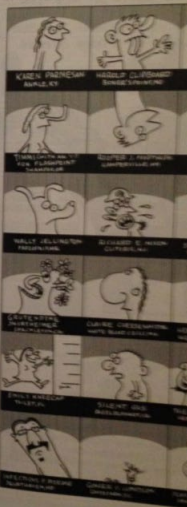


**What the Hell
Went Wrong with
*Magic Whistle 3.0***

Marc Arsenault
& Sam Henderson

CONGRATULATIONS TO



It was the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. I received a slightly cryptic email from an artist about his new comic that I was publishing. It started simply enough, “Just got my copies. There is no text on the inside covers.” There weren’t really any more informative details. It was a December book and the email didn’t sound very urgent... I hoped it was a fluke, a bad batch. Even with a worst case scenario we still had plenty of time to fix it. I went back to my tea and morning news.

The next email arrived an hour later. It was a little more to the point. The subject was “they fucked up”. It still was not super clear what really went wrong. This was all cleared up with the third email—just after lunch—which had photos attached. There it was in all its hazy phone cam glory: a completely blank inside cover on a brand new comic book [see above]. It wasn’t just plain, it was plain wrong, dammit! And Someone! Was Going! To Pay! That’s more or less what the artist said, plus details on how the entire run should be destroyed and it should be reprinted, reshipped to shops, and any bastard that sold the bad books owed him free comics for life.

I received these emails at rest-stops and meal breaks on my phone on the last day of a very long drive back to Cupertino, California from Brooklyn, New York. I was in the Mojave Desert with many hours of driving in front of me. Like many people, I was still trying to process the news from Paris and the attacks there just a few days earlier. I emailed my brand rep at the big comic book distribution place to let him know that there was a problem and they should hold the book. By the time I’d returned home,

received copies of the book (oh yeah, it was nothing like what we wanted), and talked to all the parties involved, I received an email from that brand rep that he would be on vacation until after Thanksgiving.

I found out the next week that all my urgent emails to the distributor to hold the book had bounced back. I feared the worse. This Monday morning those fears were confirmed when I saw the announcements of new comics that would be in stores on Wednesday. Today. Sam Henderson's *Magic Whistle 3.0 #1* (or Volume 3, number 1... the 27th-odd issue in the 20+ year-running series) is on sale at comic shops all over the country with completely blank inside covers.

Without the vital info on those blank pages hundreds of readers are left wondering what happened. Why? Why is this Volume Three of *Magic Whistle*? Why couldn't there just be a Volume Two Number Sixteen? What is this Three Point Oh crap anyway? Seriously? In this day and age? Since you won't be able to read it in the actual comic, I invite you to read what Sam had to say about this transformation here. Right here... after my words, after the cover art. Oh, and you really should snap those up quick. They will be recalled and replaced with comics printed the way they were intended. Then that strangest of possibilities might happen. An issue of *Magic Whistle* will become a rare collectors item. You could flip yours on eBay for 20 bucks or more. Slab it baby! Slab it!

—*Marc Arsenault, Cupertino, California 2015*

Magic Whistle 3.0

NUMBER 1, JANUARY 2016

NOW MORE PAGES!

MORE ARTISTS!



GLUTEN FREE!

MAGIC WHISTLE 3.0 WHY?

AMERICA WANTS TO KNOW!!!

**Some guys my age buy a sports car
or date someone just out of college.**

**For my mid-life crisis, I've made my comic into an
anthology.**

Hello, and welcome to *Magic Whistle 3.0*. Sort of a reboot. Not just of the comic, but of my career as well. I'm Sam Henderson and I'm tired of complaining about not being known and not being chosen. Tired of the jealousy, the sour grapes, the self-hatred. Tired of dropping the ball on nearly everything. Tired of being the Norma Desmond of comics (I am big, it's the panels that got smaller). Tired of people who grew up on my work meeting me and discovering a cauldron of bitterness. That's not me. That's not who I am. I was once one of the nicest, funniest cartoonists you'd ever meet and goddamn it, I can and should be that again.

I was tired of issues starting to look the same. After more than twenty years of doing a solo book, something new needed to be done. The first few were self-published mini-comics, the comics equivalent of open mic, with the dream most cartoonists have of doing a "real" comic, something I eventually attained in the late 90s. Over time with one-person floppies disappearing, I thought

I'd have more credibility doing the series as a paperback with a spine. It wasn't the right format for the short gags, blackouts, and shaggy dog stories I've become known for. The desperation to have enough material didn't help either. There's a lot of sloppiness and bitterness I'm embarrassed by. I also wasn't the right person to supervise all my own production. Those issues are my Star Wars Holiday Special.

I've always liked having other artists. Collaborating with them or just printing what they send me. Nobody writes letters or sends things through the mail anymore so I can't do that. I was always into the old-school anthologies from my adolescence like *Weirdo* and *Raw*, mainly existing as a showcase for the artists that edited them, but most of the issue full of work they liked. Some of the pages were of things only they would like (no offense, but did anybody buy the early *Weirdos* because of "My Pet Penis"?). I've been having more guest artists with each issue SO here you go with approximately 20 extra pages.

There are plenty of other anthologies which are all good in their own right but have more of a fine-art and literary aesthetic. I don't want to compete with them. I want *Magic Whistle 3.0* to be something lighter. More fun fun fun (till Daddy takes the T-Bird away). Not "funny ha-ha" as they say, like banana peels and seltzer bottles, just more whimsical in nature to compliment my own work. Something just as appropriate for the back of your toilet as on the coffee table for guests.

The only obstacle with this current relaunch is that I actually don't know shit about what's going on in comics anymore. I used to go to a store religiously every week, but now I go every few months. Being old enough to be the ~~parent~~ older sibling of some cartoonists, I don't socialize with the current crop like I used to either. I'm not

good at enforcing deadlines. I'm too much of a pushover. That's where co-editor Dave Nuss comes in. A bit younger and more of a taskmaster as well as a publisher himself. Back when he was in high school he wrote me about how he bought my comics and they were stolen. There was nothing I could do then, so I hope this makes up for it. He will be handling most of the non-me parts of the comic with my approval, and I'll be handling my own stuff and the stuff nobody but me would care for. *Magic Whistle 3.0* is like a series of checks and balances. Think of Dave as the legislative branch, me as the executive branch and Marc as the judicial branch. Except nobody can be voted off the island. If you find my work to be the worst thing in this issue, then FUCK YOU. It's my book. I have the veto power. There's still plenty to enjoy.

Thanks to John Brodowski, Manuel Gomez Burns, Jesse McManus, Ansis Purins, and Leah Wishnia for their material, and co-editor Dave Nuss for commissioning them and introducing me to them. Thanks to Marc Arsenault for taking over as publisher and putting up with my whining and millions of questions. The anthology was his idea initially to help with sales but I saw it as a jumpstart for my own enthusiasm. Thanks to Peter Bagge for sharing thoughts on his late brother within hours after I asked, even though tracking the material down took months on my end. It seems every cartoonist knows someone from their past more talented than them that stopped doing comics for whatever reason, and I intend to print them all eventually. Thanks to Charlie Judkins for providing the ancient Douglas Bagge comics. And special thanks to YOU, the reader.

— *Sam Henderson, October 2015, Woodstock, New York*
<http://MagicWhistle.com>

Quæ ingressæ redditio ?

Copyright © 2015

Sam Henderson & Marc Arsenault

The informative pamphlet was typeset
in Baskerville on the 310th anniversary
of John Baskerville's birth.

*What the Hell Went Wrong with Magic
Whistle 3.0* originally appeared in slightly
different form on [Medium.com](https://www.medium.com)

