

BLACKLINE IN THE SAND

TAKING A STAND ON CREATIVITY,
CONTROL AND INNOVATION IN
INDEPENDENT COMICS, BY EXAMPLE.

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A NEW ERA IN COMICS BEGINS

It is with great pleasure and anticipation that we at **Blackline Comics** present to you a new avenue for comics publishing, and a new attitude behind it! We've all seen the changes in recent months in the comics industry. Many independent publishers, among them self-publishers and other such creative folk, are up against the wall. Diamond Distributors' raising of their monthly sales thresholds is hurting many indy creators and publishers. Retailers, too. If another outlet isn't utilized *now* to get all those great untold stories and wondrous works of art out there, many of our fellow creators and publishers (again, retailers also) will

drown in this sink-or-swim scenario of independent comics surviving in this economic downturn. Blackline promises three contributions for the industry that we're devoted to, for those who support and participate in it, through our publishing efforts: **1.)** to publish entertaining, quality comics that are compelling and fun to read, devoid of subject matter unworthy of comics, such as harsh language, sexual situations and gratuitous violence that doesn't serve the story it's in; **2.)** for the creators who publish through Blackline to retain **FULL** creative control and ownership of their properties, and **3.)** to deliver such

content by utilizing new forms of digital media to its fullest potential, as well as through traditional print media. Change can be a good thing, and Blackline Comics intends to prove it! Stick around, why don't ya, and see for yourselves. We think you'll be pleasantly surprised!

WHEREAS OTHERS
HAVE DRAWN
THEIR LINE IN THE
SAND, WE'VE DRAWN
OURS IN **BLACK.**



BLACK SALT: THE LAST HEROES LEFT

Fanfare is certainly in order for Blackline Comics' first major acquisition: an action-packed martial arts thriller in the *ENTER THE DRAGON* vein entitled **BLACK SALT: THE LAST HEROES LEFT**. Produced and conceived by Ratti Entertainment, Inc. of Columbus, Ohio, its founder, **Owen Ratliff**, has developed this kung fu masterpiece for the past five years, always with a multi-media strategy in mind. **BLACK SALT** first took roots as a motion picture screenplay written by Owen. By far the franchise's strongest asset, the film project's prospects have grown steadily. As of this writing, several big league Hollywood studios have expressed enough interest in the project to begin campaigning to get **BLACK SALT** made under their respective banners. Not one to rest on his laurels, Owen also has in development a children's animated television series and a video game version of **BLACK SALT**, and already has a leisure and workout apparel line for the franchise. Incidentally,



The cover to the first issue of **BLACK SALT: THE LAST HEROES LEFT**.

BLACK SALT goodies, including logo drawstring knapsacks, will be available from Ratti Entertainment representatives at this year's **San Diego Comic-Con 2009** this July 23-26.

The **BLACK SALT** creators are not only hosting an open casting call for people with martial arts and/or acting experience to audition for roles in the **BLACK SALT** film, but Ratti is also holding a contest in which a lucky winner can actually win a role in the **BLACK SALT** movie. For more information on the casting call and the movie contest, please visit the **BLACK SALT** website at www.blacksaltfilm.com.

The most recent kicker (no pun intended) is the comic book mini-series, written by **Chad Boudreau** (as adapted from Owen Ratliff's screenplay), with art by **J.C. Grande** (Image's *JOHNNY MONSTER*) and coloring by **Santosh Kumar Rath**. And best of all, Blackline gets to publish it! Keep watching this space for **BLACK SALT**'s Fall 2009 release date!

COMIC-CON 2009!!!

Blackline's first major convention appearance since its inception in December 2008 will indeed be this year's **Comic-Con International** in San Diego, California from **July 23rd**



thru **July 26th**. Comic-Con itself promises to be bigger than ever, as it happens to be their 40th anniversary. But don't be disappointed if you don't see a booth with the Blackline logo on it. We'll be hitting the convention floor running, *literally*, as we'll have several staff members passing out flyers, gathering e-mail addresses, and promoting Blackline's projects as only Blackline Comics can! Hope to see you there!

ENGINE



A battle scene from **ENGINE** by Tim Tyler.

ENGINE is one of the most unique series we've ever encountered, and not just because creator **Tim Tyler** (*FAUST*) has completed over 150 pages and counting, and doesn't intend to declare The End until he completes page 400! Judging from the art on the left, **ENGINE** seems to be a sword-and-sorcery series. But if you had guessed it was, say, a space opera or a kung fu action epic without having seen the art, you also would've been right! Bottom line: **ENGINE** is wild and must truly be seen to be believed! **ENGINE**, debuts at Blackline online this August!

MR. BRUNELLE EXPLAINS IT ALL

It is widely known that much truth is said in jest. Nobody we at Blackline know is better at looking at everyday living than **Robert Waldo Brunelle, Jr.** A middle school teacher of art, a seventh-generation resident of Vermont who can trace his roots all the way



The unsinkable **MR. BRUNELLE** as drawn by the man himself, Robert W. Brunelle, Jr.

back to the Mayflower Pilgrims, and a talented humorist, painter, cartoonist and violin player, Robert is all of these things (though he is the first to call his violins *fiddles*). Through his political cartoon strip, **MR. BRUNELLE EXPLAINS IT ALL**, Robert's wit and wisdom is a *tour de force*, putting a microscope to all things sublime and ridiculous with a touch of Americana, like *a la mode* on a slice of warm apple pie. Robert was the first artist to answer Blackline's call for creative folk, and we couldn't be happier that he's part of the Blackline family! **MR. BRUNELLE EXPLAINS IT ALL** appears at www.blacklinecomics.com, with new strips posting every Monday and Thursday!

BLACKLINE COMICS SUBMISSIONS

■ Thank you for your interest in **Blackline Comics**. We currently are developing new and exciting original comics material that will be exclusively creator-owned properties. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES** will Blackline take any copyright and/or trademark ownership or creative control from a participating creator, or any percentage thereof.

Blackline Comics does not pay upfront page rates for any accepted proposals. Blackline pays its creators after publication, and accepts a small back-end percentage from the sale of the digital comics it publishes via e-books, smart phones and PDA display and print projects, to recoup expenses.

If you are an established industry professional with a previously or currently published comic title you have ownership of, or a talented newcomer with an idea for a new series that is complete or close to completion, and are interested in Blackline Comics publishing your concept in digital formats for a vast and diverse global audience, please contact us at submissions@blacklinecomics.com.

For the complete list of Blackline's Submission Guidelines, please visit us at www.blacklinecomics.com.

HARVEST

This is just to whet your appetite: Blackline Comics is developing an imprint that will cater exclusively to uplifting, Christian-based content. We call it **PARABLE PRESS**, we will use it to feature wondrous material we promise has never been seen in comics before, including **HARVEST**, a superhero morality tale we'll spotlight here in next issue's newsletter. **HARVEST** is written by Blackline/Parable's own **Michael De Lepine**, with artwork by new comic sensation **Matias Festa** from Buenos Aires, Argentina! You'll be as amazed by his work as we are, that's for certain!

THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!

Remember those great old *Twilight Zone* episodes that preyed upon fears of an alien invasion and ultimate subjugation? Well, Blackline has got one of those too, in the form of a superb online strip entitled **THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!**, as created by artist **Seaward Tuthill**! Seaward is especially dear to us in that he is our oldest creator, turning **72 years young** in August! Seaward's craft certainly shows, because **THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!**'s plot will surely have you looking over your shoulder for a good long time! Look for the 12-week online series beginning in August on the Blackline Comics website!



Haven't you heard? **THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!**