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## Interview

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## INTERVIEW

# "I'm Aware that a Lot of these People that I'm Feeling Sorry for are Wankers": A Conversation with Hannah Berry

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This is an interview with renowned comics creator Hannah Berry, creator of *Britten and Brülighly*, *Adamtine*, and *Livestock* (all Jonathan Cape). It was recorded at the first annual conference of the Graphic Justice Research Alliance: Graphic Justice Discussions 2017, hosted by St Mary's University on 4–5 July 2017. The interview was a plenary session at this conference, and was subsequently transcribed into text. In it, Berry discusses the various relationships between her creative comics work and her perspectives on law, the legal system, responsibility, politics, and social justice, as well as her creative practice and approach to comics production, and the general value of comics as an art-form.

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**Keywords:** law; social justice; politics; comics form; comics production

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**Thom Giddens (TG):** So, first off just a bit about your legal background. Did you have any legal training, legal experience?

**Hannah Berry (HB):** No, I've got no actual legal training, but after I graduated from Uni I went into temping in a lot of offices, which is, you know, the standard thing to do: when you finish art school, you go and work in offices. And one of the first jobs that I got was temping with the probation service. I was there as an admin, and it was not really my choice, but it turned out to be probably the most fascinating place I've ever worked—even more fascinating than Blockbusters, if you can believe that—and I stuck around there for, I think it was four years.

I was doing the admin for the prolific offenders team and it was mostly things like sending letters and updating files and updating various systems. When offenders plead guilty to an offence the probation service will draw up a pre-sentence report to send to the court to tell the judge or the magistrate about the various crimes they've committed, the various mitigating circumstances, their background. And it was my job to format those for the court. So, I had access to all these documents which went into the crimes and the backgrounds of the people who'd committed the crimes.

I had quite a sheltered upbringing in quiet, leafy Hampshire near Basingstoke. So, fresh out of Uni this was the first time I'd ever been aware of the reality of being criminal. I mean, until that point I'd been aware that there were crimes committed, and these people were bad, bad people, but then I became aware that there was this other side and it was interesting to see the stories behind the headlines, behind the crime figures. So, I mean it wasn't really legal training—although I could tell you all about community sentence orders, and all the various bits and pieces out there; all the very boring probation service bits and pieces for the computing systems.

So, the stories behind it all was what fascinated me, and I think I was working there when I'd just started working on *Britten and Brülighly* [Berry 2008] and did the artwork on it. I'd written it, and that was the point where I started to work with the probation service, and that very heavily influenced both *Britten and Brülighly* and *Adamtine* [Berry 2012].

**TG: So, is criminal justice something you feel quite strongly about?**

**HB:** Yes, I would say so. I mean I'm quite a bleeding heart lefty, a wishy-washy liberal, and I do find the way the system impacts upon people interesting and abhorrent, and kind of alarming. To see the effects on people that it has, I think that's really impacted on my work in quite a big way. In the story of *Adamtine* [for an excerpt, see **Figure 1**] there are four people who are trapped on a train, and it switches between the current story and the background. So, in the current story there are these four characters who are trapped on a train and it flashes between their situation and the reasons why they're there, and the reasons why they're there is that they've all lead to the death of a man. And it's the idea of this unrelenting force, this unrelenting



**Figure 1:** Excerpt from *Adamantine*. Berry (2012). © Hannah Berry.

justice, this inescapable justice which is slowly catching up with them, and that's the thing I find fascinating. It's also quite a staple of horror that there's this menace that you can never, never get away from.

**TG:** Do you view the law in that way, as this kind of pervasive, ominous force that we cannot escape?

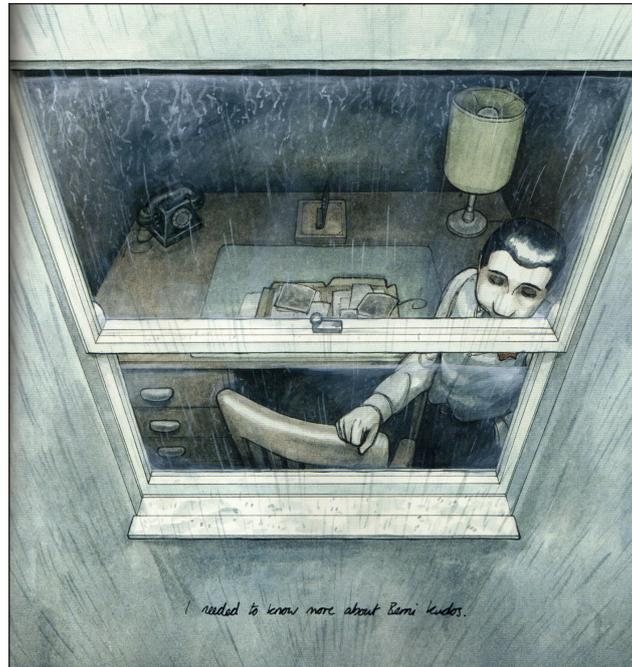
**HB:** Yes and no. I should say I'm aware that a lot of these people that I'm feeling sorry for are wankers—sorry—that deserve justice. But I'm very interested in the way that the law affects different people differently, or can catch up with different people differently, and certain people are more vulnerable in the march of the justice system than others. Some people can escape from certain aspects of it. For example, I think white collar criminals find it easier; it's easier to evade certain justices, shall we say, if you know the right people.

When you asked me to do this interview, I didn't really think that the law was something I wrote about, but it turns out it is something I write about all the time. It turns out that is a fascination of mine, so thank you for making me realise this about myself.

**TG: I'm just going to follow up on those themes of escaping the law; so, some of your work seems to engage quite a lot with the issues of responsibility. In *Britten and Brülighly* there's the question of who committed the crime and trying to find out 'whodunnit' and bring them to justice. And *Adamtine* is about all these people being faced with the responsibility for a person's death. So, can you say a little bit more about your feelings and thoughts around the issues of responsibility?**

**HB:** Yes, I don't know how deep you want to get into this but my dad was quite new age; I was brought up with the idea that you are responsible for not only yourself, but also the entire universe from your mindset. So, at the age of about seven or eight, when Saddam Hussein invaded Iraq, I remember asking my mum if she could send me to speak to Saddam Hussein because I thought that I had made him invade Iraq because of my bad attitude. I hope, I really hope, that is not the case. I hope I didn't do that; I'd hate it if that was true. But I think even though I've long since shot those ideas—they are pretty abhorrent to me now—I think there's still this sense of responsibility that I've grown up with. The idea of culpability, in so many respects, I think is quite pervasive.

So, in *Britten and Brülighly* [for excerpts, see **Figures 2** and **3**] the main character is the detective. (There are two detectives, I should point out; one of whom is a teabag, not for reasons of whimsy, I promise you!) It's the detective's job to investigate on behalf of people and to find out the secrets they want found out and to discover these crimes, either social or actual crimes, and call them back. He becomes so weighed down with the responsibility of telling people these crimes that it brings him to the brink; it makes him really depressed because of the power, the weight you have; the responsibility of basically ruining somebody's life.



**Figure 2:** Excerpt from *Britten and Brülighly*. Berry (2008). © Hannah Berry.

I was always really interested in watching daytime detective programmes, like *Murder She Wrote* [1984–1996], *Diagnosis Murder* [1993–2001], *Columbo* [1971–2003], those kinds of things—I love those. I love especially at the end, when there's a character who you've grown to maybe not *like*, 'like' is a bit strong, but there's a character that you've grown to have some level of understanding of, and then it's revealed that actually they *did* kill their husband, because he was, I don't know, cheating on them or, you know, he did something terrible. And then there's a happy ending, and Jessica Fletcher says, 'Well, you're going to prison now!' and then this person gets taken away to prison, and it's like this weird kind of happy ending. But you know their life is ruined, and the story ends there. There's the responsibility of upholding the law, but also a kind of social responsibility. I think that comes from probation as well. If an offender committed a crime, and they breached their order or were going back to court for another offence, the probation officer's job was then quite often, if they had made a lot of progress, was to say, this person doesn't

deserve to go to prison because they have made this progress, in this way; please be lenient upon them for these reasons. I don't know; I find it all very interesting, the sort of weight of responsibility and personal onus and whatnot; you know, all these fun things.

**TG: What about forgiveness?**

**HB: None of that!**

**TG: No?**

**HB: No, I cared obviously. Yes, I mean that's a huge component of it really. You see, the idea we can grow and change as human beings is quite fundamental, I think, and it's hard to tie it into current events. I get quite frustrated on social media whenever there is somebody who is generally quite positive and quite progressive in many regards, if they step out of line in a certain respect or they are inadvertently**



**Figure 3:** Excerpt from *Britten and Brüllightly*. Berry (2008). © Hannah Berry.

offensive or even intentionally offensive. There is no room for them then to be forgiven, which I find quite hard from a progressive stand point. I find it's quite weird that you can be... I mean, basically nobody is perfect is what I'm trying to say, and we need to have space to grow as individuals, otherwise what is the point? We'll be the same people we were as children; as children we were all monsters—we were all monsters, it's just a fact.

**TG: So, you just mentioned a teabag?**

**HB:** Yes.

**TG: We had a really interesting discussion yesterday [at the Comics and Critique Symposium 2017] around Britishness, and what it means to be British. So, I was wondering to what extent you think your work is British in some way, and what do you understand to be Britishness?**

**HB:** I suppose yes, there is that. The teabag was a secondary character. The main character, Fernandez Britten, was called Fernandez Britten because I thought, it'll never be published and it'll be funny to have a character called Fern Britten; that will be hilarious! And then it's haunted me ever since. But the idea was that Fern was this character who was so depressed and so—not quite unhinged, but he was at the brink, at the precipice. And there's the idea, you know, that tea is the ultimate pick-me-up. If someone has had a bereavement, or something awful has happened, the first thing you do is make them a cup of tea. And then maybe give them a hug or whatever—but tea first. It's the go-to thing. It's the one practical thing that you can do, I think, in a slightly emotionally repressed society like the one we have in Britain. It's the one thing you can do that is immediately a well-versed and well-understood gesture. And so that was how this character came to be a teabag, and it was almost like a little grasp at self-reassurance. Because I never explained either if the teabag is in his imagination, or if it's actually physically a talking teabag. It's a mystery that I will never explain, because there's no explanation. I like to write things which are open to interpretation.

**TG: Yes, because I was just thinking that he spends his career ruining people's lives, and if your life has been ruined you want a cup of tea.**

**HB:** You want a cup of tea, exactly.

**TG: But he's internalised the teabag?**

**HB:** Yes, exactly that, yes.

**TG: That's his companion.**

**HB:** Yes, yes, very much so. And also, he is not British, he's Ecuadorian. That's a little nod to my Ecuadorian roots on my mum's side. I'm still quite dull and English, so it's this idea of being an outsider but still being British, and recognising that kind of fundamental aspect of Britishness.

**TG: Because there's other kind of British themes, like bad public transport...**

**HB:** Well, yes. So, I live in Brighton and we have the service by Southern Rail. Beautiful, beautiful, Southern Rail. And so, *Adamtine* is set on this train which in the current storyline is stopped in the darkness in the middle of nowhere, for no reason at all. There's nobody else on the train, there's no conductors, no drivers, there's nothing—and the livery of the train is Southern Rail. It's immediately recognisable. Also, I feel like that story wouldn't have worked so well in other countries. I haven't lived in a lot of other countries, but I get the impression that we will quietly put up with a lot—I mean, secretly we're fuming, but we'll quietly put up with a lot, until somebody comes along and says 'I'm sorry we're delayed', and then you can get angry. So, the characters in the story are trapped on this train, and they don't know what's happening, and they are slightly obliged to just sit there and put up with it. Until, you know, they find otherwise.

I remember hearing somewhere, and I wish I could remember all the details, that there was a thought experiment that happened—sorry, not a thought an experiment, an *actual* experiment that happened! I think it was in Germany and Mexico and the UK, where there was an office building and, I think, there were two doors; I'm

going to see if I can remember this now! So, there were two doors, and people would use one of them for entry and one for exit, and the experiment was—I think—they blocked up one of the doors. So in, I think it was in Mexico, people were very quick to complain and try and get around this. In Germany, I think they found a new system to circumvent the whole thing. And in the UK, we just sort of stood and waited and queued—we just put up with it, which is hilarious and so sad at the same time. Sorry, I got completely off the subject. What was the question?

**TG: Britishness.**

**HB:** Britishness, yes; there we go, yes.

**TG: Okay, so to broaden this a bit: in *Livestock* [2017], and also some of your other works, the role of the media and of public backlash and those kinds of issues are important; we get a lot of that here. Is that a big part of your work?**

**HB:** Yes, especially in *Livestock* [for an excerpt, see **Figure 4**]. I touch on it a little bit in *Adamtine* because I'm very interested in restorative journalism, but *Livestock* is very much about the media and the role the media plays in public discourse, and the exploitation of the media as a way of controlling our viewpoints. It sounds very cruel and very reductive, but there are huge numbers of the population who will take the newspapers, or really a single newspaper, and that will be their sole source of information. And unfortunately in the UK we happen to have very, very pernicious and exploitative media outlets, which are shaping the dialogue around certain subjects. It's led to me having a few very awkward arguments on Facebook with family members, but it's something which has infuriated me for a long time.

I guess other countries do have it as well, but I had this weird thing the other day. I was at a big international conference for writers from all around the world and there were people there from Malaysia and from Turkey and from Egypt, and I stood up and I said to the audience, 'you know what? I think our press is *too free*', and there was a terrible, terrible silence. And rightly so, but I do feel like it has



Figure 4: Excerpt from *Livestock*. Berry (2017). © Hannah Berry.

gotten out of hand. I think individual journalists are responsible but I feel like further up the chain, the editorial side of things, I feel like there's no responsibility. It's just about selling papers, just about creating outrage, and so there will be the most extreme, the most disgusting sort of approaches to various subjects. Which is why we have things like rampant Islamophobia in the country; people are afraid of things which I think most people have no contact with in their day

to day life but are nonetheless terrified of. That's very much what *Livestock* was about, actually: my rage.

**TG: Do you think your work is generally politically engaged?**

**HB:** I think politically with a small 'p'. I mean, I did try not to. In *Livestock* I did, even though it is about the 'government' using the media to get across certain viewpoints through a young popstar they are using as a mouthpiece, but I was very careful to try not to make it about any particular party, but yes. I mean, I guess it's about social responsibility as well. I guess I'm a 'social justice warrior'. I'm one of those people that they're trying to get at. I suppose that is what I am, whether I like it or not; I can own that title, I don't care, it sounds perfectly nice to me.

**TG: Just thinking a bit more about the kind of ways you engage with particular issues. Is humour important? It seems like there's some moments of your work that are quite amusing. In *Britten and Brülighly* for instance, it's very dour, it's very sombre, it's very serious, and then there's a talking teabag.**

**HB:** Yes, yes, I do try to sneak the odd little joke in here and there, because I think you can reach people; there's something about humour that really connects people. I think it's a way of really getting onto a person's wavelength. I mean, maybe some of my humour falls flat—as much as I'd love to be, I'm not looking over everyone's shoulder as they read my books. Someday, hopefully, with the internet, but who knows. But I do think there's something with humour that really helps you connect with the reader. It's a similar thing to horror, I suppose. There's sort of a build-up and you're trying to get a very distinct reaction from a person, and I think I can do that. I do a weekly cartoon strip for the *New Statesman* which is again not really political [see **Figures 5** and **6**; for more, see Berry n.d.]. I tweet them every week or thereabouts, and the ones I think are the absolute successes, the ones that will probably win me some kind of future prize, they're the ones that do alright, you know? They're okay. But the ones that I sort of do in a hurry and I think are less good, they're the ones that do *really* well. So maybe my sense of humour is not what everybody else's is, or



**Figure 5:** Berry 'Blue Grey', from her 'Vox Pop' series of shorts in the *New Statesman*. © Hannah Berry.



**Figure 6:** Berry 'Pie', from her 'Vox Pop' series of shorts in the *New Statesman*. © Hannah Berry.

maybe I just can't understand Twitter, I don't know; maybe I'm doing something a little bit awry, perhaps. But I do think it's an important factor, yes, and also because, you know, it's nice to read a funny book every now and then. Even *Adamantine's* got some jokes in it.

**TG:** Does it help you articulate some of the seriousness of some of the ...?

**HB:** Yes, the weightier topics?

**TG:** Yes.

**HB:** Yes, absolutely. I think it's sort of for reasons of stealth, because I think people don't necessarily see a point coming, like a heavier topic or, you know, what could

be quite heavy handed and what could be quite a didactic approach. I think with a little bit of humour it alleviates it, it makes it more digestible, I think, to just slip in under that wire.

**TG: We've talked a lot about your content and your extensive legal background, so let's move on to think a little bit about your life as an artist, and your practice. So, obvious question first: why did you go into comics?**

**HB:** Comics are the best. I mean, I'm always surprised when people write a story and it's not in comic format. I feel like they're just building up to do comics but they don't know how to do comics yet. I think it's the best way of getting across information. I think people when they're new to comics don't understand that it's not about writing a story and then illustrating it, it's about these two different languages and there's a kind of—this sounds incredibly twatish—there's a kind of *friction* between the two; they'll never be exactly corroborating with each other. There's something between the two: there's something in the dialogue which is different to the image, and between them they build up an extra level of understanding. The possibilities are incredible and I find that so exciting.

Also, you can do so many things with the form as well that I think you can't do with other mediums. With *Adamtine*, the current story is set on a train, as I keep saying, but the background to this is black—all the borders and the gutters, everything is black, and the panels with the characters in, they're almost like these little lights in the darkness as the story progresses. I'm not sure if readers have noticed this consciously or not, but the gutters between the panels as the book goes on, they slowly increase in size so the panels themselves are shrinking. It's like the characters, as the storyline progresses, they're slowly being winked out into the darkness. And the ghost—it's not really a ghost, it's kind of the menace of the story—is in the borders and the gutters, it's in the darkness. So sometimes it does spill out into the panels themselves. And occasionally there are things in the darkness, outside the panels, which are looking back, then at the same time as they're watching the characters they're also looking back at us. So it's like this interim level where the characters are being watched, but we are also being watched. I was just playing with all that, and I

don't think you can do that in any other medium; I think comics is the only medium where you can do this kind of thing. I mean, you basically have access to all of time and space with comics, with the panels and the interface and the images and text and it's, oh it's so exciting! I could, I could do them forever. My goal is to try and get everybody to do comics. I'm really just here to proselytise.

**TG: So, it's more that comics work for you as a deeply expressive kind of thing, rather than comics being particularly good at articulating your particular subject or issue?**

**HB:** Yes, very much. I think comics are good at articulating everything. I think the only thing where you'd struggle is musicals, but I think there might be one or two people that would get around that; I think every subject can be tackled with comics. There's something about the restrictions as well, that I think encourages more thinking 'outside the box'—no pun intended. There's this level of problem solving which I think is inherent to the media, and to the people that do it. I'm sorry, I've completely forgotten what your question was I've gone off again, I'm just thinking about comics and how much I love them.

**TG: Well, that was pretty much my question! It's interesting the mention of problem solving. Constructing a comics page is not like writing a paragraph and then wiggling it around and knowing you can redraft it; so, you're saying there is more of an embodied problem-solving aspect to how you put the images together?**

**HB:** Absolutely, yes.

**TG: So, getting more into the technical side of things, what do you use to create your comics, what's your chosen medium?**

**HB:** I usually use acrylic inks. They look a little bit like watercolour, but you can layer them up nicely so they can be quite murky and quite dark and brooding, which is how I am as a person. I think I'm relatively rare in that I use paint to colour a lot. I

mean, I know other people do too, but I think we tend to be in the minority because it's such a time-consuming way of going about it that it makes no sense in terms of the time/money ratio. But still, I do it. I usually use acrylic inks, but I will go in there to digitise the markers and use photoshop to add in text and to maybe neaten them up. You know: adjust a wonky eye that I've drawn a bit funny, or maybe if someone's hand is a bit skew-whiff I'll sort that out. Little adjustments like that. But otherwise it is all done entirely on the page. Actually, I draw the same size as well because I've a very small scanner.

**TG: So a single page that we'd see in the published book, that's pretty much how you actually create it?**

**HB:** Yes, basically yes; exactly the same.

**TG: And roughly the same size?**

**HB:** Yes.

**TG: Okay, because a lot of people they do like double size and then....**

**HB:** Yes, clever people do it that way yes because then it looks better when it's reduced down and you can fit more detail on. It's fine; I've got a very small paintbrush and I've come to accept the fact that I'll probably be blind by the time I've turned sixty.

**TG: So, going back to the problem solving: do you know how you construct a page?**

**HB:** Beforehand you mean or...?

**TG: Yes. I mean, do you plan it out consciously, or is it more of a feel, or is it depending on narrative and context?**

**HB:** It's entirely dependent on narrative. So, I'll write the story first in a script format and I'll do all the editing and get everything in place first off, because editing com-

ics is a nightmare, absolute nightmare. So, I have the story written and I'll work out roughly what I want to have on each page. It's almost like you work out the most convenient place to end a page, and then from that I'll go and I'll break up the dialogue and the action into panels, according to the tone of each particular panel, the meaning of each one. I think the part that I enjoy most of all is then working out how to arrange that panel, how to display the text and the image. A bit like the actions of the characters and the actions of the things around them, the scenario and building it up, because I think probably the most useful thing I got from University—I studied illustration—was the idea that every single aspect has to tie into the final thing. There should be no excess, it should all add towards the meaning or build a world, and be something which is building up to a certain point. Every individual panel has to work as hard as it can towards that point, and each panel should work towards the meaning of the page, and then each page tells me the story. So, there's a lot of work that goes into the planning, but I think the planning is the most exciting part; for me, certainly.

**TG: Something I noticed reading your work recently, and a very geeky question, I noticed that you don't really use borders for your panels. A lot of comics artists have very solid borders, and then there's the wavy hand drawn ones, and then the 'I've got a ruler and I'm going to use it' ones; but you don't really have borders at all. Is that a conscious thing?**

**HB:** Yes. I mean, I find that it flows better if there are no outlines, so they border themselves. Everybody works differently, but for me I find that because the panels tend to have a lot of detail, and they tend to be quite rich anyway, I find that they're already quite delineable, so I don't think it needs to have a line necessarily drawn around it. So I don't. But if there was a story that necessitated it, then I would do.

**TG: Okay. So, thinking more about process and inspiration, I'm not going to ask you where you get your ideas from because that's the worst question....**

**HB:** Thank you!

**TG: So I will ask, what are your favourite comics, films, narratives? What inspires you?**

**HB:** Oh god.

**TG: Just the same question really.**

**HB:** Yes, thanks. Worded differently.

**TG: Do you have particular comics artists that you like to read, that you particularly follow?**

**HB:** Well, I mean so there's—oh god. This is the difficult thing that now, whatever I say, I'll think 'oh shit, I should've thought of...' but, yes. There are some people whose work I love. But, you know, actually I feel really bad listing those, so I'm not going to list exact people; I feel guilty if I miss people out.

So, when I started working on *Britten and Brülighly*, you know how when you're working in a certain area and you discover something which is similar but better and it destroys you? I don't know if any of you know *Blacksad* [Canales & Guarnido 2010]? I stumbled across that when I started *Britten and Brülighly* and I was like, 'fuck, I'm going to have to give up now, this is it for me, it's just over'. *Blacksad's* a story about a detective who is a cat, and all of the other characters are animals, and it's just really, really, rich and really flashily painted. It's just good, it's just nice.

I was on a long train journey at the weekend and I got into a deep conversation with a guy on the way to Bradford who asked me, if I could choose one film to take to a desert island, what would I take. And I chose *Fargo* [1996], because there's something about the Cohen Brothers films; you can watch them and get a certain sense of meaning, and then watch them again and pick up more things. There's so many hidden details that you can pick up on each time you see it, it's like a fresh film each time. It's so rich, and that's actually what I try to do with my books because I'm aware that they're very expensive and you read them very quickly and they're just done. So, I like to have a book that has more meaning, that has more things to discover each

time you read it. Just so you can get your money's worth, basically; it's a bit of an inspiration that way.

Actually, when I was working on *Adamtine* as well, one of my friends from art school is Emily Gravett—she's a children's book author and she did this book called *Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears* [Gravett 2008]. It was about this mouse which had a scrapbook and it was going through and listing all the things it was afraid of, and it was sort of sticking things into the scrapbook and tearing pieces out. There was this moment of metafiction, and I thought 'that looks like fun', and that's basically where *Adamtine* came from, with this metafiction development. So, thanks Emily for that.

I'm trying to think what else. There's all those series on Netflix that everyone is telling you you should watch and then you never get around to watching them and when you eventually do, I'm one of those people that eventually watches them right in the end, really elaborate stories. Anyway, loads of bits and pieces, that's where I get my ideas from.

**TG: Brilliant, everywhere.**

**HB:** Everywhere.

**TG: So, the last question: do you think comics are important? You can define important however you like.**

**HB:** Yes, I think they are, as an artist. I mean, as important as any art form is. I think it's about how we express ourselves, how we define ourselves, how we perpetuate thoughts and ideas, and how we communicate with each other. There's something about comics which I think can do that so, so perfectly, and in a way that is because of the way that you read them at your own pace, and the way you digest them at your own speed, and the way that you kind of translate them yourself. They're very, very personal; there's something very personal about them. When you read a comic it's as if you are having this very, very direct relationship with the person who made it. And perhaps also it's something to do with the fact that it's usually one person that has made this thing, and so it's like this very direct line of dialogue between the creator

and the reader. I think that's something that I really enjoy, and I know that whenever I go to festivals or go to any events or anything that are related to comics, the people that I've met who have read my comics sort of act like they know me. Which I kind of love, actually. I mean, sometimes it's a bit creepy, but not always. I really enjoy that, I really appreciate it.

I think comics are perhaps a bit maligned and a bit overlooked as a medium because I think people are not really aware of the full potential of them. But I hope that in this country in particular, where we tend to be a bit hard on them, I hope that they will become as popular and as important as part of the cultural narrative as they are in, say, France or Japan. I really hope; this is my dream.

**TG: Brilliant. Thank you very much.**

**HB:** Thank you.

### **Editorial Note**

This article belongs to the Graphic Justice collection, edited by Thomas Giddens and Ernesto Priego. This text was transcribed from a recording of the 5 July plenary session at Graphic Justice Discussions 2017, hosted by St Mary's University, Twickenham, London, UK. The transcription has been edited for readability and approved by both participants. You can follow Hannah on Twitter as @streakofpith, Thom as @ThomGiddens, and the Graphic Justice Research Alliance as @LexComica.

### **Competing Interests**

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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