



Australian Society of Authors

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January 2008: Graphic Novels / Comics Portfolio News

Dual portfolio holders, Julie Ditrich and Jozef Szekeres, met with Emma Dallas (ASA Membership Officer and the Comics/Graphic Novels Portfolio Liaison Officer) and Tim Sinclair (ASA Communications Officer) on Tuesday 13 November 2007 to discuss portfolio initiatives and activities for 2008. We determined that the two priority tasks were to complete the: (1) Minimum Approved Contracts (one for the traditional comics press and one for mainstream publishing which have different distribution models and which will also incorporate work-for-hire and creator-owned scenarios), and (2) Minimum Page Rates for comics artists and writers (ie. writing, penciling, inking, colouring, and lettering). The deadlines set were 30 June 2008.

Jozef and Julie also participated in a session on graphic novels at the NSW Writers' Centre 9th Australian Publishers and Authors Bookshow on Saturday 17 November 2007 where they specifically focused on the portfolio. The most interesting questions from the floor came from television writers interested in bridging across to the comics medium—a trend that is most prevalent in Hollywood with writers such as Joss Wheden (creator of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) and J Michael Straczynski (creator of *Babylon 5*) actively working in the comics industry, especially during the climate of the current writers strike.

The PulpFaction (Australian online comics community) website has also started a forum thread on the portfolio <http://forums.pulpfaction.net/viewtopic.php?t=3392> moderated by Jozef and Julie, and to which Emma Dallas will also be contributing. Please note that any queries about the portfolio can be directed to Emma on emma@asauthors.org and she will forward them onto the portfolio holders.