



Area 10

Christos Gage , Chris Samnee (Illustrator)

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In New York City, a killer known as "Henry The Eighth" leaves a trail of decapitated corpses — keeping the severed heads to use for unknown purposes. NYPD Detective Adam Kamen leads the investigation, until a seemingly unrelated freak incident leaves him with a brain injury in the section known as "Brodmann Area 10." When he recovers, Adam's perceptions of time are altered. He becomes slowly convinced that his bizarre condition could be tied directly to the "Henry" case — and that the key may lie in the ancient, mystical practice of trepanation.

Area 10 Details

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From Reader Review Area 10 for online ebook

Rodolfo Santullo says

Segundo volumen de la colección Vertigo Crime que pasa por estas reseñas y, en esta ocasión, salimos mucho mejor parados. Area 10 nos cuenta la historia de Adam Kamen, un policía neoyorquino, quien persigue a un terrible asesino en serie conocido como "Enrique VIII" (por su costumbre de decapitar a sus víctimas) y quien un mal día se cruza en el camino de un loco y termina con un destornillador clavado en la frente. Milagrosamente sobrevive pero al salir del hospital empezará a percatarse de que su perspectiva del tiempo se ha alterado y que quizá su lesión no haya sido casual sino que se vincula directamente con el asesino que persigue. Manteniendo la costumbre de la colección -la de traer guionistas de otros medios- el autor Christos N. Gage es, antes que nada, guionista de televisión, pero tampoco es un recién llegado al noveno arte (ha escrito unas cuantas series de Marvel). Plantea todo su relato como un policial de esos que fueron furor en el cine luego de Se7en de David Fincher y, la verdad, sale bastante bien librado. Hay que tener cierta tolerancia para un par de casualidades, por Gage entrega una historia muy entretenida, colmada de vueltas de tuerca, buen desarrollo de personajes y un final de esos atado con moño. Y la labor de Chris Samnee no puede ser mejor. El dibujante realiza una obra pristina -en sobrio blanco y negro- donde la narrativa es perfecta y el disfrute de cada página es total.

Jonathan Maas says

Incredible! Hopefully full review coming soon - but yeah this is a winner - great writing, great art.

Quentin Wallace says

One of the better of the Vertigo Crime series. It deals with trepanning, which is the idea of drilling a hole into the skull to open up new levels of consciousness. At its heart, however, it's a hunt for a serial killer with enough twists and original ideas to keep it from becoming stale. The art is nice and fits the story well. If you liked any of the other books in the Vertigo Crime line, you'll probably like this one.

Lono says

The Vertigo Crime imprint hasn't exactly lived up to the hype for me. No stupid-great noir tales despite having some pretty talented folks writing and/or drawing a few of them. That said, Area 10 is pretty good. Not off the hook, but certainly an entertaining read.

Christos Gage's fast paced book focuses on the hunt for a serial killer dubbed "Henry the Eighth" and the one cop in particular that's trying to bring him in. Fairly standard fare. The thing that makes this a little more unique is the cringe-worthy injury that allows the killer to stay one step ahead of the law. Couple of twists that I didn't see coming and the characters ultimately grew on me.

Not overly psyched about the art. I like a lot of black and white stuff, but it took a while for me to come around to Chris Samnee's work in this one and I enjoyed his recent run on Daredevil. In the end it was certainly serviceable enough.

While it's built on a familiar foundation, Area 10 does do a couple of things different and has enough originality to warrant a read if you're a fan of serial killer fiction or noir comics. I was unaware that Gage had written for Law & Order: SVU prior to reading this. SVU is one of my wife's favorite shows and this sorta reads a little like one of their episodes. And that's not a bad thing.

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Michael says

Excellent illustrations, moody, great acting, excellent use of blacks. Wonderfully drawn book. Script's solid, interesting premise. I liked the big twist at the end with the killer's ID, but the final fight was a tad ridiculous.

Miriam says

This is a high three-star read, a solid "I liked it" but probably wouldn't linger in the memory if not for my vague surprise at how often I encounter fictional mentions of trepanation.

Tomás says

Leído en la edición de tapa dura de Panini, que no figura en Goodreads.

Me encantan los policiales y cuando leo alguna obra del género me pongo exigente (no en estado de crítico de sillón pero exijo que la historia sea un policial coherente, entretenido y que tenga una voz propia).

Esta historia en particular me gustó, pero hasta ahí. No es nada del otro mundo, juega entre lo sobrenatural y un noir realista sin llegar a ser ninguna de las dos cosas y la mezcla no está muy bien hecha. Queda un híbrido un poco tirado a menos.

Hay un asesino serial como premisa interesante y que engancha al principio. Después tenemos el típico policial de procedimiento, el detective acomplejado, la acompañante femenina (no me gustó para nada el personaje femenino en la historia, parece que fuera solo un agregado para que el protagonista principal tenga con quien meterse en la cama, lo cual me parece bastante bajo de parte del autor) y los compañeros policías que mucho no dicen tampoco. El agregado sobrenatural es interesante, lo hubiera desarrollado un poco más quitando ciertos elementos narrativos que no van a ningún lado. Son 184 páginas, hubiera podido dar mucho más de lo que da. Pero entretiene y cumple un poco, no mucho, pero un poco.

Los dibujos son muy buenos. Chris Samnee se mueve bastante bien con el blanco y negro, los juegos de sombras le dan el ambiente noir necesario a la historia. Las viñetas no son difíciles de comprender (como pasa a veces en este tipo de historias en blanco y negro del género) así que mis aplausos para este dibujante.

Avradeep Sinha says

A page turning mix of science fiction and noir thriller with a dark, gritty and gripping story full of twists and thrills from Christos Gage and fine B&W artwork from Chris Samnee. This is one of the better crime based Vertigo graphic novels out there.

Sud666 says

Trepanation is a "medical" procedure where a hole is drilled into the head exposing the dura mater to treat health problems generally having to do with blood pressure. But some believe that this procedure helps to open up a "third eye".

NYPD Detective Adam Kamen and his partner are on the trail of a serial killer called "Henry VIII" for his penchant for removing his victim's heads. But during a random (maybe?) hostage situation Adam is stabbed in the forehead. This may have unlocked his inner sight.

What follows is an interesting detective story about a serial killer who has managed to unlock his own "third eye". This is a dark and grim story. But a good detective tale since it keeps you guessing well into the story. The subtle setup of Adam's character is excellent and keeps you guessing as to his culpability in the crimes, even if he is unaware of his actions. Truly well done!

Good crime story with a hint of supernatural spirituality makes a grim thriller about a detective's attempt to stop a serial killer.

Max says

As the only graphic novel (of the now dead) of the now dead Vertigo Crime imprint, I was very pleasantly surprised by how good this was. It just works very well as a straight up crime/mystery novel, with a well developed cast and a sensible narrative that manages to have surprising and effective plot twists without 'cheating' as a lot of (bad) mystery novels do. The ending is telegraphed and foreshadowed enough to not feel like it came out of nowhere, but was still handled subtly enough that the reader doesn't figure it out until Gage wants you to (keep in mind I don't really read many detective/mystery novels, so it may be a lot more apparent for someone familiar with the genre).

As an Original Graphic Novel, it came out all at once, and so unlike most comics, there are no issue breaks or chapter breaks at all. And because of this, and partly in spite of this, the entire novel flows very smoothly and never once feels drawn out. The pacing really is perfect. The great pacing and intriguing nature of the plot compelled me to read until the very end. The function of Trepanation within the story was interesting

and novel, and allowed for a suitably creepy atmosphere without ever being too over the top and silly.

Chris Samnee is an artist I've been aware of for awhile, but I've never read completely read something of his until now, and he definitely lives up to his reputation. It's still very clearly his art, but he adapts his style to the noir, black and white look of the Vertigo Crime format. He makes great use of shadows and negative space, giving it the look of a more shadowy Parker and a far more realist Sin City. Black and White comics that aren't in the fantasy or superhero genre (aka their characters dress and look like normal human beings) often have problems wherein, especially male, characters are difficult to differentiate, but Samnee avoids this completely without having the art look photorealistic.

I do wish I could have seen the art in standard trade paperback size, but I understand the appeal of the digest sized comic for bookstores, and it was kinda nice reading and holding a standard sized book. At 13\$ (for the softcover, hardcover is 20\$), for a complete story, it's definitely a bargain and fully sized the price likely would have been closer to 20\$ for a 200 page comic. I bought Area 10 because I had heard it was the best of the initial wave of Vertigo Crime books, but it's quality definitely makes me want to check out more of them. There are not nearly enough of these kinds of stories within comics. And, because Vertigo Crime (as well as Vertigo itself, basically) died, it looks like that won't change any time soon.

Martin says

This book blew me away. Easily my favourite Vertigo Crime book so far, "Area 10" is a straight-up police procedural mystery that delivers on all fronts: story, art, pacing, intrigue. What sets this book apart from your usual crime fiction story is the subject of trepanation, which is integral to the plot. While reading it, I kept getting those "Silence of the Lambs" vibes; you know, when the suspense gets so intense, and you just *know* something bad's going to happen, that you sit on the edge of your seat? And just when you think everything's all neatly tied up, you realize that there's still a quarter of the book left to read!

Christos N. Gage and Chris Samnee have raised the standard that every future [Vertigo Crime] book must strive to meet. Even people (mystery enthusiasts, especially) who don't normally read comic books will enjoy this one. Anyway, it's not a comic book; It's a graphic NOVEL.

I cannot recommend this book enough. I'd pay retail for this (as a matter of fact, I did!), so at a measly \$15 or so online, it's a steal. Get this book, you won't regret it.

George K. says

Τυχαία αγορά με πέντε ευρώ απ' το παζάρι των εκδόσεων Anubis, ευτυχώς που σε τ'τοιές περιπτώσεις έχω ένα κ'ποιο ν'στικτο, γιατί το συγκεκριμένο μου έρεσε πολύ. Τους δυο δημιουργούς ο'τε ακουστ' δεν τους έχω, όμως το σχέδιο, η περιλήψη της ιστορίας και οι διηγηματικοί απ' Max Brooks και Nicholas Pileggi στο εξ'φύλλο και το οπισθ'φύλλο, ήταν τρεις σημαντικοί λόγοι για να ρισκάρω. Το συγκεκριμένο graphic novel αν'κει σε μια σειρά αυτοτελών αστυνομικών ιστοριών, που γ'ρνουν πολύ προς το παλπ, αν λ'βω υπ'ψιν τ'σο την ιστορία που μ'λεις διβάσα 'σο και τις περιλήψεις των υπ'λοιπων. Και αυτ' είναι κ'τι που με ελκεί.

Εδ' έχουμε να κ'νούμε με έναν κατ' συρροήν δολοφόνο, τον "Henry the Eighth", ο οποίος αφ'νει

στο δι?βα του αποκεφαλισμ?να πτ?ματα, χωρ?ς να υπ?ρχει καν?να στοιχε?ο για το που μπορε? να βρ?σκονται τα κεφ?λια. ?νας ντετ?κτιβ του τμ?ματος ανθρωποκτονι?ν της Ν?ας Υ?ρκης, ο Adam Kamen, ερευν? την υπ?θεση. ?μως μια μ?ρα θα τραυματιστε? σοβαρ?, αφο? ?νας τρελ?ρας θα του χ?σει ?να κατσαβ?δι στο κ?ντρο του μετ?που του! Αναρρ?νει γρ?γορα αλλ? αρχ?ζει να νι?θει περ?εργα, να ?χει παραισθ?σεις, ακ?μα και να βλ?πει κ?ποια πιθαν? γεγον?τα στο ?μεσο μ?λλον! Και, φα?νεται, ?τι ο τραυματισμ?ς του μ?νο τυχα?ος δεν ?ταν, γιατ? θα μ?θουμε ?τι οι φ?νοι του "Henry" σχετ?ζονται με κ?ποιες αρχα?ες ιεροτελεστ?ες γ?ρω απ? την κρानιοτομ?α (trepanation), μια "επ?μβαση" που υποτ?θεται ?τι βελτι?νει την αντ?ληψη και διευρ?νει το μυαλ?. Ο Adam θα προσπαθ?σει να βρει και να σταματ?σει τον κατ? συρρο? δολοφ?νο, με την βο?θεια μιας γιατρ?νας, τι γ?νεται ?μως αν αυτ?ς ο τρελ?ς του την ?χει στημ?νη;

Το Area 10 ε?ναι ?να τρελ? και ?κρως χορταστικ? αστυνομικ? graphic novel, με ενδιαφ?ρουσα πλοκ?, γρ?γορους ρυθμο?ς, τρελ?ς καταστ?σεις, ?ντονη δρ?ση, σκην?ς γραφικ?ς β?ας και ανατροπ?ς. Σ?γουρα ξεφε?γει λ?γο και ορισμ?να κομμ?τια ε?ναι μη ρεαλιστικ?, ?μως πρ?κειται για λεπτομ?ρειες που μοι?ζουν ασ?μαντες μπροστ? στην ψυχαγωγ?α που προσφ?ρει. Οι δι?λογοι μου φ?νηκαν καλογραμμ?νοι και φυσικ? και η δομ? της ιστορ?ας αρκετ? προσεμ?νη. Το ασπρ?μαυρο σκ?τσο πολ? καλ? και κοντ? στα γο?στα μου, μου φ?νηκε απ?λυτα ταιριαστ? με την ιστορ?α. Και οι σπλ?τερ σκην?ς ?ταν αρκετ? ?ντονα δοσμ?νες. Πραγματικ? το ευχαριστ?θηκα.

?πως ε?πα, αν?κει σε μια σειρ? της Vertigo με αυτοτελε?ς αστυνομικ?ς ιστορ?ες. Α?ριο κι?λας θα π?ω στο παζ?ρι των εκδ?σεων Anubis, ελπ?ζοντας να βρω και κ?ποια ?λλα της σειρ?ς αυτ?ς που ε?χα σταμπ?ρει απ? την προηγ?μενη φορ?. Δι?βασα κριτικ?ς για μερικ? απ? αυτ? και πε?στηκα για να προχωρ?σω σε αγορ?. Αφ?στε δε που ε?ναι μια τ?λεια ευκαιρ?α για εξ?σκηση των αγγλικ?ν μου. Με το Area 10 δεν ε?χα καν?να απολ?τως πρ?βλημα και το απ?λαυσα σαν να το δι?βασα στα ελληνικ?!

Kurt says

This graphic novel is a gory little procedural that takes advantage of the opportunities presented by the medium. In simple prose form, it would be easy to overlook as a simple airport paperback. With the inspired black-and-white art, though, it becomes something truly unsettling and worth a quick read.

The story is a mystery about a serial killer, and the topic and the timing of the plot twists (and I do mean twists, as in Shyamalan "wait, what was I seeing?" twists, not just surprising developments) are nothing a reader wouldn't see multiple times a week on a CSI spinoff. The trippy Eastern spirituality elements, though, bring the story into a different realm that would be challenging to explore on network television. I don't think Raymond Chandler's noir stories get enough credit for their more exotic elements, especially when they get hallucinatory, and Christos Gage really blends those pieces into a crime story that elevate it into a more respectful neo-noir than many people may appreciate.

The art here is what makes the story special. Chris Samnee plays with light and shadow as much as possible without distracting from the story, lending a real menace to the work. He is not shy about gore, which is abundant in this serial killer story with so many aspects relating to trepanation (the drilling/stabbing/ewww of a hole in the forehead for medical or spiritual purposes), and he makes inspired choices as he brings the reader into the protagonist's altered visions and his battles with the antagonist. And for a story that calls for some nudity and a little sex and a former cheerleader, Samnee is surprisingly respectful of his female characters, presenting realistic features and not making the reader feel creepy (of course, this leaves the door

wide open for him to make the reader feel creepy about the gruesome mutilations and murders, but even then he shows an appropriate level of restraint).

Certainly, this is no more an essential read than an episode of Law and Order is essential viewing. It's a crime story that doesn't claim to be life-changing literature. But it's a very good crime story, with fascinating art and an angle that we don't see very often in the U.S. these days. I recommend it.

Thomas Edmund says

I don't want to give too much away about the spunky idea the book is based on, as discovering it is half the fun. Let me just say that the premise is pretty cool.

Unfortunately the plot around the coolness essentially plays out like EVERY police procedural in the known world (divorced cop, on the edge of sanity, cute lady met along the way and of course twists (predictable) aplenty)

The artwork while adequate and gruesome at times, doesn't inspire and could have stood to be either more edgy given the content, or perhaps less mundane.

In short, a highly enjoyable read but nothing eye-bleedingly awesome.

Brian Rosenberger says

This was my first Vertigo Crime imprint and I enjoyed it. Serial killer "Henry the Eighth" is leaving a trail of decapitated corpses. The detective on the case gets forcefully trepanned (via screwdriver) and starts having weird visions. Writer Christos Gage ties it all together. It's like a Seinfeld episode but with a body count. Area 10 is a fast read with a few twists and pretty cool B/W art. Good thriller.
