
Graphic Greats—Mike Mignola

1—Bio

Mike Mignola is an American comic book artist and writer who is known for his series *Hellboy*. Born in Berkeley, California on September 16th, 1960, Mike Mignola grew up with an admitted fascination with ghosts and monsters after reading *Dracula* at the age of 13. From that point on, Mike Mignola fell in love with Victorian literature and folklore and wanted to find a way to draw monsters for a living.

Mike Mignola began his career in 1980 by illustrating for *The Comic Reader*. After graduating from the California College of the Arts with a BFA in Illustration, Mike Mignola proceeded to move to New York City to become an inker at Marvel Comics for *Daredevil*, *Power Man and Iron Fist*, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *Rocket Raccoon* in 1983 and later in 1987 worked with DC Comics. In 1994 Mike Mignola's worked with Dark Horse Comics to release *Hellboy*, his creator-owned project. With the exception of a rare few *Hellboy* stories, nearly all have been written and drawn solely by Mike Mignola.

2—Body of Work

Mike Mignola has had a fruitful career in the comic industry and has worked with Marvel, DC Comics, and Dark Horse Comics throughout his career. Mike Mignola is credited in an incredible amount of comics for his work as either an inker, artist, or writer. His most notable credits are for his own series, *Hellboy*, for which he is both the primary writer and artist. Mike's other contributions to the comic industry include, but are not limited to these notable series: *Rocket Raccoon*, *Doctor Strange*, *Doctor Doom*, *Batman*, *Wolverine*, *ZombieWorld*, *B.P.R.D.*, *Lobster Johnson*, *Abe Sapien*, *Sir Edward Grey*, *Witchfinder*, *Baltimore*, *Sledgehammer 44*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Daredevil*, *X-Men Classic*, *Zorro*, *Silver Surfer*, *Aquaman*, *Aliens versus Predator*, and *Action Comics*, *Amazing High Adventure*, *World of Krypton*, *Cosmic Odyssey*, and *The Amazing Screw-On Head and Other Curious Objects*.

While best known for his work in comics, Mike Mignola lends his artistic talents to movies and animation on occasion. Mike Mignola worked with Francis Ford Coppola on the film *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, and was the production designer on the Disney film *Atlantis: The Lost Empire*. Mike Mignola has also worked as a visual consultant with acclaimed director Guillermo del Toro on *Blade II*, *Hellboy*, and *Hellboy 2: The Golden Army*.

3—Influence On Modern Graphic Novels

Mike Mignola's greatest influence on graphic novels is both his signature art style and his *Hellboy* series. Mike Mignola's art style is notable for its use of thin lines, clunky shapes, and lots of black. Mike Mignola has a way of placing his shadows and heavy blacks in areas where they are the most impacting to emphasize contrast. Mike Mignola lists Jack Kirby as an influence to his art and storytelling and his artwork shows this influence while still remaining uniquely Mike Mignola. From 1995 to 2011, Mike Mignola has won many Eisner and Harvey awards for his artistry and writing.

Mike Mignola's influence has touched film makers and other comic artists and writers throughout his career. Alan Moore, famous for his work as a graphic novelist, has called *Hellboy* "a gem, one of considerable size and a surprising luster." Alan Moore continues his praise saying "it is in the skillful cutting and the setting of the stone that we can see Mignola's sharp contemporary sensibilities at work." Will Eisner, an American cartoonist, writer, and entrepreneur, has also recognized Mike Mignola's work, saying "Mike Mignola is a master of the kind of dynamic impressionistic art that is influencing the rhythm of modern graphic storytelling". Mike Mignola's influence can even be seen in video games. *Darkest Dungeon*, a rogue-like RPG video game released in 2016 by Red Hook Studios, is greatly influenced by Mike Mignola in both its art style and theming.