



# SuperMutant Magic Academy

By Jillian Tamaki

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**Unrequited love, underage drinking, and teen angst rule at a high school for mutants and witches**

The *New York Times* and *New Yorker* illustrator Jillian Tamaki is best known for co-creating the award-winning young adult graphic novels *Skim* and *This One Summer*?moody and atmospheric bestsellers. *SuperMutant Magic Academy*, which she has been serializing online for the past four years, paints a teenaged world filled with just as much ennui and uncertainty, but also with a sharp dose of humor and irreverence. Tamaki deftly plays superhero and high-school Hollywood tropes against what adolescence is really like: The SuperMutant Magic Academy is a prep school for mutants and witches, but their paranormal abilities take a backseat to everyday teen concerns.

Science experiments go awry, bake sales are upstaged, and the new kid at school is a cat who will determine the course of human destiny. In one strip, lizard-headed Trixie frets about her nonexistent modeling career; in another, the immortal Everlasting Boy tries to escape this mortal coil to no avail. Throughout it all, closeted Marsha obsesses about her unrequited crush, the cat-eared Wendy. Whether the magic is mundane or miraculous, Tamaki's jokes are precise and devastating.

*SuperMutant Magic Academy* has won two Ignatz Awards. This volume combines the most popular content from the webcomic with a selection of all-new, never-before-seen strips that conclude Tamaki's account of life at the academy.

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## SuperMutant Magic Academy By Jillian Tamaki Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 9 Up—This quirky solo work from Caldecott- and Printz-winning graphic novelist Tamaki collects strips from her long-running webcomic about a school for mutants and witches into one mostly cohesive anthology. Riffing off popular phenomena, such as Harry Potter and the X-Men, this title sets teen angst-y situations in a world populated with cat-eared prom queens, the Everlasting Boy, and superpowered jocks. Most of the strips are a page-long, with the exception of the never-before-seen 40-page story arc that concludes the series. While at times these snippets may confuse readers because of their brevity and often weighty existential themes, these snapshots often center on the same cast of characters, each of whom teens get to know more deeply by the book's end. The mostly black-and-white art is divided in a range of single, full-page to six panels, and rare bursts of color are deftly used to moving effect. Marsha, the misanthropic witch with a crush on her female best friend; Frances, the boundary-pushing artist; and Cheddar, the athlete trying to find the meaning of life, among others, stand out as the more fully developed protagonists, but readers will find bits of themselves in many of the realistic characters. Poking fun at the "Chosen One" mythos, Tamaki has created a stellar graphic novel that combines her slice-of-life expertise and clean, uncluttered art style. VERDICT A must-have volume reminiscent of Alan Moore's *Watchmen* (DC Comics, 1987) and her and Mariko Tamaki's *This One Summer* (First Second, 2014) in sensibility and Raina Telgemeier's works in appearance.—Shelley Diaz, School Library Journal

## Review

"Tamaki's sense of comedy and pacing owes a lot to Charles Schulz's "Peanuts," although her subject matter is decidedly less innocent. And she delights in breaking her own rules: Her artwork is black-and-white except when she throws in impish splashes of color, drawn with broad, rough brush strokes except when it's composed of felt-tip scribbles or shimmering digital gray." *?New York Times*

"*SuperMutant Magic Academy*... exudes an irresistible wit." *?The Guardian*

"This collection is a great read for comic fans and genre newbies alike." *?Bust Magazine*

"[*SuperMutant Magic Academy*] is smart, thoughtful, and too hilarious to gobble down in just one sitting." *?Bitch Magazine*

"When it comes down to it, this is one of the best books... of any kind to come out in a long time." *?Autostraddle*

"The humor [in *SuperMutant Magic Academy*] is sometimes slapstick, but more often it offers ultra-dry observations on modern disengagement. Tamaki is playful and loose with her art, unafraid to be experimental as she draws us into a world where true feelings are the greatest danger." *?Publishers Weekly Starred Review*

"Though Tamaki's black and white panels shift from detailed and realistic to dreamy and atmospheric and back again, she consistently and expertly captures subtle emotion and subtext with only a few strokes of the pen. [*SuperMutant Magic Academy* is] simultaneously heartbreaking and hilarious." *?Booklist Starred Review*

"*SuperMutant Magic Academy* will reassure teenagers that high school is a weird place, even for humans,

and will remind adults that it is an experience we never really outgrow.” ?*Winnipeg Free Press*

#### About the Author

**Jillian Tamaki** is a Canadian illustrator and cartoonist living in Brooklyn, New York. Her illustrations have won gold medals from the Society of Illustrators and the Society of Publication Designers. Tamaki is the co-creator of the graphic novel *Skim*, which was listed as a *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book of 2008 and was nominated for four Eisner Awards and a Governor General's Literary Award. *This One Summer*, her second co-authored work with Mariko Tamaki, was published in mid-2014 and spent more than a month on the *New York Times* bestseller list. Her two books of personal work are *Gilded Lilies* and *Indoor Voice*.

#### Users Review

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