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For media inquiries contact John Shableski  
john\_shableski@hotmail.com

## **Will Eisner Graphic Novel Prize for Libraries Debuts at ALA Convention in Anaheim**

Three libraries to win graphic novel collections featuring 2012 Eisner Award-nominated titles and cash awards.

**RIDGEWOOD, NJ – (June 8, 2012)** The Will & Ann Eisner Family Foundation announced today the launch of the **Will Eisner Graphic Novel Prize for Libraries**. The prize will be awarded annually to three libraries at the American Library Association's summer conference commencing with this year's event in Anaheim, California.

Each library will receive books nominated for the prestigious Will Eisner Comic Industry Awards, the entire Will Eisner Library of books, a \$2,000 voucher for the purchase of additional graphic novels, and an additional \$1,000 stipend for the library to hold a graphic novel author/creator event or a graphic novel/comics themed event. The collection of titles comprises over 100 books and the total value for each prize is approximately \$4,000.

Carl Gropper, President of the Foundation says, "We developed this prize as a way to emphasize not only Will Eisner's contributions to the comics industry, but to also recognize the important role that librarians have played in the phenomenal growth of the graphic novel category. While Will Eisner helped to create the foundation for graphic novels, librarians have championed the benefits of the graphic novel format and the comics medium to the world's readers."

Gropper continues, "The addition of the Eisner Award-nominated titles to the prize reflects the spirit of inclusion that Will Eisner was known for. He would have loved to have participated in the convergence of the comics and library communities. The Eisner Awards are announced each year at San Diego Comic Con and are considered the Oscars of the Comics Industry. The list of nominated titles is created by a committee of independent industry experts, which has included a librarian since 2005, when Kat Kan was selected for the committee."

David Glanzer, Director of Marketing and Public Relations for Comic Con International adds "Each year we take great pride in celebrating Will Eisner's incredible contribution to the comics world with two awards named in his honor; the Will Eisner Comics Industry Awards, and the Will Eisner Spirit of Retailing award. We are happy to learn that the Ann & Will Eisner Foundation is creating and administering The Will Eisner Graphic Novel Prize for Libraries which endeavors to provide an even wider audience for Graphic Novels, a move we truly support."

"We also thank our friends," continues Gropper, "the publishers of the Will Eisner Library: Abrams ComicArts, Dark Horse Comics, DC Entertainment, IDW Publishing, and W.W. Norton and for their support and their contribution of books by Will Eisner and biographies about him for the prize. "

Librarians attending the ALA Convention in Anaheim can register to win the prize at the Reading With Pictures/Will & Ann Eisner Family Foundation booth (#788). The three winning libraries will be announced at 4pm on Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup> on the Graphic Novel Stage in the convention hall.

The Brodart Company is the library wholesale partner and a sponsor for this year's prize. They will handle the cataloging and shipping of the graphic novels to the winning libraries.

**About Will Eisner:** WILL EISNER (March 6, 1917 – January 3, 2005) was an acclaimed American comics writer, artist and entrepreneur. He is considered one of the most important contributors to the development of the medium and is known for the cartooning studio he founded; for his highly influential comic series *The Spirit*; for his use of comics as an instructional medium; for his leading role in establishing the graphic novel as a form of literature with his groundbreaking 1978 graphic novel *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories*; and for his educational work in the medium as exemplified by his textbook *Comics and Sequential Art*. In a career that spanned nearly seven decades — from the dawn of the comic book to the advent of digital comics — Will Eisner was truly the 'Orson Welles of comics' and the 'father of the Graphic Novel'. Visit [www.willeisner.com](http://www.willeisner.com) for more information.

