writing comics rather than both writing and drawing them,[17] stating that “After I’d been doing [it] for a couple of years, I realised that I would never be able to draw well enough and/or quickly enough to actually make any kind of decent living as an artist.”[18](p15)

To learn more about how to write a successful comic-book script, he asked advice from his friend, comic-book writer Steve Moore, whom he had known since he was fourteen.[18](p20) Interested in writing for 2000AD, one of Britain’s most prominent comic magazines, Alan Moore then submitted a script for their long running and successful series Judge Dredd. While having no need for another writer on Judge Dredd, which was already being written by John Wagner, 2000AD’s editor Alan Grant saw promise in Moore’s work – later remarking that “this guy’s a really fucking good writer”[19] – and instead asked him to write some short stories for the publication’s Future Shocks series. While the first few were rejected, Grant advised Moore on improvements, and eventually accepted the first of many. Meanwhile, Moore had also begun writing minor stories for Doctor Who Weekly, and later commented that “I really, really wanted a regular strip. I didn’t want to do short stories … But that wasn’t what was being offered. I was being offered short four or five-page stories where everything had to be done in those five pages. And, looking back, it was the best possible education that I could have had in how to construct a story.”[18](pp21–22)


From 1980 through to 1984, Moore maintained his status as a freelance writer, and was offered a spate of work by a variety of comic book companies in Britain, namely Marvel UK, and the publishers of 2000AD and Warrior. He later remarked that “I remember that what was generally happening was that everybody wanted to give me work, for fear that I would just be given other work by their rivals. So everybody was offering me things.”[2](p57) It was an era when comic books were increasing in popularity in Britain, and according to Lance Parkin, “the British comics scene was cohering as never before, and it was clear that the audience was sticking with the title as they grew up. Comics were no longer just for very small boys: teenagers – even A-level and university students – were reading them now.”[3](p20)

During this three-year period, 2000AD would accept and publish over fifty of Moore’s one-off stories for their Future Shocks and Time Twisters science fiction series.[19] The editors at the magazine were impressed by Moore’s work and decided to offer him a more permanent strip, starting with a story that they wanted to be vaguely based upon the hit film E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial. The result, Skizz, which was illustrated by Jim Baikie, told the story of the titular alien who crashes to Earth and is cared for by a teenager named Roxy, and Moore later noted that in his opinion, this work “owes far too much to Alan Bleasdale.”[20](p94) Another series he produced for 2000AD was D.R. and Quinch, which was illustrated by Alan Davis. The story, which Moore described as “continuing the tradition of Dennis the Menace, but giving him a thermonuclear capacity”[20](p99) revolved around two delinquent aliens, and was a science-fiction take on National Lampoon’s characters O.C. and Stiggs. The work widely considered to be the highlight of his 2000AD career,[20](pp100–110) and that he himself described as “the one that worked best for me”[2](p58) was The Ballad of Halo Jones.[20](pp99–102) Co-created with artist Ian Gibson, the series was set in the 50th century. The series was discontinued after three books due to a dispute between Moore and Fleetway, the magazine’s publishers, over the intellectual property rights of the characters Moore and Gibson had co-created.
Another comic company to employ Moore was Marvel UK, who had formerly purchased a few of his one-off stories for Doctor Who Weekly and Star Wars Weekly. Aiming to get an older audience than 2000AD, their main rival, they employed Moore to write for the regular strip Captain Britain, “halfway through a storyline that he’s neither inaugurated nor completely understood.”[21] He replaced the former writer Dave Thorpe, but maintained the original artist, Alan Davis, whom Moore described as "an artist whose love for the medium and whose sheer exultation upon finding himself gainfully employed within it shine from every line, every new costume design, each nuance of expression."[21]

The third comic company that Moore worked for in this period was a new monthly magazine known as Warrior, founded by Dez Skinn, a former editor of both IPC (publishers of 2000 AD) and Marvel UK, that was designed to offer writers a greater degree of freedom over their artistic creations than was allowed by pre-existing companies, and it was at Warrior that Moore “would start to reach his potential”.[3](p21) Moore was initially given two ongoing strips in Warrior: Marvelman and V for Vendetta, both of which debuted in Warrior’s first issue in March 1982. V for Vendetta was a dystopian thriller set in a future 1997 where a fascist government controlled Britain, opposed only by a lone anarchist dressed in a Guy Fawkes costume who turns to terrorism to topple the government. Illustrated by David Lloyd, Moore was influenced by his pessimistic feelings about the Thatcherite Conservative government, which he projected forward as a fascist state in which all ethnic and sexual minorities had been eliminated. It has been regarded as “among Moore’s best work” and has maintained a cult following throughout subsequent decades.[3]

Marvelman (later retitled Miracleman for legal reasons) was a series that originally had been published in Britain from 1954 through to 1963, based largely upon the American comic Captain Marvel. Upon resurrecting Marvelman, Moore "took a kitsch children’s character and placed him within the real world of 1982".[3](p23) The work was drawn primarily by Garry Leach and Alan Davis.[22] The third series that Moore produced for Warrior was The Bojeffries Saga, a comedy about a working-class English family of vampires and werewolves, drawn by Steve Parkhouse. Warrior closed before these stories were completed,[23][24][25] but under new publishers both Miracleman and V for Vendetta were resumed by Moore, who finished both stories by 1989. Moore’s biographer Lance Parkin remarked that “reading them through together throws up some interesting contrasts – in one the hero fights a fascist dictatorship based in London, in the other an Aryan superman imposes one.”[3](p26)

Although Moore’s work numbered amongst the most popular strips to appear in 2000 AD, Moore himself became increasingly concerned at the lack of creator’s rights in British comics.[20](pp105–106) In 1985, he talked to fanzine Arkensword, noting that he had stopped working for all British publishers bar IPC, “purely for the reason that IPC so far have avoided lying to me, cheating me or generally treating me like shit.”[7][26] He did join other creators in decrying the wholesale relinquishing of all rights, and in 1986 stopped writing for 2000 AD, leaving mooted future volumes of the Halo Jones story unstarted.[20](pp110–111) Moore’s outspoken opinions and principles, particularly on the subject of creator’s rights and ownership, would see him burn bridges with a number of other publishers over the course of his career.[7][26]

Meanwhile, during this same period, he – using the pseudonym of Translucia Baboon – became involved in the music scene, founding his own band, The Sinister Ducks, with David J (of goth band Bauhaus) and Alex Green, and in 1983 released a single, March of the Sinister Ducks, with sleeve art by illustrator Kevin O’Neill. In 1984, Moore and David J released a 7-inch single featuring a recording of “This Vicious Cabaret”, a song featured in V for Vendetta, which was released on the Glass Records label.[3](p95) Moore would write the song “Leopardman at C&A” for David J, and it would be set to music by Mick Collins for the album We Have You Surrounded by Collins’ group The Dirtbombs.[27]

The American mainstream and DC Comics: 1983–1988

Moore’s work in 2000 AD brought him to the attention of DC Comics editor Len Wein,[28] who hired him in 1983 to write The Saga of the Swamp Thing, then a formulaic and poor-selling monster comic. Moore, with artists Stephen R. Bissette, Rick Veitch, and John Totleben,[29] deconstructed and reimagined the character, writing a series of formally experimental stories that addressed environmental and social issues alongside the horror and fantasy, bolstered by research into the culture of Louisiana, where the series was set.[23][24] For Swamp Thing he revived many of DC’s neglected magical and supernatural characters, including the Spectre, the Demon, the Phantom Stranger, Deadman, and others, and introduced John Constantine,[30] an English working-class magician based visually on the British musician Sting; Constantine later became the protagonist of the series Hellblazer, which became Vertigo’s longest running series at 300 issues. Moore would continue writing Swamp Thing for almost four years, from issue No. 20 (January 1984) through to issue No. 64 (September 1987) with the exception of issues No. 59 and 62.[3](p82) Moore’s run on Swamp Thing was successful both critically and commercially, and inspired DC to recruit British writers such as Grant Morrison, Jamie Delano, Peter Milligan, and Neil Gaiman to write comics in a similar vein, often involving radical revamps of obscure characters.[23][24] These titles laid the foundation of what became the Vertigo line.

Moore began producing further stories for DC Comics, including a two-part story for Vigilante, which dealt with domestic abuse. He was eventually given the chance to write a story for one of DC’s best-known superheroes, Superman, entitled “For the Man Who Has Everything”, which was illustrated by Dave Gibbons and published in 1985.[31] In this story, Wonder Woman, Batman, and Robin visit Superman on his
AARGH, was an anthology of work by a number of writers (including Moore) that challenged the Thatcher government’s recently introduced superhero genres that Moore was used to writing, instead focusing on realism, ordinary people, and political causes. Mad Love’s first publication, publishing company, which they named Mad Love. The works that they published in Mad Love turned away from the science fiction and Abandoning DC Comics and the mainstream, Moore, with his wife Phyllis and their mutual lover Deborah Delano, set up their own comics completing V for Vendetta, which DC had already begun publishing, thus enabling him to finish the final few episodes, in 1989, Moore stopped working for DC. He and Gibbons had earlier created the character Mogo as part of DC’s Green Lantern Corps[39] and a short story by Moore and artist Kevin O’Neill published in Green Lantern Corps Annual No. 2 (1986) was one of the inspirations for the “Blackest Night” storyline in 2009-2010.[40]

In 1987 Moore submitted a proposal for a miniseries called Twilight of the Superheroes, the title a twist on Richard Wagner’s opera Götterdämmerung (meaning “Twilight of the Gods”). The series was set in the future of the DC Universe, where the world is ruled by superheroic dynasties, including the House of Steel (presided over by Superman and Wonder Woman) and the House of Thunder (led by the Captain Marvel family). These two houses are about to unite through a dynastic marriage, their combined power potentially threatening freedom, and several characters, including John Constantine, attempt to stop it and free humanity from the power of superheroes. The series would also have restored the DC Universe’s multiple earths, which had been eliminated in the continuity-revising 1985 limited series Crisis on Infinite Earths. The series was never commissioned, but copies of Moore’s detailed notes have appeared on the Internet and in print despite the efforts of DC, who consider the proposal their property.[3][pp43–44] Similar elements, such as the concept of hypertime, have since appeared in DC comics. The 1996 miniseries Kingdom Come by Mark Waid and Alex Ross, was also set amid a superheroic conflict in the future of the DC Universe. Waid and Ross have stated that they had read the Twilight proposal before starting work on their series, but that any similarities are both minor and unintended.[25]

Moore wrote the lead story in Batman Annual No. 11 (1987) drawn by George Freeman.[41] The following year saw the publication of The Killing Joke, written by Moore and illustrated by Brian Bolland. It revolved around The Joker, who had escaped Arkham Asylum and gone on a killing spree, and Batman’s effort to stop him. Despite being a key work in helping to redefine Batman as a character,[42][43] along with Frank Miller’s The Dark Knight Returns and Batman: Year One, Lance Parkin believed that “the theme isn’t developed enough” and “it’s a rare example of a Moore story where the art is better than the writing,”[3][pp38–39] something Moore himself acknowledges.[2](p121)

Moore’s relationship with DC Comics had gradually deteriorated over the issues of creator’s rights and merchandising. Moore and Gibbons were not paid any royalties for a Watchmen spin-off badge set, as DC defined them as a “promotional item”,[44] and according to certain reports, he and Gibbons gained only 2% of the profits earned by DC for Watchmen.[3](p44) Meanwhile, a group of creators including Moore, Frank Miller, Marv Wolfman, and Howard Chaykin, fell out with DC over a proposed age-rating system similar to those used for films.[3](pp44–45) After completing V for Vendetta, which DC had already begun publishing, thus enabling him to finish the final few episodes, in 1989,[45] Moore stopped working for DC.

Abandoning DC Comics and the mainstream, Moore, with his wife Phyllis and their mutual lover Deborah Delano, set up their own comics publishing company, which they named Mad Love. The works that they published in Mad Love turned away from the science fiction and superhero genres that Moore was used to writing, instead focusing on realism, ordinary people, and political causes. Mad Love’s first publication, AARGH! was an anthology of work by a number of writers (including Moore) that challenged the Thatcher government’s recently introduced
Lee's WildC.A.T.S., starting with issue No. 21, which he would continue to write for fourteen issues. The series followed two groups of Spawn series: Violator, Violator/Badrock, and Spawn: Blood Feud.[3](p56) In 1995, he was also given control of a regular monthly comic, Jim Gebbie, with whom Moore subsequently entered into a relationship, it was set in 1913, where Alice from Alice in Wonderland, Dorothy from The Wizard of Oz and Wendy from Peter Pan – who are each of a different age and class – all meet in a European hotel and regale each other with tales of their sexual encounters.[3](pp49–50) With the work, Moore wanted to attempt something innovative in comics, and believed that creating comics pornography was a way of achieving this. He remarked that “I had a lot of different ideas as to how it might be possible to do an up-front sexual comic strip and to do it in a way that would remove a lot of what I saw were the problems with pornography in general. That it's mostly ugly, it's mostly boring, it's not inventive – it has no standards.”[2](pp154–155) Like From Hell, Lost Girls outlasted Taboo, and a few subsequent instalments were published erratically until the work was finished and a complete edition published in 2006.

Meanwhile, Moore began producing work for Taboo, a small independent comic anthology edited by his former collaborator Stephen R. Bissette. The first of these was From Hell, a fictionalised account of the Jack the Ripper murders of the 1880s. Inspired by Douglas Adams' novel Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency,[48] Moore reasoned that to solve a crime holistically, one would need to solve the entire society it occurred in, and depicts the murders as a consequence of the politics and economics of the time. Just about every notable figure of the period is connected with the events in some way, including “Elephant Man” Joseph Merrick, Oscar Wilde, Native American writer Black Elk, William Morris, artist Walter Sickert, and Aleister Crowley, who makes a brief appearance as a young boy. Illustrated in a sooty pen-and-ink style by Eddie Campbell, From Hell took nearly ten years to complete, outlasting Taboo and going through more publishers before being collected as a trade paperback by Eddie Campbell Comics. It was widely praised, with comics author Warren Ellis calling it “my all-time favourite graphic novel”. [49]

The other series that Moore began for Taboo was Lost Girls, which he described as a work of intelligent “pornography”. [50] Illustrated by Melinda Gebbie, whom Moore subsequently entered into a relationship, it was set in 1913, where Alice from Alice in Wonderland, Dorothy from The Wizard of Oz and Wendy from Peter Pan – who are each of a different age and class – all meet in a European hotel and regale each other with tales of their sexual encounters.[3](pp49–50) With the work, Moore wanted to attempt something innovative in comics, and believed that creating comics pornography was a way of achieving this. He remarked that “I had a lot of different ideas as to how it might be possible to do an up-front sexual comic strip and to do it in a way that would remove a lot of what I saw were the problems with pornography in general. That it’s mostly ugly, it’s mostly boring, it’s not inventive – it has no standards.”[2](pp154–155) Like From Hell, Lost Girls outlasted Taboo, and a few subsequent instalments were published erratically until the work was finished and a complete edition published in 2006.

Meanwhile, Moore set about writing a prose novel, eventually producing Voice of the Fire, which would be published in 1996. Unconventional in tone, the novel was a set of short stories about linked events in his hometown of Northampton through the centuries, from the Bronze Age to the present day, which combined to tell a larger story.[3](p92)

Return to the mainstream and Image Comics: 1993–1998

In 1993 Moore declared himself to be a ceremonial magician. The same year marked a move by Moore back to the mainstream comics industry and back to writing superhero comics. He did so through Image Comics, widely known at the time for its flashy artistic style, graphic violence, and scantily clad large-breasted women, something that horrified many of his fans.[3](p55) His first work published by Image, an issue of the series Spawn, was soon followed by the creation of his own mini-series, 1963, which was “a pastiche of Jack Kirby stories drawn for Marvel in the sixties, with their rather overblown style, colourful characters and cosmic style”. [3](p56) According to Moore, “after I’d done the 1963 stuff I’d become aware of how much the comic audience had changed while I’d been away [since 1988]. That all of a sudden it seemed that the bulk of the audience really wanted things that had almost no story, just lots of big, full-page pin-up sort of pieces of artwork. And I was genuinely interested to see if I could write a decent story for that market.”[2](p173)

He subsequently set about writing what he saw as “better than average stories for 13- to 15-year olds”, including three mini-series based upon the Spawn series: Violator, Violator/Badrock, and Spawn: Blood Feud.[3](p56) In 1995, he was also given control of a regular monthly comic, Jim Lee's WildC.A.T.S., starting with issue No. 21, which he would continue to write for fourteen issues. The series followed two groups of
superheroes, one of which is on a spaceship headed back to its home planet, and one of which remains on Earth. Moore's biographer Lance Parkin was critical of the run, feeling that it was one of Moore's worst, and that "you feel Moore should be better than this. It's not special."[3](p56) Moore himself, who remarked that he took on the series – his only regular monthly comic series since Swamp Thing – largely because he liked Jim Lee, admitted that he was not entirely happy with the work, believing that he had catered too much to his conceptions of what the fans wanted rather than being innovative.[2](p174)

Next he took over Rob Liefeld's Supreme, about a character with many similarities with DC Comics' Superman. Instead of emphasising increased realism as he had done with earlier superhero comics he had taken over, Moore did the opposite, and began basing the series on the Silver Age Superman comics of the 1960s, introducing a female superhero Suprema, a super-dog Radar, and a Kryptonite-like material known as Supremium, in doing so harking back to the original "mythic" figure of the American superhero. Under Moore, Supreme would prove to be a critical and commercial success, announcing that he was back in the mainstream after several years of self-imposed exile.[3](pp59–60)

When Rob Liefeld, one of Image's co-founders, split from the publisher and formed his own company Awesome Entertainment, he hired Moore to create a new universe for the characters he had brought with him from Image. Moore's "solution was breathtaking and cocky – he created a long and distinguished history for these new characters, retro-fitting a fake silver and gold age for them." Moore began writing comics for many of these characters, such as Glory and Youngblood, as well as a three-part mini-series known as Judgment Day to provide a basis for the Awesome Universe.[3](pp60–61) Moore was not satisfied with Liefeld, saying "I just got fed up with the unreliability of information that I get from him, that I didn't trust him. I didn't think that he was respecting the work and I found it hard to respect him. And also by then I was probably feeling that with the exception of Jim Lee, Jim Valentino – people like that – that a couple of the Image partners were seeming, to my eyes, to be less than gentlemen. They were seeming to be not necessarily the people I wanted to deal with."[2](p175)

America's Best Comics: 1999–2008

Main article: America's Best Comics

Image partner Jim Lee offered to provide Moore with his own imprint, which would be under Lee's company WildStorm Productions. Moore named this imprint America's Best Comics, lining up a series of artists and writers to assist him in this venture. Lee soon sold WildStorm – including America's Best Comics – to DC Comics, and "Moore found himself back with a company he'd vowed to never work with again". Lee and editor Scott Dunbier flew to England personally to reassure Moore that he would not be affected by the sale, and would not have to deal with DC directly.[51] Moore decided that there were too many people involved to back out from the project, and so ABC was launched in early 1999.[3](p62)

The first series published by ABC was The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, which featured a variety of characters from Victorian adventure novels, such as H. Rider Haggard's Allan Quatermain, H. G. Wells' Invisible Man, Jules Verne's Captain Nemo, Robert Louis Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and Wilhelmina Murray from Bram Stoker's Dracula. Illustrated by Kevin O'Neill, the first volume of the series pitted the League against Professor Moriarty from the Sherlock Holmes books; the second, against the Martians from The War of the Worlds.[52] A third volume entitled The Black Dossier was set in the 1950s. The series was well received, and Moore was pleased that an American audience was enjoying something he considered "perversely English", and that it was inspiring some readers to get interested in Victorian literature.[2](p183)

Another of Moore's ABC works was Tom Strong, a post-modern superhero series, featured a hero inspired by characters pre-dating Superman, such as Doc Savage and Tarzan. The character's drug-induced longevity allowed Moore to include flashbacks to Strong's adventures throughout the 20th century, written and drawn in period styles, as a comment on the history of comics and pulp fiction. The primary artist was Chris Sprouse. Tom Strong bore many similarities to Moore's earlier work on Supreme, but according to Lance Parkin, was "more subtle", and was "ABC's most accessible comic".[3](pp64–65)

Moore's Top 10, a deadpan police procedural drama set in a city called Neopolis where everyone, including the police, criminals, and civilians has super-powers, costumes, and secret identities, was drawn by Gene Ha and Zander Cannon.[3](pp65–66,71) The series ended after twelve issues, but has spawned four spin-offs: a miniseries Smax, which was set in a fantasy realm and drawn by Cannon; Top 10: The Forty-Niners, a prequel to the main Top Ten series drawn by Ha,[3](p68)[53] and two sequel miniseries, Top 10: Beyond the Farthest Precinct, which was written by Paul Di Filippo and drawn by Jerry Ordway, and Top 10: Season Two, written by Cannon and drawn by Ha.

Moore's series Promethea, which told the story of a teenage girl, Sophie Bangs, who is possessed by an ancient pagan goddess, the titular Promethea, explored many occult themes, particularly the Qabalah and the concept of magic, with Moore stating that "I wanted to be able to do an occult comic that didn't portray the occult as a dark, scary place, because that's not my experience of it … [Promethea was] more psychedelic … more sophisticated, more experimental, more ecstatic and exuberant."[2](p188) Drawn by J. H. Williams III, it has been described as "a personal statement" from Moore, being one of his most personal works, and that it encompasses "a belief system, a personal cosmology."[3]
ABC Comics was also used to publish an anthology series, Tomorrow Stories, which featured a regular cast of characters such as Cobweb, First American, Greyshirt, Jack B. Quick, and Splash Brannigan. Tomorrow Stories was notable for being an anthology series, a medium that had largely died out in American comics at the time.[3]

Despite the assurances that DC Comics would not interfere with Moore and his work, they subsequently did so, angering him. Specifically, in League of Extraordinary Gentlemen No. 5, an authentic vintage advertisement for a "Marvel"-brand douche caused DC executive Paul Levitz to order the entire print run destroyed and reprinted with the advertisement amended to "Amaze", to avoid friction with DC's competitor Marvel Comics.[5] A Cobweb story Moore wrote for Tomorrow Stories No. 8 featuring references to L. Ron Hubbard, American occultist Jack Parsons, and the "Babalon Working", was blocked by DC Comics due to the subject matter. DC had already published a version of the same event in their Paradox Press volume The Big Book of Conspiracies.[55]

In 2003, a documentary about him was made by Shadowsnake Films, titled The Mindscape of Alan Moore, which was later released on DVD.[56] Return to independence: 2009–present

Alan Moore at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in 2009

With many of the stories he had planned for America's Best Comics brought to an end, and with his increasing dissatisfaction with how DC Comics were interfering with his work, he decided to once more pull out of the comics mainstream. In 2005, he remarked that "I love the comics medium. I pretty much detest the comics industry. Give it another 15 months, I'll probably be pulling out of mainstream, commercial comics."[18] (p65) The only ABC title continued by Moore was The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen; after cutting ties with DC he launched the new League saga, Volume III: Century, in a co-publishing partnership of Top Shelf Productions and Knockabout Comics, the first part released in 2009, the second in 2011 and the third released in 2012.

In 2006, the complete edition of Lost Girls was published, as a slipcased set of three hardcover volumes. The same year Moore published an eight-page article tracing out the history of pornography in which he argued that a society's vibrancy and success are related to its permissiveness in sexual matters. Decrying that the consumption of contemporary ubiquitous pornography was still widely considered shameful, he called for a new and more artistic pornography that could be openly discussed and would have a beneficial impact on society.[57][58] He expanded on this for a 2009 book-length essay entitled 25,000 years of Erotic Freedom, which was described by a reviewer as "a tremendously witty history lecture – a sort of Horrible Histories for grownups."[59]

In 2007 Moore appeared in animated form in an episode of The Simpsons – a show of which he is a fan[60] – entitled "Husbands and Knives", which aired on his fifty-fourth birthday.

Since 2009 Moore has been a panellist on the BBC Radio 4 programme The Infinite Monkey Cage, which is hosted by physicist Brian Cox and comedian Robin Ince.[61][62]

In 2010 Moore began what he described as "the 21st century's first underground magazine". Titled Dodgem Logic, the bi-monthly publication consists of work by a number of Northampton-based authors and artists, as well as original contributions from Moore.[63][64]

In January 2011, the fourth and final issue of Moore's Neonomicon was released by Avatar Press.[65] This horror mini-series is set in the H. P. Lovecraft universe, and like The Courtyard, is illustrated by Jacen Burrows.

Moore has appeared live at music events collaborating with a number of different musicians, including a 2011 appearance with Stephen O'Malley at the All Tomorrow's Parties 'I'll Be Your Mirror' music festival in London.[66]

A planned future project is an occult textbook known as The Moon and Serpent Bumper Book of Magic, written with Steve Moore. It will be published by Top Shelf in "the future".[67] In September 2016, he published a novel called Jerusalem, which is also set in Northampton.[68][69]

Alan Moore has joined the Occupy Comics Kickstarter project. Moore contributed an essay on comics as counter-culture.[70]

He continues to work with Kevin O'Neill on their League of Extraordinary Gentlemen spin-off, Nemo. Avatar Press announced a twelve-part series with Jacen Burrows called Providence on H. P. Lovecraft and the sources of the Cthulhu Mythos for 2015, which has since been
In 2014 Moore announced that he was leading a research and development project to "create an app enabling digital comics to be made by anyone".[72] Electricomics premiered in 2015.[73] It is an open source app for reading and creating interactive comics. Moore wrote the story Big Nemo, a dystopian sequel to Winsor McCay’s Little Nemo. It was illustrated by Colleen Doran and animated by Ocasta Studios with colors by Jose Villarubia. The Guardian chose it as one of the best iPhone/iPad apps of 2015.[74] Pipedream Comics named it the Digital Comics App of the Year.[75]

In 2016, Moore confirmed that after authoring a final League of Extraordinary Gentlemen book, he plans on retiring from regularly writing comic books.[76]

As of April 2016, Moore has been curating a comic book anthology series entitled Cinema Purgatorio published by Avatar Press, each issue opening with a story written by Moore and illustrated by Kevin O’Neill. The book also features the writing and artist team-ups of Garth Ennis & Raulo Cáceres (Code Pru), Max Brooks & Michael DiPascale (A More Perfect Union), Kieron Gillen & Ignacio Calero (Modded), and Christos Gage & Gabriel Andrade (The Vast). The anthology series has been described as “Classic tropes of pulp fiction, either turned on their head, given new filters or explored in ridiculous detail, by some of the very best comic creators we have today.”[77]

In 2018 Moore contributed to the comic anthology 24 Panels. The publication was curated by Kieron Gillan and intended to raise funds for those affected by the Grenfell Tower fire of 2017.[78]

Work
Themes

In a number of his comics, where he was taking over from earlier writers, including Marvelman, Swamp Thing, and Supreme, he used the “familiar tactic of wiping out what had gone before, giving the hero amnesia and revealing that everything we’d learned to that point was a lie.”[3] (p58) In this manner he was largely able to start afresh with the character and their series and was not constrained by earlier canon. While commenting on the artistic restrictiveness of serialised comic books, artist Joe Rubinstein gave the example that a comics creator would be limited in what he could do with Spider-Man, and added, “unless you’re Alan Moore, who would probably kill him and bring him back as a real spider or something”.[79]

As a comics writer, Moore applies literary sensibilities to the mainstream of the medium as well as including challenging subject matter and adult themes. He brings a wide range of influences to his work, such as William S. Burroughs,[80] Thomas Pynchon, Robert Anton Wilson, and Iain Sinclair.[81] New Wave science fiction writers like Michael Moorcock, and horror writers such as Clive Barker.[82] Influences within comics include Will Eisner,[83] Steve Ditko,[84] Harvey Kurtzman,[85] Jack Kirby,[86] and Bryan Talbot.[87][88][89]

Recognition and awards

Moore’s work in the comic book medium has been widely recognised by his peers and by critics. Comics historian George Khoury asserted that “to call this free spirit the best writer in the history of comic books is an understatement”[2](p10) whilst interviewer Steve Rose referred to him as “the Orson Welles of comics” who is “the undisputed high priest of the medium, whose every word is seized upon like a message from the ether” by comic book fans.[90] Douglas Wolk observed: “Moore has undeniably made it into the Hall of Fame: he’s one of the pillars of English language comics, alongside Jack Kirby and Will Eisner and Harvey Kurtzman and not many others. He’s also the grand exception in that hall, since the other pillars are artists – and more often than not, writer/artists. Moore is a writer almost exclusively, though his hyper detailed scripts always play to the strengths of the artists he works with. That makes him the chief monkey wrench in comics author theory. The main reason that almost nobody’s willing to say that a single cartoonist is categorically superior to a writer/artist team is that such a rule would run smack into Moore’s bibliography. In fact, a handful of cartoonists who almost always write the stories they draw have made exceptions for Moore – Jaime Hernandez, Mark Beyer and most memorably Eddie Campbell.”[91](p229)

Moore signing an autograph, 2006.

Moore has won numerous Jack Kirby Awards during his career, including for Best Single Issue for Swamp Thing Annual No. 2 in 1985 with John Totleben and Steve Bissette,[92] for Best Continuing Series for Swamp Thing in 1985,[92] 1986,[93] and 1987[94] with Totleben and Bissette, Best Writer for Swamp Thing in 1985[92] and 1986[93] and for Watchmen in 1987,[94] and with Dave Gibbons for Best Finite Series and Best Writer/Artist (Single or Team) for Watchmen in 1987.[94]

He received an Inkpot Award at the San Diego Comic-Con International in 1985.[95]
Moore has won multiple Eagle Awards, including virtually a “clean sweep” in 1986 for his work on Watchmen and Swamp Thing. Moore not only won “favourite writer in both the US and UK categories”, but had his work win for favourite comic book, supporting character, and new title in the US; and character, continuing story and “character worthy of own title” in the UK (in which last category his works held all top three spots).[96]

Moore has been nominated for the Comics Buyer’s Guide Fan Awards several times, winning for Favorite Writer in 1985, 1986, 1987, 1999, and 2000. He won the CBG Fan Award for Favorite Comic Book Story (Watchmen) in 1987 and Favorite Original Graphic Novel or Album (Batman: The Killing Joke with Brian Bolland) in 1988.[97]

He received the Harvey Award for Best Writer for 1988 (for Watchmen),[98] for 1995 and 1996 (for From Hell),[99][100] for 1999 (for his body of work, including From Hell and Supreme),[101] for 2000 (for The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen),[102] and for 2001 and 2003 (for Promethea).[103][104]

Among his numerous international prizes are the German Max & Moritz Prize for an exceptional oeuvre (2008) and the British National Comics Award for Best Comics Writer Ever (in 2001 and 2002). He also won French awards like the Angoulême International Comics Festival Prize for Best Album for Watchmen in 1989 and V for Vendetta in 1990, and the Prix de la critique for From Hell in 2001, the Swedish Urhunden Prize in 1992 for Watchmen and several Spanish Haxtur Awards, in 1988 for Watchmen and 1989 for Swamp Thing No. 5 (both for Best Writer).

In 1988 he received a World Fantasy Award for Best Novella for A Hypothetical Lizard, which Avatar Press published in 2004 as a comics adaption by Antony Johnston. Moore also won two International Horror Guild Awards in the category Graphic Story/Illustrated Narrative (in 1995 with Eddie Campbell for From Hell and in 2003 with Kevin O'Neill for The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen)[105] Moore received a Bram Stoker Award in the category Best Illustrated Narrative for The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen in 2000, then again in 2012 for Neonomicon as Best Graphic Novel.

In 2005, Watchmen was the only graphic novel to make it on to Time’s “The 100 Best Novels from 1923 to the Present” list.[106] Eisner Awards

**Best Writer**

- 1988 Watchmen (DC)
- 1989 Batman: The Killing Joke (DC Comics)
- 1995 From Hell (Kitchen Sink)
- 1996 From Hell (Kitchen Sink)
- 1997 From Hell (Kitchen Sink); Supreme (Maximum Press)
- 2000 The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Promethea, Tom Strong, Tomorrow Stories, Top 10 (America's Best Comics (ABC))
- 2001 The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Promethea, Tom Strong, Tomorrow Stories, Top 10 (ABC)
- 2004 The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Promethea, Smax, Tom Strong, Tom Strong’s Terrific Tales (ABC)
- 2006 Promethea, Top 10: The Forty-Niners (ABC)

**Best Writer/Artist**

- 1988 With Dave Gibbons, Watchmen (DC)

**Best Single Issue/Single Story**

- 2000 Tom Strong #1: “How Tom Strong Got Started”, with Chris Sprouse, and Al Gordon (ABC)

**Best Serialized Story**

- 1993 “From Hell” with Eddie Campbell in Taboo (SpiderBaby Graphix/Tundra)

**Best Continuing Series**

- 1995 Watchmen, Promethea, Tom Strong, Tomorrow Stories (America’s Best Comics (ABC))
- 2003 Tom Strong (ABC)
Best Finite Series/Limited Series

1988 Watchmen, with Dave Gibbons (DC)
2003 The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, Volume II, with Kevin O'Neill (ABC)

Best New Series

2000 Top 10, with Gene Ha, and Zander Cannon (ABC)

Best Anthology

2000 Tomorrow Stories, with Rick Veitch, Kevin Nowlan, Melinda Gebbie, and Jim Baikie (ABC)

Best Graphic Album/Best Graphic Album: New

1988 Watchmen, with Dave Gibbons (DC)
1989 Batman: The Killing Joke, with Brian Bolland (DC)
1994 A Small Killing, with Oscar Zarate (Dark Horse)
2006 Top 10: The Forty-Niners, with Gene Ha (ABC)

Best Graphic Album: Reprint

2000 From Hell, with Eddie Campbell (Eddie Campbell Comics)

The Will Eisner Award Hall of Fame

Class of 2014

Film adaptations

Due to the success of his comics, a number of filmmakers have expressed a desire to make film adaptations over the years. Moore himself has consistently opposed such ventures, stating that “I wanted to give comics a special place when I was writing things like Watchmen. I wanted to show off just what the possibilities of the comic book medium were, and films are completely different.”[107] Expressing similar sentiments, he also remarked that “If we only see comics in relation to movies then the best that they will ever be is films that do not move. I found it, in the mid 80s, preferable to concentrate on those things that only comics could achieve. The way in which a tremendous amount of information could be included visually in every panel, the juxtapositions between what a character was saying and what the image that the reader was looking at would be. So in a sense … most of my work from the 80s onwards was designed to be un-filmable.”[56]

The first film to be based upon Moore’s work was From Hell in 2001, which was directed by the Hughes Brothers. The film made a number of radical differences from the original comic, altering the main character from an older, conservative detective to a young character played by Johnny Depp. This was followed in 2003 with The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, a film that departed radically from the books, changing the ending from a mob war over the skies of London to the infiltration of a secret base in Tibet. For these two works, Moore was content to allow the filmmakers to do whatever they wished and removed himself from the process entirely. “As long as I could distance myself by not seeing them,” he said, he could profit from the films while leaving the original comics untouched, “assured no one would confuse the two. This was probably naïve on my part.”[108]

His attitude changed after producer Martin Poll and screenwriter Larry Cohen filed a lawsuit against 20th Century Fox, alleging that the film The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen plagiarised an unproduced script they had written entitled Cast of Characters. According to Moore, “They seemed to believe that the head of 20th Century Fox called me up and persuaded me to steal this screenplay, turning it into a comic book they could then adapt back into a movie, to camouflage petty larceny.” Moore testified in a deposition, a process he found so unpleasant that he surmised he would have been better treated had he “molested and murdered a busload of retarded children after giving them heroin”. Fox’s settlement of the case insulted Moore, who interpreted it as an admission of guilt.[108] In 2012 Moore claimed that he had sold the rights to
In 2005 a film adaptation of Moore’s V for Vendetta was released, produced by The Wachowskis and directed by James McTeigue. Producer Joel Silver said at a press conference for the Warner Bros. V for Vendetta that fellow producer Lana Wachowski had talked with Moore, and that “[Moore] was very excited about what [Lana] had to say.”[110] Moore disputed this, reporting that he told Wachowski “I didn’t want anything to do with films … I wasn’t interested in Hollywood,” and demanded that DC Comics force Warner Bros to issue a public retraction and apology for Silver’s “blatant lies”. Although Silver called Moore directly to apologise, no public retraction appeared. Moore was quoted as saying that the comic book had been “specifically about things like fascism and anarchy. Those words, ‘fascism’ and ‘anarchy,’ occur nowhere in the film. It’s been turned into a Bush-era parable by people too timid to set a political satire in their own country.”[111]

Moore also publicly criticised details of the script before the film’s release, pointing to apparent laziness in the writing. “They don’t know what British people have for breakfast, they couldn’t be bothered [to find out]. ‘Eggy in a basket’ apparently. Now the US have ‘eggs in a basket,’ which is fried bread with a fried egg in a hole in the middle. I guess they thought we must eat that as well, and thought ‘eggy in a basket’ was a quaint and Olde Worlde version”, he stated.

This conflict between Moore and DC Comics was the subject of an article in The New York Times[44] on 12 March 2006, five days before the US release. In the New York Times article, Silver stated that about 20 years prior to the film’s release he had met with Moore and Dave Gibbons when Silver acquired the film rights to V For Vendetta and Watchmen. Silver stated, “Alan was odd, but he was enthusiastic and encouraging us to do this. I had foolishly thought that he would continue feeling that way today, not realising that he wouldn’t.” Moore did not deny this meeting or Silver’s characterisation of Moore at that meeting, nor did Moore state that he advised Silver of his change of opinion in those approximately 20 years. The New York Times article also interviewed David Lloyd about Moore’s reaction to the film’s production, stating, “Mr Lloyd, the illustrator of V for Vendetta, also found it difficult to sympathise with Mr Moore’s protests. When he and Mr Moore sold their film rights to the comic book, Mr Lloyd said: “We didn’t do it innocently. Neither myself nor Alan thought we were signing it over to a board of trustees who would look after it like it was the Dead Sea Scrolls.”[44]

Moore has subsequently stated that he wishes his name to be removed from all comic work that he does not own, including Watchmen and V for Vendetta, much as unhappy film directors often choose to have their names removed and be credited as “Alan Smithee”. He also announced that he would not allow his name to be used in any future film adaptations of works he does not own, nor would he accept any money from such adaptations.[112] This request was respected by the producers of the subsequent adaptations of his work Constantine (2005) (based on a character created by Moore) and Watchmen (2009).

In a 2012 interview with LeftLion magazine, Alan Moore was asked to put a figure on how much money he had turned down by refusing to be associated with these film adaptations. He estimated it to be ‘at least a few million dollars’ and said: “You can’t buy that kind of empowerment. To just know that as far as you are aware, you have not got a price; that there is not an amount of money large enough to make you compromise even a tiny bit of principle that, as it turned out, would make no practical difference anyway. I’d advise everyone to do it, otherwise you’re going to end up mastered by money and that’s not a thing you want ruling your life.”[113]

List of feature film adaptations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Director(s)</th>
<th>Studio(s)</th>
<th>Based on</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Box office</th>
<th>Rotten Tomatoes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>From Hell</td>
<td>Albert Hughes and Allen Hughes</td>
<td>20th Century Fox</td>
<td>From Hell by Moore and Eddie Campbell</td>
<td>$35 million</td>
<td>$74.5 million</td>
<td>57%[114]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen</td>
<td>Stephen Norrington</td>
<td>20th Century Fox</td>
<td>The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen by Moore and Kevin O’Neill</td>
<td>$78 million</td>
<td>$179.3 million</td>
<td>17%[115]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>V for Vendetta</td>
<td>James McTeigue</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>V for Vendetta by Moore and David Lloyd</td>
<td>$54 million</td>
<td>$132.5 million</td>
<td>73%[116]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Watchmen</td>
<td>Zack Snyder</td>
<td>Warner Bros.</td>
<td>Watchmen by Moore and Dave Gibbons</td>
<td>$130 million</td>
<td>$185.3 million</td>
<td>65%[117]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DC Entertainment Watchmen by Moore and Dave Gibbons $130 million $185.3 million 65%

DC Entertainment
Warner Bros. Animation Batman: The Killing Joke by Moore and Brian Bolland $3.5 million $4.3 million 48%

Personal life

Since his teenage years Moore has had long hair, and since early adulthood he has also had a beard. He has taken to wearing a number of large rings on his hands, leading him to be described as a “cross between Hagrid and Danny from Withnail And I” who could be easily mistaken for “the village eccentric”. Born and raised in Northampton, he continues to live in the town, and used its history as a basis for his novels Voice of the Fire and Jerusalem. His “unassuming terraced” Northampton home was described by an interviewer in 2001 as “something like an occult bookshop under permanent renovation, with records, videos, magical artefacts and comic-book figurines strewn among shelves of mystical tomes and piles of paper. The bathroom, with blue-and-gold décor and a generous sunken tub, is palatial; the rest of the house has possibly never seen a vacuum cleaner. This is clearly a man who spends little time on the material plane.” He likes to live in his home town, feeling that it affords him a level of obscurity that he enjoys, remarking that “I never signed up to be a celebrity.” He has spoken in praise of the town’s former Radical MP, Charles Bradlaugh at the annual commemoration. He is also a vegetarian.

With his first wife Phyllis, whom he married in the early 1970s, he has two daughters, Leah and Amber. The couple also had a mutual lover, Deborah, although the relationship between the three ended in the early 1990s as Phyllis and Deborah left Moore, taking his daughters with them.[2][pp158–159][120] On 12 May 2007, he married Melinda Gebbie, with whom he has worked on several comics, most notably Lost Girls.

Religion and magic

In 1993, on his fortieth birthday, Moore openly declared his dedication to being a ceremonial magician, something he saw as “a logical end step to my career as a writer”. According to a 2001 interview, his inspiration for doing this came when he was writing From Hell in the early 1990s, a book containing much Freemasonic and occult symbolism: “One word balloon in From Hell completely hijacked my life … A character says something like, ‘The one place gods inarguably exist is in the human mind’. After I wrote that, I realised I’d accidentally made a true statement, and now I’d have to rearrange my entire life around it. The only thing that seemed to really be appropriate was to become a magician.” Moore associates magic very much with writing; “I believe that magic is art, and that art, whether that be music, writing, sculpture, or any other form, is literally magic. Art is, like magic, the science of manipulating symbols, words or images, to achieve changes in consciousness … Indeed to cast a spell is simply to spell, to manipulate words, to change people’s consciousness, and this is why I believe that an artist or writer is the closest thing in the contemporary world to a shaman.”

“Monotheism is, to me, a great simplification. I mean the Qabalah has a great multiplicity of gods, but at the very top of the Qabalistic Tree of Life, you have this one sphere that is absolute God, the Monad, something which is indivisible. All of the other gods, and indeed everything else in the universe, is a kind of emanation of that God. Now, that’s fine, but it’s when you suggest that there is only that one God, at this kind of unreachable height above humanity, and there is nothing in between, you’re limiting and simplifying the thing. I tend to think of paganism as a kind of alphabet, as a language, it’s like all of the gods are letters in that language. They express nuances, shades of meaning or certain subtleties of ideas, whereas monotheism tends to just be one vowel and it’s just something like ‘oooooooo’. It’s a monkey sound.”

Connecting his esoteric beliefs with his career in writing, he conceptualised a hypothetical area known as the “Idea Space”, describing it as “… a space in which mental events can be said to occur, an idea space which is perhaps universal. Our individual consciousnesses have access to this vast universal space, just as we have individual houses, but the street outside the front door belongs to everybody. It’s almost as if ideas are pre-existing forms within this space … The landmasses that might exist in this mind space would be composed entirely of ideas, of concepts, that instead of continents and islands you might have large belief systems, philosophies, Marxism might be one, Judeo-Christian religions might make up another.” He subsequently believed that to navigate this space, magical systems like the tarot and the Qabalah would have to be used.

Taking up the study of the Qabalah and the writings of the notorious early 20th-century occultist Aleister Crowley, Moore accepted ideas from Crowley’s religion, Thelema, about True Will being connected to the will of the pantheistic universe. In some of his earlier magical rituals, he used mind-altering psychedelic drugs but later gave this up, believing that they were unnecessary, and stated, “It’s frightening. You call out the names in this strange incomprehensible language, and you’re looking into the glass and there appears to be this little man talking to you. It just works.”
Moore took as his primary deity the ancient Roman snake god Glycon, who was the centre of a cult founded by a prophet known as Alexander of Abonoteichus, and according to Alexander’s critic Lucian, the god itself was merely a puppet, something Moore accepts, considering him to be a “complete hoax”, but dismisses as irrelevant. According to Pagan Studies scholar Ethan Doyle-White, “The very fact that Glycon was probably one big hoax was enough to convince Moore to devote himself to the scaly lord, for, as Moore maintains, the imagination is just as real as reality.”

Friends and hobbies

Moore is a member of Northampton Arts Lab and takes walks with the novelist Alistair Fruish.

Political views

Moore politically identifies as an anarchist and outlined his interpretation of anarchist philosophy, and its application to fiction writing in an interview with Margaret Killjoy, collected in the 2009 book, Mythmakers and Lawbreakers:

I believe that all other political states are in fact variations or outgrowths of a basic state of anarchy; after all, when you mention the idea of anarchy to most people they will tell you what a bad idea it is because the biggest gang would just take over. Which is pretty much how I see contemporary society. We live in a badly developed anarchist situation in which the biggest gang has taken over and have declared that it is not an anarchist situation — that it is a capitalist or a communist situation. But I tend to think that anarchy is the most natural form of politics for a human being to actually practice.

In December 2011, Moore responded to Frank Miller’s attack on the Occupy movement, calling his more recent work misogynistic, homophobic and misguided. Worldwide, Occupy protesters have adopted the Guy Fawkes mask from V for Vendetta. The mask has also been adopted by Anonymous, WikiLeaks, Egyptian revolutionaries and anti-globalization demonstrators. Moore described Occupy as “ordinary people reclaiming rights which should always have been theirs” and added:

I can’t think of any reason why as a population we should be expected to stand by and see a gross reduction in the living standards of ourselves and our kids, possibly for generations, when the people who have got us into this have been rewarded for it – they’ve certainly not been punished in any way because they’re too big to fail. I think that the Occupy movement is, in one sense, the public saying that they should be the ones to decide who’s too big to fail. As an anarchist, I believe that power should be given to the people whose lives this is actually affecting.

Moore is a member of The Arts Emergency Service, a British charity working with 16- to 19-year-olds in further education from diverse backgrounds.

In the 2017 general election, Moore expressed guarded support for the Labour Party, mainly due to the left-wing socialist Jeremy Corbyn being elected leader, though he does not vote as a matter of political principle.

On conspiracy theories

Doing research into conspiracy theories for his work on Brought to Light, Moore came to develop his own opinions on the subject of a global conspiracy, stating that “Yes, there is a conspiracy, indeed there are a great number of conspiracies, all tripping each other up … the main thing that I learned about conspiracy theories is that conspiracy theorists actually believe in the conspiracy because that is more comforting. The truth of the world is that it is chaotic. The truth is, that it is not the Jewish banking conspiracy, or the grey aliens, or the twelve-foot reptiloids from another dimension that are in control, the truth is far more frightening; no-one is in control, the world is rudderless.”

Selected bibliography

Main article: Alan Moore bibliography

Comics

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Watchmen (1986–1987)
From Hell (1989–1996)
A Small Killing (1991)
A Small Killing (1991)
Top 10 (1999–2001)
Tom Strong (1999–2006)
The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (1999–present)
The Courtyard (2003)
Neonomicon (2010)
Fashion Beast (2012–2013)

Novels

Voice of the Fire (1996)
Jerusalem (2016)

Non-fiction

Alan Moore's Writing for Comics (2003)

See also

List of comic creators
List of Comics Journal interview subjects
List of Eisner Award winners
List of English writers
List of Harvey Award winners
List of occultists
List of postmodern authors
List of science fiction authors

Notes


Kavanagh, Barry (17 October 2000). "The Alan Moore Interview". Blather.net. Archived from the original on 26 February 2014. Retrieved 1 January 2013. On the term “graphic novel”: "It's a marketing term. I mean, it was one that I never had any sympathy with. The term "comic" does just as well for me. The term "graphic novel" was something that was thought up in the '80s by marketing people …"


“Alan Moore crafted yet another timeless tale in this annual. It featured the art of George Freeman and starred Clayface III.”


Manning “1980s” in Dolan, p. 233: “Crafted with meticulous detail and brilliantly expressive art, Batman: The Killing Joke was one of the most powerful and disturbing stories in the history of Gotham City.”


Manning “1980s” in Dolan, p. 234: “A fable of revolution and a cautionary tale of lost freedoms, V For Vendetta was a triumph for Moore, this time aided by the shadowy pencils of David Lloyd.”


Cowsill, Alan “2000s” in Dolan, p. 307

Cowsill “2000s” in Dolan, p. 320: “A graphic novel prequel to the award-winning Top 10 series, The Forty-Niners proved to be one of the best books of the year.”


Musson, Alex. “Alan Moore talks Dodgem Logic”. Mustard. Archived from the original on 26 October 2009.


A ZACF Anarchist in the Landless People's Movement, South Africa: Interview with Lekhetho Mtetwa

Lekhetho Mtetwa, a member of the Zabalaza Anarchist Communist Front (ZACF) discusses his role in the Landless People's Movement (LPM), formed in South Africa in 2001. The post A ZACF Anarchist in the Landless People's Movement, South Africa: Interview with Lekhetho Mtetwa appeared first on Infoshop News.

On the Outside Looking in: a Critique of Inside/outside Strategy

How to (and whether to) engage with existing political institutions is a perennial topic hotly contested by groups and individuals in left organizing spaces. By performing well above expectations in the Democratic Party presidential primaries, Bernie Sanders revived the national outlook for left electoralism. However, electoral politics are simply one facet of what we refer […]

404 Page Not Found

via The Baffler by Kate Wagner The first time I can remember logging on to the net was around 1998, when I was five years old. My father was with me; I remember him working his magic, getting the modem to hum its infamous atonal tune. The purpose of this journey was to see if […]

Vermont Union President Challenged Lawmakers

Vermont AFL-CIO Unions including AFSCME, AFT, IBEW, USW, & PFFV, have been fighting all winter to get legislators to advance H.428 & S.36, card check recognition for public sector workers. The bills were introduced in the House by Progressive Brian Cina, and in the Senate by Democrat/Progressive Phillip Baruth. If passed, card check would establish […]

Freelancers Want to Join Unions but Labor Laws Won’t Let Them

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The insanity of global trade

The way trade works in the global economy is absurd. It hurts small farmers, increases emissions and lines corporate pockets. But we can stop it aQ The post The insanity of global trade appeared first on Infoshop News.

Why the Green New Deal needs mass direct action

Last weekend in San Francisco, my friends and I with Diablo Rising Tide hosted two friends from Germany on the “Scale Resistance” tour that Rising Tide has organized with radical climate group Ende Galaende. The talk left me thinking a lot about resistance (the real kind, not the stuff being sold by Chuck Schumer, Nancy […]

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Extinction Rebellion was established in the United Kingdom in October 2018 as a movement that aims to use tactics of nonviolent direct action in order to avert the effects of climate change. The post Why Extinction Rebellion can’t save the world appeared first on Infoshop News.

Criticizing Israel isn’t Anti-Semitic, Here’s What Is

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Alan Moore is a British comic book writer, one of the most prominent and acclaimed in history. His eminent works include Watchmen, From Hell, V for Vendetta, Miracleman, Tom Strong, Promethea, and The Saga of Swamp Thing.

**Summary**

**Early Career.** Alan Moore started writing in the late 1960s, but it wasn't until the 1970s that he began producing work professionally. In 1977 he created the tales of Anon E Mouse and St Pancras Panda for the Back Street Bugle, a local counter-culture paper.