



By Errol de Cruz  
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THE Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF) is looking for comics artists to participate in a project called the *Asia-Europe Comics Collaboration*, and the tagline for the project is *Beyond Superheroes: The art of furthering cross-cultural understanding between Asia and Europe*.

"Comics, with their roots in cave paintings, are a powerful idea," an ASEF statement said. "They are typically associated with humour and entertainment, and have been successfully adapted as an informational and educational tool, with exceptional results."

Because of their reader-friendliness, comics have been effectively employed to convey and explain events, concepts and messages that may otherwise not attract the interest of a wide general audience, ASEF said.

"The people behind the comics are very often those with a high level of social consciousness and purpose, and who want to make a difference in people's lives through their work."

ASEF proposes to initiate a collaboration between Asian and European creators which will lead to successive comics publications on shared concerns between the two regions.

**THE OBJECTIVES ARE TO ACHIEVE:**

- a continuing collaboration to deepen understanding amongst Asian and European creators, storytellers, artists and communicators;
- products in published form that will promote discovery of the interrelationship between Asian and European peoples and societies; and
- a self-sustaining series of projects to realise the above goals, through sales of the eventual publications.

Under the project, a team of established resource persons and upcoming creators and practitioners from Asia and Europe will work on a publication after engaging in online discussions to exchange views on a prospective list of subjects, topics or issues that are relevant to their societies and which challenge them to come up with novel story-telling angles that would seize readers' attention.

**SUBJECT EXAMPLES WOULD INCLUDE**

- natural catastrophes that have stirred a common international outpouring of sympathy, support and action;
- aspects of globalisation that societies in both regions are grappling with;
- shared concerns about environmental degradation and experiences in successfully sustaining development; and
- European man-in-the-street perceptions of Asia and vice versa;

The team will first convene at an upcoming international comics festival (to be confirmed) for an exploratory meeting to understand each other's work, against the background of their respective societies and cultures, agree on an Asia-Europe theme for the publication, and establish a workplan for the coming year.

The deadline for participation is 12pm on October 31, 2005. Submit your enquiries or applications to:

Soh Lai Yee  
 Project Executive (Public Affairs)  
 Asia-Europe Foundation  
 31 Heng Mui Keng Terrace  
 Singapore 119595

You can also call (65) 6874 9729 and (65) 6874 9700 or fax (65) 6872 1207.



"The ancestors of printed comics drew, painted and carved their time-paths from beginning to end, without interruption"

- Scott McCloud, author, *Understanding Comics and Reinventing Comics*.

# COMICS CRUSADE

