



AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Daniel Cooney has done all aspects of producing comic books and graphic novels -- writing, penciling, inking, coloring, lettering, and book design, all the way through pre-press for publication. A lifelong fan of comics, Cooney graduated with a BFA from New York's School of Visual Arts in 1998. His client list includes illustration/graphic design work for Lucas Film LTD, NBC/Universal, Topps Entertainment, UpperDeck Cards, Rittenhouse Archives, Rolling Stone, Sony, Tower Records, Marvel Trading Cards, and Image Comics, along with writing and illustrating his own stylish action comic thriller, Valentine, under the Red Eye Press imprint.



Cooney currently lives in the San Francisco Bay area, where he teaches on-site at the Academy of Art University, writes online classes for the University, and stays busy with a variety of freelance and comic work. He lives with his ravishing and industrious wife, Carolina, and their two quirky black cats, Shorty Do Wop and Greenly Beans. Cooney has worked in comic art and illustration since 1997.

CONTACT

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Daniel Cooney is represented by The Endeavor Agency.

BOOKS



Valentine: Fully Loaded

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Red Eye Press (October 29, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0972467351

ISBN-13: 978-0972467353

Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 5.2 x 0.4 inches

List Price: \$14.95



Valentine: Red Rain

Paperback: 120 pages

Publisher: Red Eye Press (June 2, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 097246736X

ISBN-13: 978-0972467360

Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 6.5 x 0.4 inches

List Price: \$12.95



Valentine: The Killing Moon

Paperback: 120 pages

Publisher: Red Eye Press (August 8, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0972467386

ISBN-13: 978-0972467384

Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 6.8 x 0.2 inches

List Price: \$14.95

A thoughtful but action-packed graphic novel featuring the strong and sexy female assassin, Dana Valentine

SERIES SYNOPSIS

No matter how hard she tries, Valentine just can't leave the killing game behind. Her life as an assassin has made her a liability to everyone she's ever known -- and the lingering mental effects of the CIA's MkUltra program have clouded her memory, making her past a puzzle waiting to be pieced together.

Could a trip to Valentine's hometown be the key to unlocking her memories? With a broken spirit and a bruised body, Valentine limps home to uncover a past that may be her only hope for a future. In a world where it's kill or be killed, it's Valentine's life that's become a death sentence.

PRAISE FOR THE VALENTINE SERIES

"...enthusiasm and an unpretentious approach...I definitely recommend you investigate." - Comic Book Galaxy

"Creator Dan Cooney has produced a gritty dark tale that features a female protagonist who could give Dirty Harry a run for his money in the bad ass category...This is a very edgy, hard-hitting series. There are no simple or easy answers." -SequentialTart.com

"Take equal parts Alias and La Femme Nikita, put them together on a comics page, and the result is Valentine, a fast paced action comic starring a heroine of refreshingly believable proportions -- the female comics-reading public thanks you, Dan Cooney!" - Trina Robbins, comics historian & writer/creator of GoGirl!

"Young, attractive, and uber-deadly, Dana Valentine has begun to morally question her life as an assassin...VALENTINE is a book that can give a reader a whole lot of cognitive issues...Between ALIAS, LE FEMME NIKITA, and the coming ELEKTRA, there's a growing market and desire for female-driven spy/assassin stories...I suspect that agents across town would be sending their 20ish female clients in droves to try and get this part." –Marc Mason, MoviePoopShoot.com, October 28, 2003

"...the world's deadliest female assassin with a killer smile." –BrokenFrontier.com, July 12, 2005

"Daniel Cooney (artist and writer: "Valentine")... in our opinion, could be a big name soon...One of the more visually stunning booths was that of [Daniel Cooney](#), whose Valentine character loomed behind him in stand-up poster form" –Sfist.com, April 12, 2005

"Valentine never looks like a cookie-cutter comic heroine nor is she ever presented that way." – A David Lewis, PopMatters.com

"I thought Dana Valentine was an interesting lead, not unlike one of the stronger females in Greg Rucka's novels. She engaged in a morally questionable profession, but she isn't presented as inhuman. Instead, like Tony Soprano or Leon in The Professional, she's a human with emotions and thoughts who is stuck in a job that most of us mentally ascribe to inhuman personalities. The dichotomy makes for an interesting hook...Valentine offers up an unusual premise, looking at the life of a female assassin not from the angle

of the guns, explosions and assignments, but the after-effects on the psyche and the down-time persona.” –TheFourthRail.com

“This sexy, bitchy killer provides for some classic comic entertainment. The new book, “The Killing Moon,” was unveiled at Comic-con, and it is very good, opening with Valentine crashing a car through some thugs’ living room and taking out the trash.” – John Guilfoil, BlastMagazine.com

“I definitely recommend this comic book to everyone. Not because Daniel Cooney is from Sacramento like me, because this comic book is absolutely OUTSTANDING! Meet Dana Valentine, she is the deadliest assassin you will ever meet! She makes Vin Diesel’s Triple X character look like an amateur boyscout. Daniel Cooney takes you into a reality that completely absorbs you into the story. There is strong character development with all of the characters and I found myself getting attached to Dana...Plenty of action, adventure and intrigue in this story! Dana is absolutely gorgeous and even though she has plenty of scratches from her encounter with Sophia, she still is attractive...There is no time for a breather with this story, the story moves rapidly. Daniel is also a superb artist and you will not be disappointed as you move from panel to panel and admiring the fine details Daniel places in each drawing...After I finished reading this baby, it stuck in my mind a long time afterwards! This comic book gets a standing ovation!” –Paul Dale Roberts, ComicsBulletin.com

“Scars never looked as good as they do on ex-CIA assassin Dana Valentine...”The Killing Moon” promises even more bullets and bodies once Dana’s GTO crosses the New Mexico border” – Tom McLean, Variety.com, August 24, 2005

“...the book is snazzy. You’ve got guns, you’ve got cars being driven through houses, disembowelments and a solid story. Cooney’s artwork is clean and his “shots” are nicely cinematic.” –NeedCoffee.com, July 17, 2005

AWARDS

Nominee: 2002 Squiddy Award for Best Comics Letterer
Nominee: 2002 Squiddy Award for Best Comics Novella
Nominee: 2002 Squiddy Award for Best Multi-Part Story
Nominee: 2002 Squiddy Award for Best Comics Series
Nominee: 2002 Squiddy Award for Best Comics Character

Additional Information:

Appearances

For an up-to-date listing of author appearances, visit Daniel Cooney’s press page:
<http://www.valentinecomic.com/press.html>

Author Web Page

Visit Daniel Cooney's web page at:

<http://www.dancooneyart.com>

Read an Excerpt

Read an excerpt from Valentine: The Killing Moon at:

http://www.valentinecomic.com/valentine_3_preview.pdf

Review Copies, Author Interviews & Excerpts

If you would like to receive a review copy, schedule an author interview, or obtain more information regarding publishing an excerpt, contact Daniel Cooney at dan@dancooneyart.com

Order Now!

The Valentine series is available at your favorite fine bookstore, or anywhere online. You can order directly from the publisher at

http://www.valentinecomic.com/store_valentine.htm

INTERVIEWS

Valentine's Day

Daniel Cooney

By [Lee Atchison](#)

October 8, 2007

I met Daniel Cooney at San Diego Comic-Con in July this year. Actually, I met the friend he had working at his booth first. There are more women now than there were before, but I'm still biased enough to be more curious when there's a woman sitting behind a booth. Behind her was a large image of a woman named Dana Valentine. She seemed just the kind of heroine I like □ strong, confident, and aggressive.

So that's what stopped me. What kept me around, and resulted in this interview later, is that Daniel's a very intelligent guy who's passionate about comics. And Valentine, his creator-owned story, seemed just as smart and passionate. In addition to being a comic creator, he's also an illustrator and an art instructor. Read on to find out more about a series you should be reading.

Sequential Tart: For those readers who aren't familiar with you yet, tell us something about yourself. What's your background?

Daniel Cooney: My name is Daniel Cooney, and I'm the artist, writer and publisher of the comic Valentine. I also am a freelance illustrator and an instructor at the Academy of Art in San Francisco.

ST: When did you first start reading comics?

DC: I was actually into comics before I was able to read well. The weekly trip to the local grocery store was something my brothers and I would look forward to because there was a spinner rack full of comics.

ST: What was the first comic you read?

DC: The first comic book I remember reading was Amazing Spider-Man #134 with the Tarantula villain character. I was only 5 years old, but I took that comic book with me everywhere I'd go, drawing pictures from it. I liked science fiction and super-hero comics like Micronauts, Star Wars, and Spider-Man. Those comics were the ones I remember actually reading comics and following the story lines.

ST: How did you get started in comics? What was it that turned you from reader to creator?

DC: It probably began back in the 6th grade during math class doodling a cartoon character I called Super Person. Those how-to-draw books by the illustrator Ed Emberley gave me the idea to draw my own comic book. All I could really draw at the time were dinosaurs, robots, and spaceships. I had a hard time drawing people, cars, and animals □ things you see in real life, right? I drew from my imagination, and the comic book Super Person actually helped me become a better artist. I would take a piece of drawing paper from art class, fold it in half, and draw the panels like a comic book. I drew something like 125 issues plus a giant-size issue by my senior year in high school.

The whole time that I was making these comics, I was reading everything I could get my hands on. It just seemed natural to want to draw my own comics before I realized I wanted to do them professionally. My mom found my Super Person comics in a box when my parents were moving, and thank the maker she didn't throw them away like so many of those stories artists tell you about.

I think I knew during high school I was considering making comics for a living. During high school, I went to my first comic book show in Sacramento and met Art Adams. Art was the first professional artist I received a drawing from □ the Hulk, which I still have in my studio today. He gave me some good advice about breaking into comics. I'll never forget that, because he took the time to draw me a sketch and talk to me for a bit. A few years later, while in junior college, I started going to our local comic book show in Vacaville, CA, selling my sketches and showing off my work to professionals and getting their feedback. I really didn't get started professionally in comics until I went away to art school in New York City.

ST: How did you get your start as a creator? Were you self-taught, or have you taken classes in comics writing or illustration?

DC: I transferred to the School of Visual Arts as a second-year student after doing a stint

at several California junior colleges. I procrastinated on making a career decision the first couple of years after high school and moved from place to place. To me, going to a four-year traditional college art program didn't feel right. I thought about being an art teacher someday, but it wasn't the right time. I grew up in a small town about an hour north of San Francisco and the lure of New York City was just too tempting not to go.

When I find out about the School of Visual Arts and the artists/writers who were instructors □ like Will Eisner, Art Spiegelman, Denny O'Neil, Walt Simonson, Gene Colan, and Klaus Janson □ how could I not go there and learn from them if given the chance? It was my second year in Walt Simonson's class that I began my own comic book, which was the assignment we had to commit our entire school year to. I was a better illustrator than writer at the time. My writing was creative but undisciplined. This took a few years to hone, and to this day I still work on becoming a good writer.

ST: Tell us about Valentine. What is the story about?

DC: Dana Valentine is a professional killer and ex-CIA lab rat. She's a ravishing, hard-hitting woman with one goal: survive the job long enough to find out about her past. I'm fascinated with characters that have dual identities that contrast with one another, like a magnet that both attracts and repels □ I see Valentine as a character constantly being pulled in two different directions.

The first story arc dealt with Valentine being set up during a hit. She survives the hit (I don't think that gives away too much) to track down the person(s) responsible, who have plans to assassinate one of the world's top political leaders. The second story arc deals with Valentine trying to leave the profession of assassin behind when she's given a clean slate and new identity. Of course, plans go awry when the Russian mob gets involved, and a friend she owes her life to makes her situation a bit complicated.

ST: Dana Valentine is an interesting protagonist. Her bloody background is tempered by humanity. How did Valentine develop, and who were her inspirations?

DC: Valentine developed from an inspiration of characters like Emma Peel of The Avengers, Modesty Blaise, Dana Scully from the X-Files, and The Black Widow from Marvel Comics. This gave her the look, the style, and some of the qualities of these characters: intelligence, razor sharp wit, skilled in use of technology, and exceptional marksmanship.

Dana Valentine originated as a cyborg ninja in future noir Japan while I was in junior college. I made this pen & ink poster size illustration of her for art class in the early '90s. I shelved it for a few years and pulled it out when I was thinking about a comic book to work on for Walt's class.

ST: Valentine seems cut from the same cloth as Charly Baltimore (The Long Kiss Goodnight) or Jason Bourne (The Bourne Supremacy). Those are favorable comparisons, but how is she different? What sets her apart?

DC: You're on the nose with that reference, Lee! In the fall of '96 *The Long Kiss Goodnight* came out. I remember seeing it between classes at a Cineplex Odeon near SVA, and it all came together for me.

I had already just watched a pile of films over the summer break, researching for my year long comic book project. Being introduced to the Charley Baltimore character gave me the springboard I needed to put a book together that would be challenging and fun to do for eight months. Eight months seems like a long time to do a comic book, but I also had four other classes each semester, worked two part-time jobs to put myself through school, and was producing submissions to break into comics at the same time.

What sets Valentine apart from these comparisons is that she's still a killer. The Charley Baltimore character settled down with her family after taking care of loose strings she had lying around as an assassin. Jason Bourne at one time went "off the grid" to try to live a normal life with his girlfriend until she was killed, thus bringing him back into the black ops politics and resolving his past once and for all. I believe his character retired from the life as an assassin whereas Valentine leaves the politics out of the killing game if she can help it. She has two goals when entering the killing market: the first is to make enough money to live well the rest of her life, and the second is to find out who killed her father and why. Both set her apart from the two characters you compare Val to. And after the current "The Killing Moon" story arc is completed I think readers will see Valentine in a whole new light.

ST: What themes are you exploring with Valentine?

DC: The first story arc was centered around the "black ops politics" of government. Valentine was heavily involved with those operations, and we saw how it affected her in her personal relationships. The themes in the Red Rain story arc dealt with redemption, loyalty, betrayal, and rebirth. The current story arc deals with Valentine's past and with realizing that what she thought she knew about herself may be far better than discovering the truth, the real truth about herself before she became a killer.

ST: I see Valentine as your magnum opus □ that one story that creators are sometimes compelled to tell, even if they have to fit it in around a day job or other paying comics work, and even if it takes years. What about the story keeps calling to you?

DC: Given the fact that Dana Valentine and some of the supporting characters have aged maybe a couple of years while I'm 11 years older is strange when I revisit with them. It's like revisiting old friends who haven't really aged but you can see what will eventually happen to them. I have an ending in mind, but the appealing part is getting write and illustrate the road to the conclusion. Comic book storytelling should be challenging and fun, and I love it.

I think you have to love it because the longer you do it, the more it demands of you to become better at telling a story, both as a writer and an illustrator. When I look back

since I began the book, I was a student with two part-time jobs, then a working freelance illustrator while earning my teaching credential, and now I'm an art teacher and freelance illustrator. What I always come back to is writing and illustrating comics, whether they're my own creative work or someone else's, and it's always fun to sit at the drawing table or computer working on them. Current events always contribute to Valentine as a source for inspiration, but I try not to deviate too much from the original plot of the story.

ST: What's coming up next for you and Valentine?

DC: "The Killing Moon" is the third story arc for Valentine, and it deals with the events that lead up to her choosing to become a hired gun. I'm halfway through that and can't wait to share how this story plays out.

Beyond Valentine, I'm finishing the outline to my first graphic novel titled *The Tommy Gun Dolls*. It's about burlesque dancers who become bank robbers after one of their own is murdered. The setting is the infamous Barbary Coast district in San Francisco, which will be the backdrop for the story, which is inspired by real life events but injected with fictional characters. More information about this historical fiction story will be revealed in the coming months on my web site.

ST: Tell us about your other comics or freelance work. I was really intrigued by the strips (and want to see more) at *Urban Fertility Dancer*.

DC: I'm really having a good time illustrating *Ava The Adventurer* written by Shawn Frances Lee, a former exotic dancer who's now a pole dance and choreography instructor. The idea she presented me to illustrate *Ava* was appealing because it was different from what I've been doing and the monthly web comic fits into my schedule.

It's refreshing to just illustrate from Shawn's point of view and the experience she draws from when presenting the stories to me. I encourage anyone interested to read more about *Ava* and Shawn at her web site, urbanfertilitydancer.com.

I just finished illustrating trading cards for a *Marvel Masterpiece* series and am currently working on *Aliens vs. Predator 2* cards for *Inkworks*. Earlier this year I illustrated some pages for writer Dan Wickline's *The Unusual Suspects* published by Image to benefit *The Hero Initiative*. I'm also illustrating images for writer Aaron Hilton's book *The Grunge Operatives* that's about a pair of thirty-something private detectives who specialize in cases that have a Generation X or Y/alternative culture twist.

ST: How did you get a job teaching a comics course, and what does it entail?

DC: I inquired to the Academy of Art in San Francisco about their sequential art program in the illustration department a few years back. This was one of those situations where timing was indeed everything. The department was in the middle of searching for a new instructor to teach their *Survey of Comics 1* class, and after an interview where I outlined my goals for the course, I was hired. Chuck Pyle, an accomplished illustrator, is the

director of the department and a staunch supporter of having a comics program at the school.

The class is designed for students to utilize their drawing skills while applying them to the mechanics of sequential art. The students work from comic book scripts week to week, drawing 2-3 pages and honing their skills as storytellers. Students are introduced to inking, lettering, coloring, submitting their work to editors, and learning how to self-publish their own stories. During the semester, students learn about the history of comics, from the Golden Age, to the underground, to current trends in the industry, as well as about artists and their techniques.

I believe there are now five different classes students can take, from Survey of Comics, Manga and Anime, and Writing For Comics to making your own graphic novel courses at the graduate level. From time to time, we've had guest speakers like Steve Leialoha, Dan Brereton, Walden Wong, Timothy Green, Jason Mcnamara, and Tony Tolbert. Rutu Modan of Exit Wounds will be visiting the school on October 17th, and we're really looking forward to her visit.

The goal of these classes is provide the students with a learning environment that gives them the tools necessary to succeed as working professional artists.

I find teaching art is a wonderful balance to my freelance career. It's invigorating to be in an environment of learning while students explore their artistic endeavors and to have the satisfaction of seeing them grow. You never stop learning as an artist, and since I've been teaching I've seen it improve my work as both an artist and writer.

ST: As an instructor and a comics creator, what advice do you have for new creators?

DC: To learn from mistakes, do as I say and not as I do! In all seriousness, research the medium you want to work in. Go to conventions, talk with artists, editors, writers, retailers □ anyone in the comics industry who has a sliver of advice to give you □ and write it all down! You may save yourself some heartache along the way and there will be heartache, I kid you not.

I jumped in thinking I was prepared and I wasn't. This experience applies a lot to self-publishing. I think many aspiring artists and writers have this idealized notion that self-publishing your own comic book is a bed of roses. It's not, you're going to have a few thorns along the way and you have to realize it's a business and you're going to have to wear many hats. You have to market your work, write press releases, give away samples for reviews (both the good and the bad), be an accountant to manage your finances, plus your attitude is important and no one is going to be into your work unless you're fully behind it.

You have to be committed to your work and see it all the way through and learn from it. Ask yourself what you can do better on the next book, the next convention, what worked

well marketing-wise and what didn't. Start a web comic or small ashcans/mini books made at Kinko's before you spend \$2,000 on a book that's poorly edited. Find out if readers respond to your book both online and at conventions before spending all that money. Self-publishing your own work is a risk, it all is, but you're investing in yourself and shouldn't sell yourself short. You have to be willing to allow other people to critique your work and be objective.

Sure the idea of creating a book and going to a show where an editor discovers you and picks up your book and gives you a big check would be great, but often times it's getting your work exposed at the show, selling a few books, making contacts and then returning to your day job the next day until the next convention rolls around. If you can be realistic and manage both, you'll eventually find the definition of what success means to you and feel satisfied at the end of the day.

ST: What comics out there are you really digging? What would you recommend to others?

DC: I always have a pile of books I want to read that I can never get to the bottom of! I'm digging Y: The Last Man, 100 Bullets, Queen and Country, and the Crystal Ballroom by Frank Thorne. I'd recommend Moore's Watchmen and V For Vendetta, Barbucci's Sky-Doll, Blacksad by Juan Diaz Canales, Planetary by Warren Ellis, On The Road To Perdition by Max Allan Collins, Brownsville by Neil Kleid, and Batman: The Long Halloween, just off the top of my head. That should keep you busy for a while!

ST: For those who want to meet you personally, what conventions do you usually attend, and where can we see you next?

DC: I've been attending the San Diego Comic-Con as a professional for 10 years now and will continue to do so, along with WonderCon, Super-Con, Emerald City Con, Heroes-Con, and sometimes Chicago, Portland, and APE. I'm really looking forward to going back to New York City next year as well for the New York Comic-Con. The next show I'll be exhibiting at is WonderCon in February in San Francisco. I'd like to eventually make it out to SPX, Mocca, Baltimore Comic-Con, and Phoenix Comic-Con, too. Comic-Con in San Diego is where I got my start, and it's been good to me since the beginning.

Additional Audio Interviews

<http://www.caprado.org/articles/articledetail.aspx?articleid=1699>

http://fanboyradio.libsyn.com/index.php?post_id=130671