CLOSURE

Kieler e-Journal für Comicforschung

Autumn School on Graphic Knowledge

Graphic Epistemology and the Condemned Medium in Jeff Lemire's Gideon Falls

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The world is listening.

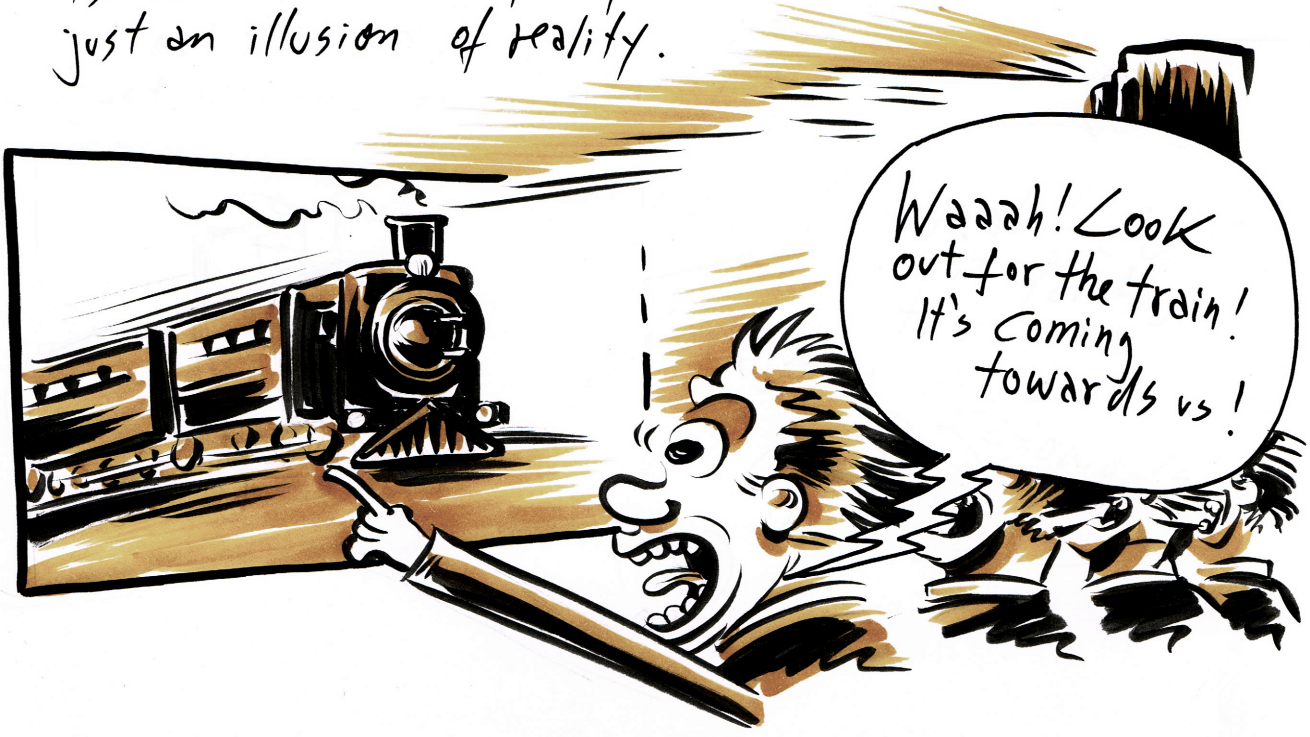
Horror-stories don't work that well in the comic-medium ... to say the least.
I bought Gideon Falls just for entertainment for a trainride, but it turned out it is totally amazing!
I became a devoted reader of Jeff Lemire's and Andrea Sorrentino's work.

I considered comic-books to be exaggerated but it turned out they work very well for story telling.
Problem: You won't find that many comic studies. Altough the medium offers so many possibilities. We need to develope that further.
So...
LET'S START!

Looks (almost) right but is false.

Comics as a false world and it's implications on a seemingly realistic narrative.

Film and photography managed to create a realistic illusion of the world. The point is: The audience is not that naive, they know that it is just an illusion of reality.



The graphicness of the comics consequently works against the filmic capacity for illusion.

The comic turns out to be rather demanding for the reader. For some it's hard to understand.

But let's get back to Gideon Falls.

The creators show that comic-books can do much more than one might think.

A lot depends on how you arrange your page! You might check out various examples in Gideon Falls.

You'll need some graphic imagination to know what this gun is doing.

Other pages are made up as splash panels. So you have a lot of details in that giant panel and you have to literally read the pictures.

The graphical basis of the medium must include it's media knowledge. The comics medium points to the relatedness of culture and imagery. You need to know how to read them and what the pictures mean.

Gideon Falls challenges the readers

I wouldn't recommend that one for starters, even if it's done brilliantly.

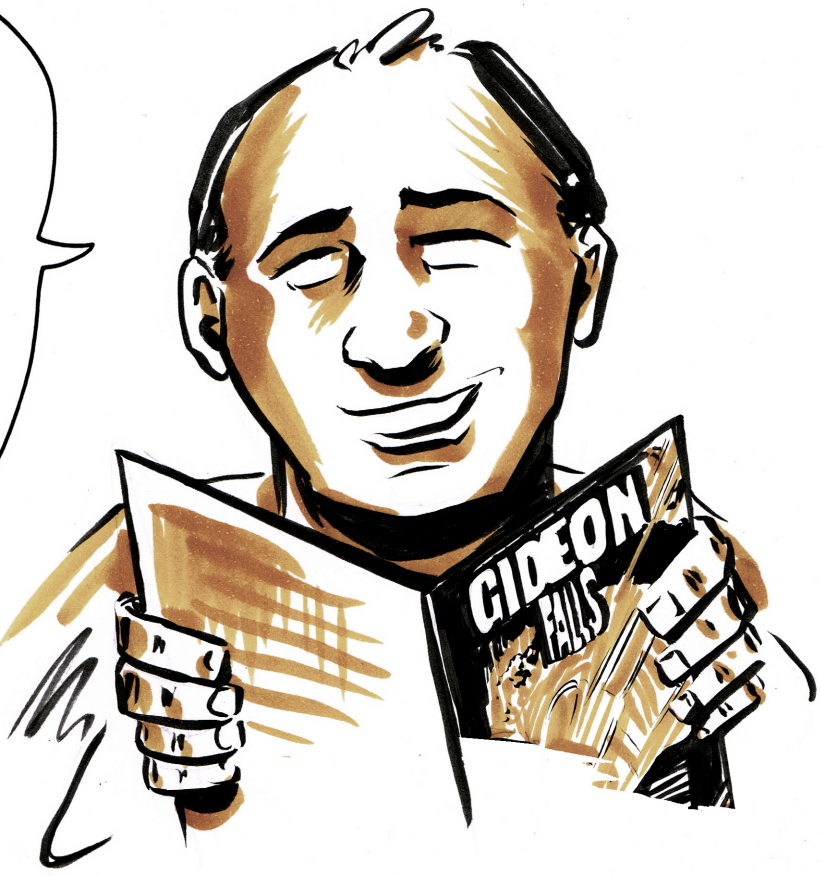
Just try something like "Blankets" by Craig Thompson.

Comics permanently refer to it's own fictitiousness for not only being an illusion, but an impossibility even as seemingly realistic depiction.

Page 112 and 113 of volume 1 of the German edition of Gideon Falls completly liquidates the classic comic grid.*

* see Gideon Falls Band 1, Splitter Verlag, 2019

There are lots of other interesting examples on how to arrange pages in quiet different ways... look it up!



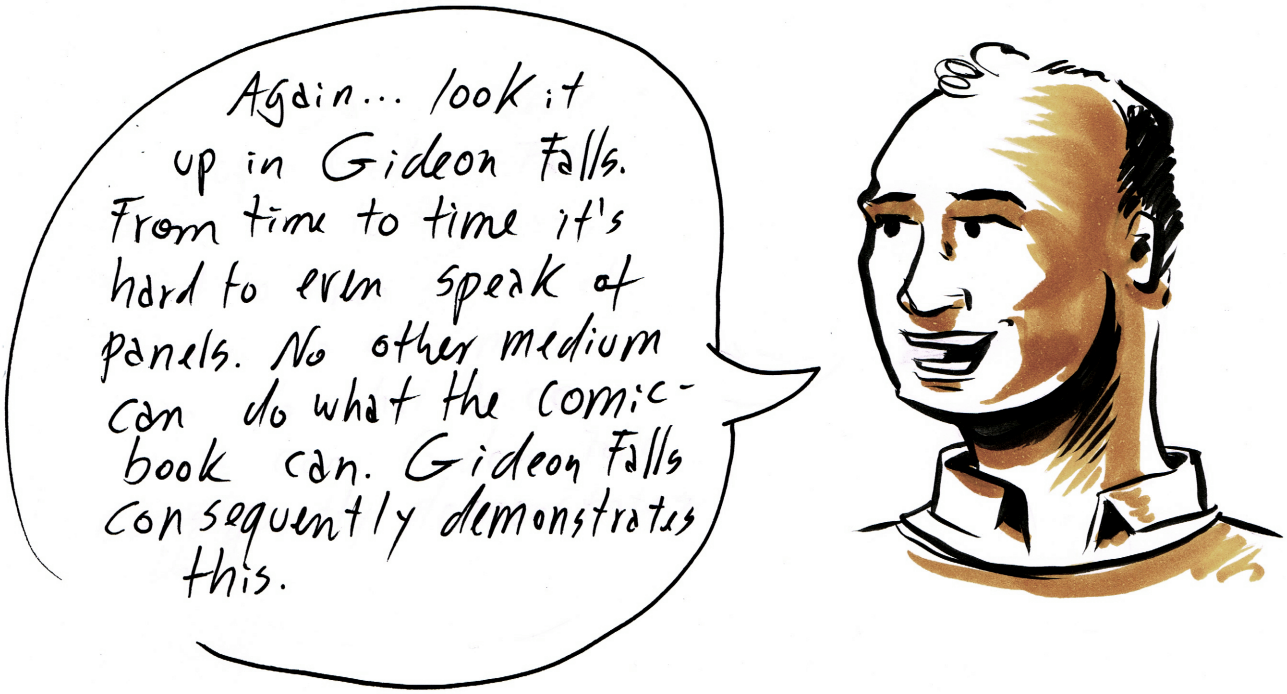
Coming to the conclusion:

The comics medium is by far not the combination of image and text, leading in inappropriate use of both of these, but elimination of contradiction between these two leading aspects of comics.

Comics consequently showcase the arbitrariness of their graphical word that emphazizes that comics can only be read by the permanent awareness of that what is about to happen is not actually happening.

Comics are absolutely aware of their impossibility of authentic representation at all.

This is a particular competence of the medium



The graphical organization of Gideon Falls seems like a lesson in the capacities and the knowledge of comics. Jeff Lemire and Andrea Sorrentino construct a false world of fictious disillusion.

That's all Folks!