ATHENS COMICS LIBRARY GREECE

COMICDOM PRESS

Non for profit organisation, Comicdom Press was founded in 2004, to promote and advocate for the 9th Art of comic.

Amongst our activities are:

- the comics news website comicdom.gr
- the annual Comics Festival Comicdom Con Athens which attracts over 18.000 visitors running since 2006
- the Athens Comics Library the first-ever greek comic library
- the design and facilitation of educational workshops for young people, students, schools, teachers, and librarians, as well as workshops for adults, using creative storytelling and comics
- the Comics Digital Museum, launched in May 2021
- the Baytna Hub project, a safe and creative space for refugee and migrant children and their caregivers in partnership with the Refugee Trauma Initiative
- the launch and curation of a series of creative Take Away Art packs for preschool children.
- the small publishing house Comicdom Press

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COMICDOM PRESS

Since the launch of Comicdom Press until today, we have worked in close partnership with stakeholders from Greece and abroad to produce and deliver various creative community events such as exhibitions, workshops, festivals, conferences and promoted artists exchange and mobility.

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Our vision

Our vision is to showcase to the Greek audience the power of the medium of comics, by exposing them to different styles and schools. We also have an educational angle, boostering the love of reading, teaching multimodal literacies and promoting self directed knowledge through comics.

For us, comics could be a tool to teach soft skills such as collaboration, creative problem solving, intercultural understanding, empathy, but also a way to develop social skills by gaining a better understanding of our complex societal environment.

Our Progammes

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Baytna Hub

Baytna, meaning “our home” in Arabic, provides high-quality pre-school education and specialist psychosocial support to children aged 0-6 and their parents. The programme strives to give these children the opportunity to learn and play and to develop healthy and secure relationships. Baytna nurtures the attachment between parents and children to enhance the socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical development of children we work with. Baytna facilitates a safe environment to support the development of young refugees who are experiencing a prolonged period of distress and insecurity. A space where children can play and learn, and where families can strengthen relationships and feel empowered.

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Welcome Through Football

Athens Comics Library is working in partnership with AEK F.C. on the european programme Welcome Through Football. This programme is recognising the value of sports and football in particular, in social cohesion, skills development and nurturing professional opportunities for the participants.

Educational Workshops

Athens Comics Library believes in the educational value of comics and that is why we design and implement educational programs for all school levels as well as seminars for teachers. The programmes are available either through zoom or by visiting the teachers on the school premises. Athens Comics Library offers a series of activities on the art of comics for the whole family in its space but also in collaboration with other organisations.

Comics &Creative Storytelling Training

Athens Comics Library designed and implemented a specialised training seminar on the use of comics and storytelling as a therapeutic and educational tool and as a means of empowering communities. The course is tailored to eraly childhood educators, cultural mediators working with children, humanitarian NGO educational officers, community Psychosocial (PSS) workers, and refugee caregivers.

Take Away Art

As COVID has dramatically altered access to education and culture, particularly for vulnerable communities, and whilst the world is moving more and more towards digital solutions, a serious concern around digital exclusion is raised for those particular communities who might not have access to data, smart-devices and technology in general. The exclusion of refugee children from the Greek education system and community arts reached record levels during the pandemic, prompting reactions from across various sectors. For that reason we created a series of Take Away Art creativity packs n 4 languages (Greek, English, French and Farsi) that children can enjoy at home together with their caregivers. Take Away Art is also available to educational and humanitarian organizations that would like to offer creative work packs to groups of children who do not have access to digital facilities especially whilst covid19 lockdown was in place.

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Women Strike Again

Athens Comics Library, as part of #FootballPeople: Europe's largest campaign for social change and football diversity in collaboration with the FARE Network, hosted the Panel Discussion: "Women Strike Again" #WomenStrikeAgain,

The event is framed by a digital campaign entitled #WomenStrikeAgain #FootballPeople, which will be disseminated through social media, where athletes, journalists, people of culture and sports will participate giving us a message of empowerment, which will subscribe to the goal of the event. , as well as a statement of commitment to strengthen women's representation, but also empowerment in the field of football.

Stroller Tours

A unique series of tours of the Athens Comics Library in a friendly environment for babies and toddlers. Crying babies and toddlers chatting are welcome! Both babies and adults can enjoy the colourful and interesting art tour without fear of disturbing other visitors. They are also an opportunity for caregivers to get to know each other and share their love for art.

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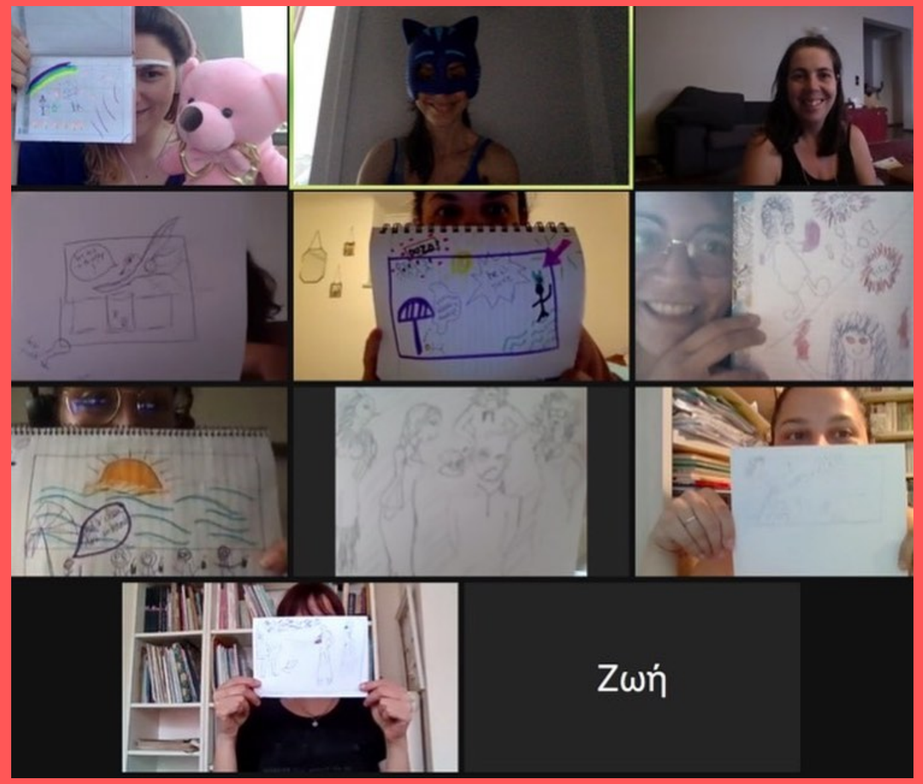
Team Building



Finding inspiration by the superpowers of comics, we create scenarios, role playing and games tailored to the needs of each organisation aims and objectives. Participants have the opportunity to experience a shared experience and the organisations to collect interesting data and test teamworking that will help them in their development.

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Professional Workshops

Our team offers a series of training workshops to professionals such as:

- graphic journalism
- graphic facilitation
- comics & media literacy
- storytelling for community empowerment

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Visual and Storytelling Campaigns

Our team undertakes the design and implementation of social or other campaigns utilizing comics as a key tool.

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Next Steps

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Roma Communities Empowerment in Collaboration with World Comics India

1. Tavva, Mizoram - " We made comics to sensitise people about their voting rights and distributed them just before the elections."
2. Saraswati, Uttar Pradesh - " Now we know that the touchers get punished if they use the stick."
3. Devendra, Uttarakhand - " The drunkard headmaster was immediately sacked. Now I have started a comics campaign against alcoholism."
4. Rinku, Bihar - " When the ward member read my comics, our school backyard was cleaned within a day."
5. Suresh, Rajasthan - " This comics got electricity to my village."
6. Aranesh, Bihar - " Village head installed two handpumps as soon as he read my comics."

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Roma Communities Empowerment in Collaboration with World Comics India

Inspired by a recent collaboration with World Comics India, we are planning a project together, aiming at recording stories and particularly empowering Roma communities, challenging the existing narrative around those particular communities. Our aim is to design and implement in collaboration with World Comics India a series of grassroots comics workshops in these communities, highlighting integration issues and of course the challenges and limitations with the ultimate goal of changing the narrative, but also speak up about issues such as gender based violence, and gender stereotypes which are usually not covered by the mainstream media.

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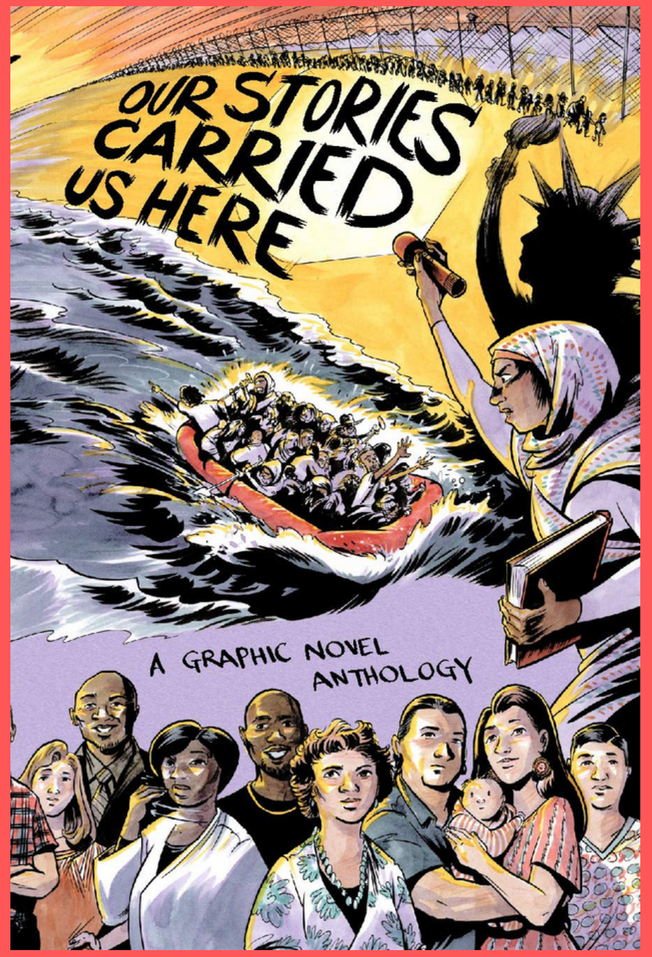
Refugee Communities Empowerment in Collaboration with Green Card Voices



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Refugee Communities Empowerment in Collaboration with Green Card Voices

In collaboration with Green Card Voices we plan to host the exhibition Our Stories Carried Us Here in the context of the 16th Comicdom Con Athens which will take place on 15-17 April 2022 and at the same time to organize storytelling workshops in both refugee communities and professionals working with different communities.

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Female Empowerment in Collaboration with Girl Power

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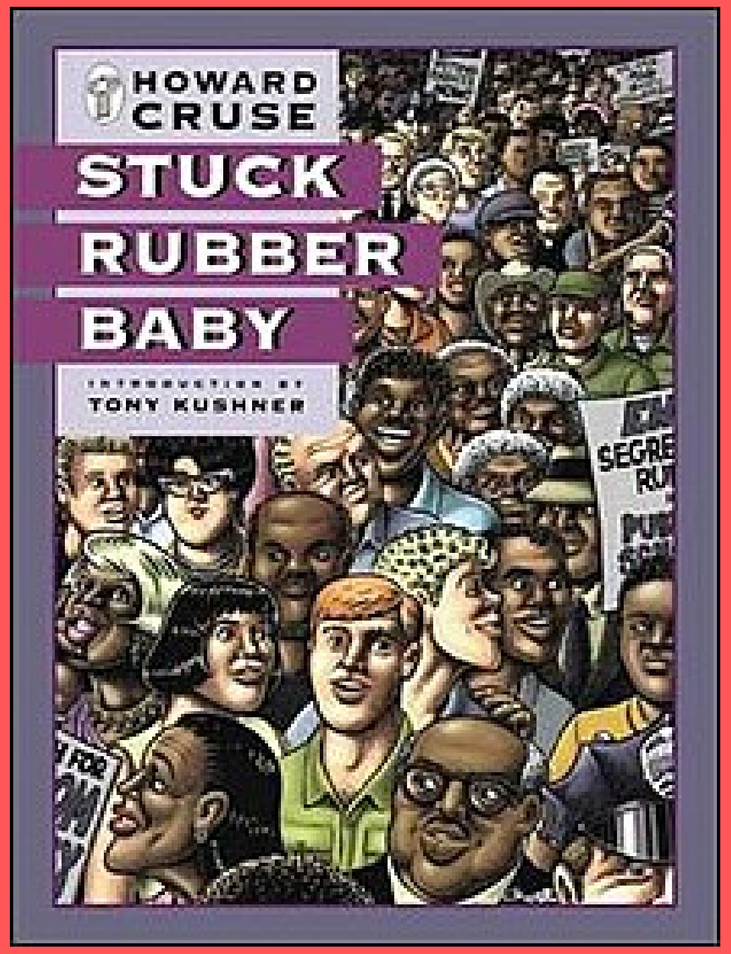
Female Empowerment in Collaboration with Girl Power

In partnership with Girl Power, which was founded by the former head of Afghanistan's national women's soccer team, we plan to create a Leadership Academy here in Greece , which Girl Power has already been successfully delivering in recent years, to empower women from underprivileged / marginalized backgrounds through of sports and in particular football and create robust role models for young women from valnurable groups.

LGBTQI+ Community Empowerment



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LGBTQI+ Community Empowerment

Inspired by the publication in Greek by our publishing company Comicdom Press of the influential graphic novel Stuck Rubber Baby we plan a series of fringe activities, such as exhibitions, creative workshops, but also a larger advocacy campaign utilizing comics (also exploring the representation of LGBTQI+ in pop culture) associated with other organizations (such as Pride, with which we coexisted this year during Comicdom Con Athens).

Stuck Rubber Baby is a 1995 graphic novel by American cartoonist Howard Cruse. He created his debut graphic novel after a decades-long career as an underground cartoonist. It deals with homosexuality and racism in the 1960s in the southern United States, in the midst of the Civil Rights Movement.

Comics and Creative Storytelling as an Educational, Healing and Community Empowerment tool

Comics and Creative Storytelling as an Educational, Healing and Community Empowerment tool

Following last year's successful first cycle, we continue this year to offer the training program which is addressed to PSS workers, educators and employees mainly in the humanitarian sector with the aim of training them in storytelling and comics methodologies as educational, therapeutic and community empowerment tools. The program was implemented last year with the support of the Refugee Trauma Initiative and Choose Love (Help Refugees)

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Arts on Prescription Program

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Arts on Prescription Program

We are designing a pilot social prescribing program for people who have one or more long-term health problems, need support with their mental health, are lonely or isolated, belong to minorities or vulnerable groups, have complex social needs that affect their well-being, have mental disorders created by the agony and impact of the covid19 pandemic (whether they have lost a loved one, are ill for a long time, are isolated, live in an environment of fear). Starting with comics and storytelling then we will expand to other art forms.

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Refugee Week Greece in collaboration with Counterpoints Arts

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Refugee Week Greece in collaboration with Counterpoints Arts

We are working with Counterpoints Arts to bring Refugee Week to Greece in June 2022. Refugee Week aims to bring together different people without labels, to help them understand why some people need to move and the challenges they face in seeking safety. The theme for Refugee Week 2022 is "healing". Through creativity and discussion, next year's festival will be a celebration of community, mutual care and the human ability to start again and improve mental health and well-being despite adverse conditions and experiences.

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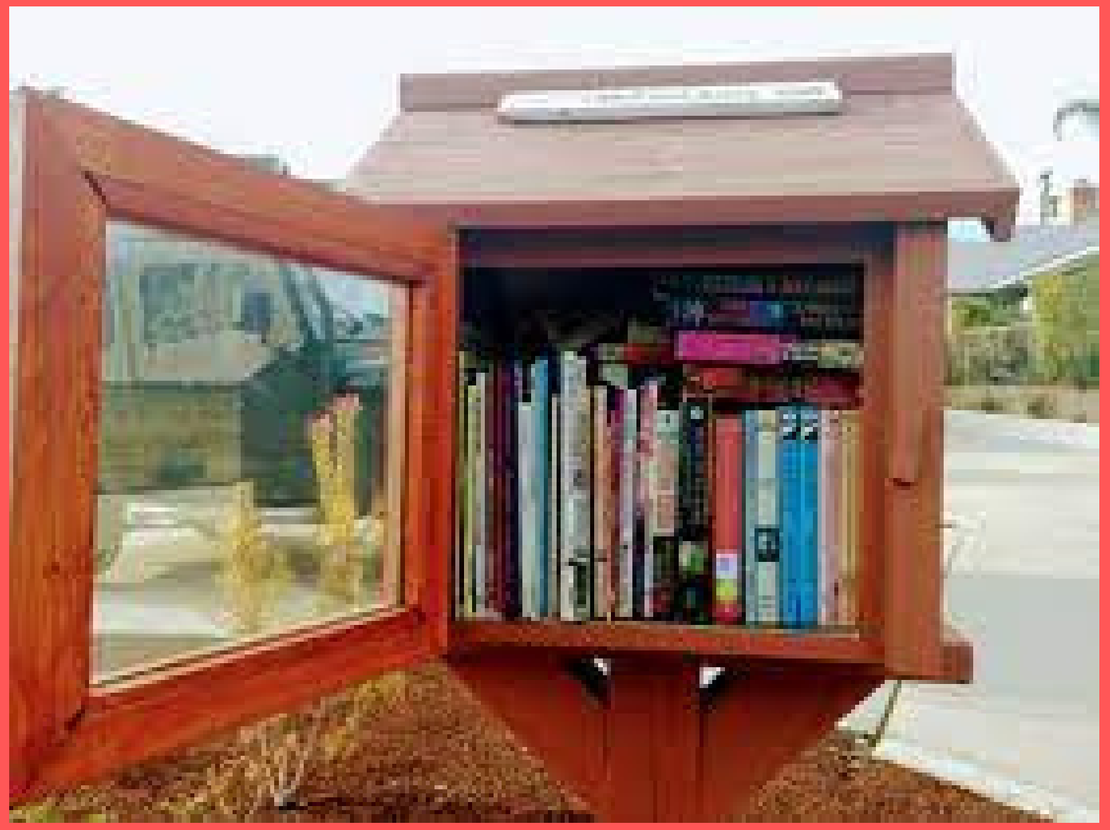
Library in a box



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Library in a box

Wanting to offer the experience of Athens Comics Library to more and more people, we plan to create small, portable libraries, which can be easily sent and installed in educational and cultural organizations, public spaces, etc., mainly in remote areas, closed structures, etc. Libraries will include a selection of comics for all ages and suggestions for educational activities.

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All Communities Empowerment Community Centre

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All Communities Empowerment Community Centre

Our biggest and most inspiring project is about the creation of a community center around our library in order to be able to offer all the services in the communities we serve. A welcoming space that will be a hub throughout the city and will give residents the opportunity to socialize, learn and access basic cultural and educational services and will be a catalyst in increasing social cohesion in the neighborhood and communities in which we address.

Our team

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FOUNDER & STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

VASILEIA VAXEVANI

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

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ATHENS COMICS LIBRARY

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