



Mangaland



MANGALAND

A Full English translation is available.

漫畫之國

Author: Chang Sheng, ZEI, Peter Mann, Path **Illustrator:** Chang Sheng, ZEI, Peter Mann, Path

Publisher: Dala Publishing

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Rights contact: bft.children.comics@moc.gov.tw

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Adaptation: Figurine

Rights sold: Russian

BFT 2.0 Translator: Elizabeth Hsinyin Lee

As a young girl slips from one manga world into the next, readers are pulled deeper into a surreal journey. Echoing Alice's passage through the looking glass, *MANGALAND* invites them into a playful realm of imagination.

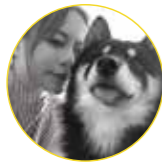
MANGALAND is a collaborative manga by four singular artists—Chang Sheng, ZEI, Peter Mann, and Path. Each chapter is drawn by a single artist, while the transition pages, co-created by the artists, blend styles to reflect the passage between worlds. These distinct chapters are anchored by a single protagonist, forming one immersive storyline. Introspective and whimsical, this book is not a manga anthology at all. Rather, it is a mosaic—an experiment in narrative that celebrates artistic diversity while boldly reimagining what manga can be.

“Ah, I remember now—I’ve always loved manga.”



Author **Chang Sheng**

Born in Taipei, Taiwan in 1968, Chang Sheng graduated from the Western Painting Department of Fuxing Commercial High School. After 15 years in advertising, he transitioned to comic creation in 2002. Notable works include *Dream Hotel*, *Baby*, *OLDMAN*, *The Hidden Level*, *Nine Lives Man: Time's Wheel*, and *Yan*. Chang Sheng was part of the Louvre Comics Project and contributed to "Seven Dreams of the Louvre: Fantastic Journey of Taiwanese Comic Artists." His works have been licensed in Japanese, French, Korean, English, Italian, Turkish, and other languages.



Author **ZEI**

ZEI is a Taiwanese manga artist known for emotional fantasy. ZEI created *Witch in Practice: Pico Pico* (6 volumes) and won 2015 the 6th Best Comic for Teenage Girls and 2016 the 7th Character Design at the Golden Comic Awards.



Author **Peter Mann**

Born in 1995 in Germany, Peter Mann is 100% Taiwanese. She previously worked in animation and video production but has now started creating comics. Her illustration work often relates to music, including visuals for music festivals and album cover designs. Peter's comic creations are difficult to categorize, but she enjoys exploring dark humor in daily life and developing unexpected twists within seemingly logical narratives. In 2023, her work *Bla Bla Song* won the Best New Talent Award and the Best Cross-Media Application Award at the 14th Golden Comic Awards.



Author **Path**

Path is a horror manga artist and cat lover. Known for *The Children's Mass Suicide*, *End of Days*, and *Story of Neil Poe*, Path weaves social critique through eerie, unsettling storytelling.

Created as A Love Letter to Manga Fans: Four Singular Artists Join Forces to Expand the Genre's Possibilities

by Gahra Hippie
(originally published on OKAPI.BOOKS.COM.TW)

If you were to randomly ask passersby what “comics” mean to them, you would likely receive hundreds, if not thousands, of different answers.

Veteran comic artist Chang Sheng, with decades of creative experience, teams up with ZEI, Peter Mann, and Path to create an extraordinary, single-story adventure that departs from the everyday.

Upon opening the deep blue cover, we meet a chihuahua that speaks human language. Talking animals are nothing new—but this chihuahua is different. He breaks the fourth wall, addressing the reader directly. As we turn the next page, we realize that while speaking

to the reader, he is simultaneously communicating with the female protagonist.

The heroine of *MANGALAND* is a bob-haired schoolgirl. While reading comics at home, she suddenly realizes that the characters are speaking to her. She hurriedly tells her father, a comic artist, about this strange occurrence. Then, on her way out to summer sessions, she encounters even more events reminiscent of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

In the first chapter, Chang Sheng passes the baton to ZEI. The first time I saw the girl drawn by ZEI, her large, lively eyes and delicate style immediately drew me in. A lover of Lolita fashion, ZEI crafts

the first world with striking vibrancy and beauty. The heroine truly becomes Alice in Wonderland, stepping into a picture-book realm where speech bubbles are tangible objects, almost within reach.

In the second chapter, the heroine enters a world crafted by Peter Mann. Characters descend layer by layer into the dreamscape of the human mind. Fragmented, bizarre, and uncanny events feel perfectly natural within the logic of dreams, revealing the intricate complexity of the subconscious. The experience is like stepping directly into the artist's mind, with the heroine acting as a playful mouthpiece to gently mock the comic's creator. Traditionally, the comic artist occupies a godlike position—omniscient and omnipotent within the story—but here, that hierarchy is inverted, allowing the created being to critique the creator.

The third chapter, drawn by comic artist Path, is rendered entirely in pencil. While pencils are typically reserved for sketches or drafts, Path employs a distinctive visual style and a simple, warm narrative to create his own vision of the “land of comics.” In this chapter, there are no inked lines, no screentones, and not even conventional panel layouts. The black frames are removed, yet the language of comics persists, returning to the essentials of dialogue, character tension, and narrative segmentation. The story shifts back to the heroine's everyday life, where the interpersonal

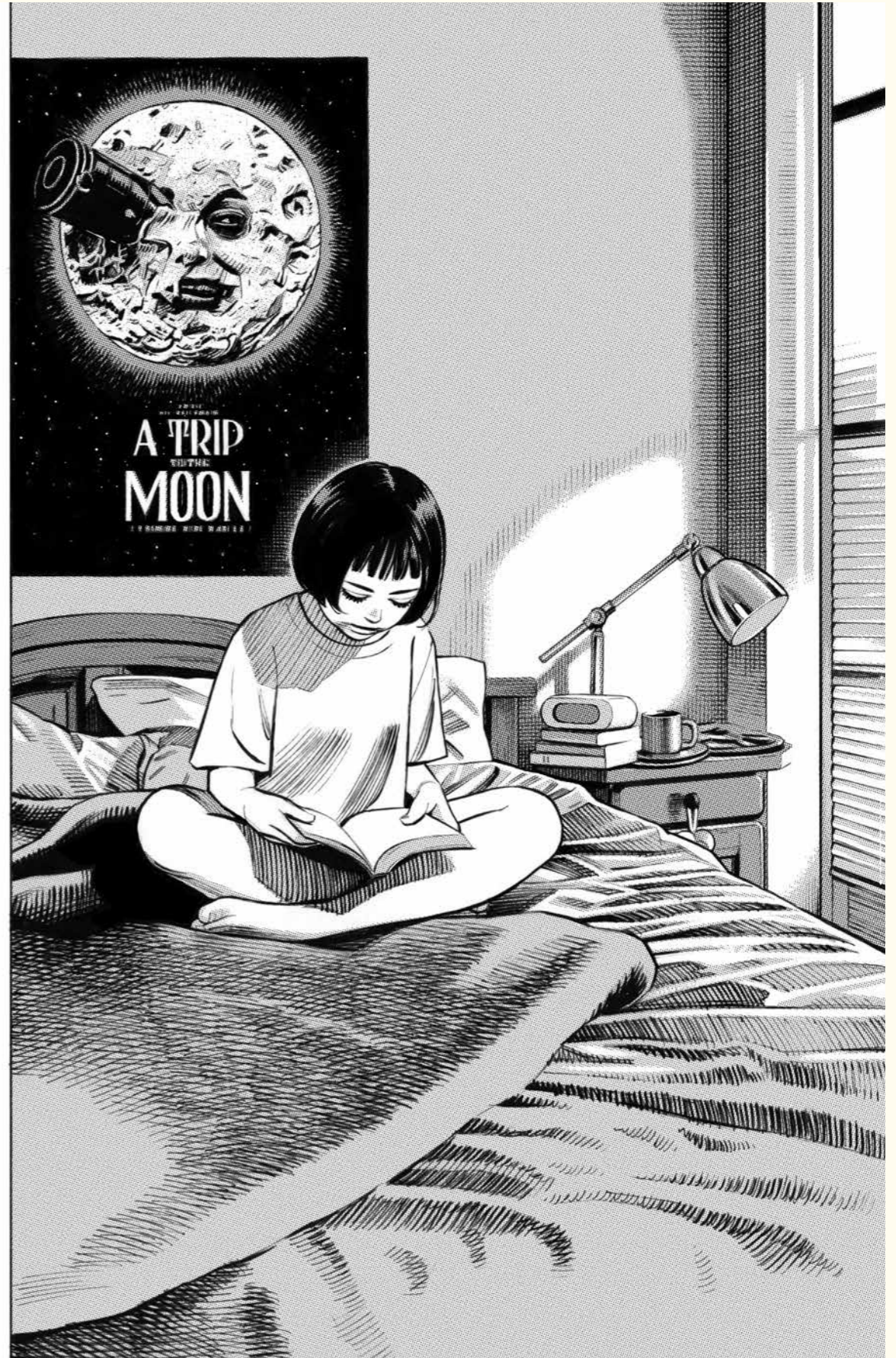
challenges she faces mirror the obstacles we encounter in our own daily lives. The comic's “hint-giving characters” may well represent the mentors or benefactors we meet in real life.

After three dazzling adventures, the heroine meets a boy traveling with a suitcase. Chang Sheng returns for the final chapter, where everyone carries a locked suitcase in their heart, safeguarding precious and beautiful memories. What, then, lies inside the boy's suitcase?

With a compelling sense of symmetry, *MANGALAND* seamlessly unites its opening and ending. Its conclusion is exhilarating. Marked by a highly distinctive narrative approach and brimming with the passion of its creators, this comic delights and surprises from the very first page. Viewed from different angles, it reveals new sensations with every reading. Above all, it is a love letter to everyone who cherishes comics.

This essay has been edited for the purposes of this booklet.

*Gahra Hippie is a veteran otaku who grew up immersed in the arts from elementary school onward, and deeply believes that otaku culture and literary sensibilities can coexist. She hosts the podcast *Otaku Literati Salon*, and her writing has appeared on *Vocus*, *Creative Comic Collection*, *Womany*, *AgentMovie*, and *Reading Island*.*





...IS THE WORLD INSIDE A MANGAKA'S MIND.

MANGALAND ...



FUCK!



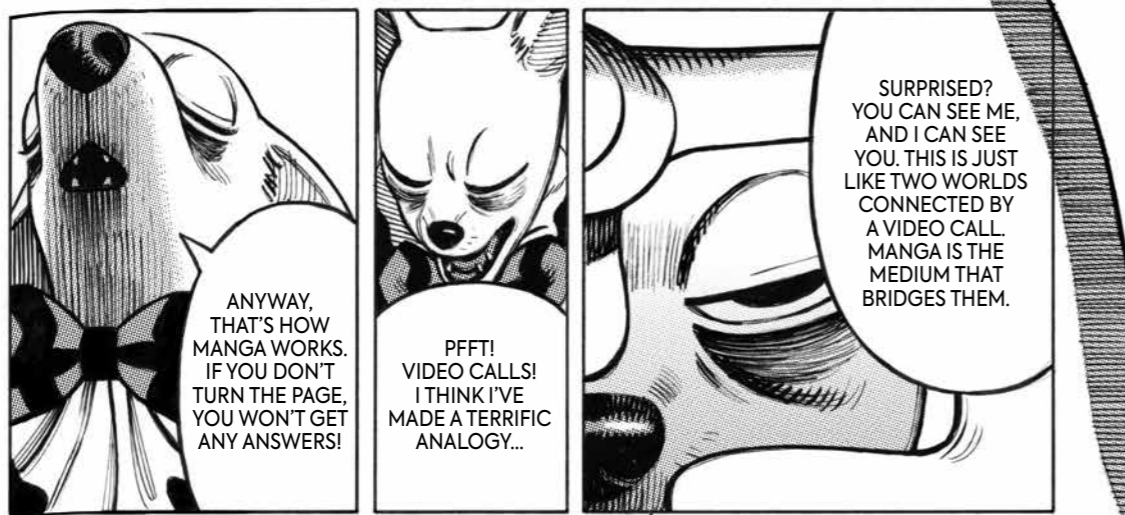
CORRECT. THE CLOCK ON YOUR WALL SAYS IT IS 9.03 AM.

IT LOOKS LIKE... YOU'RE READING THIS MANGA IN YOUR ROOM?

ARE YOU FINALLY GOING TO TURN THE PAGE?



FUCK.



ANYWAY, THAT'S HOW MANGA WORKS. IF YOU DON'T TURN THE PAGE, YOU WON'T GET ANY ANSWERS!

PFFT! VIDEO CALLS! I THINK I'VE MADE A TERRIFIC ANALOGY...

SURPRISED? YOU CAN SEE ME, AND I CAN SEE YOU. THIS IS JUST LIKE TWO WORLDS CONNECTED BY A VIDEO CALL. MANGA IS THE MEDIUM THAT BRIDGES THEM.



YOU'RE NOT ALICE, AND I AM NOT SOME RABBIT IN A WHITE WAISTCOAT. THIS IS...

MANGALAND.

COUGH... MIND YOUR MANNERS, MISS.

