

Nightmares accompany pretty pictures in local author's new graphic novel

By Katherine Suydam
Copy Editor



Contributed by Random House

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"Habibi," set in a Middle Eastern kingdom of no certain time, with its glorious palace and sky scrapers, its slave market and modern technology, is a dark tale fraught with draught, beatings and little hope for humanity.

Craig Thompson, a local author, who was raised in a crushingly Evangelical family in rural Wisconsin, has been living in Portland now for 15 years. However, the fact that he has made our nearest culturally rich city his home is not the only reason you can find Thompson's other books at an easy reach, in the Clackamas Community College bookstore or on the shelves of the CCC library.

Also by the author, "Blankets," is an epic story of first love that is included on the required book list of some of CCC's classes and is by far seen as the reason readers have come to adore Thompson's rich artistic style and shockingly honest stories.

I'm sure that I was not the first person to walk into a bookstore and buy "Habibi" with the same anticipation of greatness. Truly, his new book has lived up to "Blankets" paisley motif that is repeated page after page in this autobiographical graphic novel.

In this menagerie of deluded

and sometimes horrific scenes, I have come to love Thompson's eye for detail. Though the story may not have captivated me beyond the halfway point I was forced to read all the way through simply for the art. Thompson, once again, has created a graphic novel that even the strictest of pallets may enjoy. He has weaved beautiful calligraphy and Eastern illustrations throughout the entire story, something my art starved eyes forced my story weary brain to turn pages and continue enjoying.

It's easy to say that "Habibi" is a dark story; it's harder to get anyone who has not picked up the book to understand that this is more than just the darker, older sister to "Blankets."

The two main characters are forced into such terrible situations that you begin to think that Thompson is truly a sadist. Dodola, an Arab girl, is sold by her parents to become the wife of a scribe. Her husband tells her stories and teaches her to write. I've never read a more desperate main character, forced from one sticky situation to the next, including adopting a dark skinned slave boy as her son, brother and life partner.

Zam, as he is called amongst other names, feels dirty when he reaches puberty, reminiscent of Thompson himself in "Blankets." It seems that

Thompson is repeating all of his youthful feelings on this ill-fated character, who is forced to bare a terrible self-loathing and a search to be one with God.

"Habibi" is an exquisite story if you are only looking at the pictures. The time it has taken Thompson to produce this book is obvious in the gorgeous drawings in the book. The fight scenes are by far the most interesting and super human I've seen in a graphic novel that doesn't have anything to do with super heroes.

Along with mesmerizing calligraphy, Thompson has woven stories from the Qur'an into his novel. It is clear that Thompson is trying to force the reader to understand the similarities between Christianity and Islam. It's as if Thompson has taken all of his opinions on religion and humanity and spit it onto the page yelling, "Look at what I think!" However, though I do tend to agree with his opinions, I am faintly offended that he seems to not think his readers can come to those opinions on their own.

Thompson's "Habibi" is at times disgusting, depressing and beautiful. The art is wonderful. I would say that anyone who enjoyed "Blankets" should definitely pick up a copy, just expect some nightmares to come along with the pretty pictures.

The Bucket List: Goody-two-shoes gone wild

By Mandie Gavitt
Arts & Culture Editor



I'm 20 and I've never snuck into a movie. I'm one of those horrible goody-two-shoes that just does not do that kind of thing. So, that's why I've just recently crossed off number two on my bucket list: sneak into a movie.

Blind dates are often some of the most awkward experiences you can ever partake of in your life. Whether you are set up by mutual friends, the Internet or some other random force of nature, there is always the anticipation of whether or not there will be an attraction between the two of you — and let's face it there is nothing more awkward than sitting through a date when you know there is no way you can be attracted to the other person — or if you'll have enough to talk about — nothing worse than just awkwardly staring at your food for an hour.

However, every now and then you find a date to be well worth all the extra time and effort that you put into your hair and makeup. This is the story of one of those dates.

After a lovely dinner with Guy X, as my date will hereafter be referred to as, he asked if I would like to see a movie, so we walked to a nearby cinema.

It turned out the movie we had planned on seeing wasn't playing there so Guy X decided to buy us movie tickets to a random movie we hadn't even heard of. Then he took me on a crazy adventure in which we watched five minutes of every movie playing in the theater. He explained, "It's how I get through all the crappy movies of the summer. So we slipped into one movie then ducked out into another while attempting to dodge the movie theater employees."

I was incredibly paranoid, I do not have any idea what they do when you get kicked out of a movie theater: Do you get arrested? Do they give you a ticket? Does your picture get posted on the wall of shame saying you're banned from the theater for the rest of your life? We didn't need to worry. The one employee that did notice us thought it was funny and didn't seem to care about the guilty look on my face. After every movie we asked each other what we thought of the movie we had watched so much of.

"How did they get everyone to have the exact same mustaches?"

At one point we watched maybe five minutes of some "inspirational" chick-flick that just about killed us and we were oh-so-moved by the roll-

ing credits of "The Help."

Even with all our previewing we still made it to the movie he had paid for on time, "The Future," and ended up watching and enjoying the whole thing. While I do not condone making a habit of sneaking into movies on a regular basis, I do recommend putting this item on your bucket list. It ended up being a marvelous first date and a great opportunity for me to let my goody-two-shoes self, relax a little bit and to try something a little bit more on the rebellious side, while getting through all of summer's movies in one night.

And in case you're wondering: there was a second date.



TWEAKS OF THE WEEK

Things to do if college life is tweaking you out:

Holocaust Survivor

Speaks on Campus: Holocaust survivor Alter Wiener will speak at CCC on Thursday, Oct. 27, from noon to 2 p.m. in the McLoughlin Auditorium. He is the author of "64735 - From A Name to A Number, a Holocaust Survivor's Autobiography." No cost to attend. Open to public.

Flag Football Fridays

Flag football Fridays, a beloved tradition at Clackamas Community College, is available now for all to enjoy. This intramural sport meets every Friday from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Hwy 213 soccer field.

Halloween Fantasy

Trail: Take a haunting walk through a lighted, wooded, fantasy trail decorated with spooky sights and sounds at Wenzel Farm until Oct. 30, 19754 S Ridge Rd Oregon City; noon to 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Does your band have a gig or are you involved in an event you would like CCC students to be in the know about? Send your event info to "Tweaks of the week" at aced@clackamas.edu.

NASA Employee To

Speak on Campus: Former Clackamas student will be on campus to discuss his NASA career on Tuesday Oct. 25 at 3:30 p.m. in Pauling 102.

Breast Cancer

Awareness Barbeque A barbeque will be held on Thursday, Oct. 27 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. outside of the ASG office.

Fall Term Blood

Drive: A blood drive will be held on Oct. 24 and 25. Students may sign up now in the ASG office CC152.

Halloween Costume

Contest: A Halloween costume contest will be held Oct. 23 through 25. Students can come into the ASG office in their costume to have their pictures taken for other students to judge.