



## All-Star Western, Volume 1: Guns and Gotham

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Even when Gotham City was just a one-horse town, crime was rampant--and things only get worse when bounty hunter Jonah Hex comes to town. Amadeus Arkham, a pioneer in criminal psychology, enlists Hex's special brand of justice to help the Gotham Police Department track down a vicious serial killer!

**Collecting:** *All-Star Western* 1-6

## All-Star Western, Volume 1: Guns and Gotham Details

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Author : Justin Gray (Writer) , Jimmy Palmiotti , Moritat (Illustrator) , Phil Winslade (Illustrator) , Jordi Bernet (Illustrator)

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# From Reader Review All-Star Western, Volume 1: Guns and Gotham for online ebook

## Evan Leach says

All Star Western features Jonah Hex, an anti-hero so grizzled that Hollywood executives decided they had no choice but to cast Megan Fox by his side when producing the movie edition:

Alas, this book does not feature the talented Ms. Fox. Instead, Jonah spends the six issues in this collection running around 19th century Gotham City. In the first half, the hardworking whores of Gotham are being targeted by a serial killer, and the inept Gotham police department isn't able to solve the problem (I guess some things never change). Jonah is forced to team up with Amadeus Arkham to go after the ringleaders, the 'Brotherhood of Cain.' In the second half, Jonah and Arkham go looking for some missing children that have disappeared off Gotham's streets. This story is not as strong as the first half, but does take Jonah to the Batcave, for what that's worth. There are also two B-stories told in this volume, one featuring 'El Diablo' and the other 'the Barbary Ghost.' Both are completely independent from the other action, and neither are particularly memorable (the El Diablo story is pretty damn lame).

This was my first time reading a Jonah Hex story, and he did not disappoint as a main character. Jonah is a mean, hard-drinking man of few words, cursed with an ugly mug and an itchy trigger finger. Amadeus Arkham provides a nice foil as Jonah's bumbling academic sidekick. But the two stories here just aren't all that interesting. Neither is terrible, but both use violence as a substitute for a compelling plot. Now, that's not to say that anybody wants to read a Jonah Hex story where he goes around hugging it out with all his enemies. He's a cowboy with half a face and two big-ass guns – somebody's getting blown away. But at times that seemed to be all this volume was – Jonah grunting and growling from scene to scene where he could pump lead into someone. There are no important supporting characters (other than Arkham) that he gives a damn about, and he doesn't seem to have any interests other than drinking and shooting people. That started to get a little old for me about 1/3 of my way through this collection. The B-stories did next to nothing for me; the Barbary Ghost one was tolerable, while the El Diablo tale was very weak. The artwork throughout this collection is solid, but not enough to lift some uninspired storytelling all by itself.

That said, this wasn't a terrible read and I liked Jonah Hex enough as a main character that I'll consider returning in the future to see if they give him something more interesting to do. At the end of this volume, Hex heads south to 19th century New Orleans, which could be a better setting for an ol' cowpoke like Hex in volume 2. **2.5 stars.**

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## Mohammed Abdi Osman says

The old Jonah Hex series that just ended before this was great, gritty western series. One of the most acclaimed series on the US comics market. I enjoyed it because it was the only great western out there.

This series is not badly written or bad art but it has completely sold out its western genre, fans who enjoyed Jonah Hex. The title lies the stories are more supernatural Gotham stories i read 8 issues and they were all set in Gotham, about Batman villains, sects. About Dr. Arkham and recent issue is involved contemporary

Batman comics event.

Sure sellout to Batman comics to get more Batman fans reading and not caring for western fans like me is one thing but the creators i respected lied in interviews saying it would be the same series. There is no western set in Gotham city every issue.....

Shame they couldnt leave one series to survive only its quality and not only care for quantity. There are many other titles to connect to Batman world.

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### **Stewart Tame says**

Not bad. At first I wondered what Jonah Hex would be doing in Gotham City, but they came up with a plausible reason. The backup stories weren't bad, though the El Diablo one was kind of meh. I wish I were more familiar with DC's western heroes because I honestly have no clue who that guy at the end of the Hex story is. All will be made clear in volume 2, I'm sure.

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### **Jesse A says**

Not bad but no where close to the pre 52 Jonah Hex run. Interesting enough to keep going.

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### **Joseph says**

one of the best of the New 52. top of my pile every month.

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### **Chris Lemmerman says**

An interesting and varied addition to the New 52, though the fact that the main protagonist is little more than a grumpy gunslinger kind of hurts it. If not for Dr. Arkham, I don't think this would have been quite as good. The back-up stories are also great, considering how short they are, and I'd like to see both characters appear in the main series at some point too.

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### **Mike says**

After catching P/G's fun run on Power Girl, I figured these guys would have a fun take on the old Jonah Hex & company mythology. Not. Even. Close.

Why did they decide to suck out all the fun by narrating this story with a psychological discourse on the inner workings of a cypher like Jonah Hex? Talk about bashing in the skull of a great universe - turning it into a lecture or treatise, deconstructing Jonah. Bo-ring. Aaron did a great thing with Bullseye trying to get into Frank Castle's head in that amazing Punisher MAX run. These guys make me feel like I'm sitting in a

shitty psych lecture.

What makes this so tiresome is the old "show don't tell" principle - the damned 'doctor' (a fucking wet sock and intellectual arsehole if I ever met one) just won't shut UP about how much Hex does violence, and why that shocks him so. Jaysus jumping legbone guys, you're mashing any shock value into a pulp. Put down the fucking pen guys, and give the artist a sliver of room to breathe.

It's like someone had never seen a protagonist beating up goons to get info out of them, and wanted to protect our delicate sensibilities from the horrors of fisticuffs. Go read a Spider-Man or Daredevil comic for the sake of all that's bloody.

And setting the story in Gotham? Of all the places in the US to pick, isn't it getting a \*little\* tiresome to keep dragging this place out, as if it's the only cesspool of human degradation and corruption? Deifying Gotham just makes it that much \*less\* impressive every time. Wouldn't it be interesting to hear about some nowhere place for once? Or drag in Star City and show where it came from? Anything but another "this town is the worst I've ever seen" old saw.

FFS, this book officially jumped the shark when they brought out a giant man-sized bat. Is there any specific reference to modern Bat-verse these tools \*won't\* try to shove up our drug-smuggling orifices? Killing the damned thing (which was presented as a horrifying cliffhanger not two pages before) so easily was especially boner-killing (as if this book didn't smear grandma-boob-level excitement killers all over my imagination already.)

Some good art in this book, but filled with boring action and stiff acting.

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## **Fizzgig76 says**

Reprints All-Star Western (3) #1-6 (November 2011-April 2012). Jonah Hex is a bounty hunter and just rolled into Gotham City. Matching wits with a serial killer, Jonah and his unlikely ally Amadeus Arkham find themselves in more trouble than expected. A trip to the underground in search of stolen children also leads to a confrontation with the legendary Miagani and a demon of immense size. Also El Diablo confronts a town overrun by the undead and a girl known as the Barbary Ghost sets out to avenge the murder of her family.

Written by Justin Gray and Jimmy Palmiotti, All-Star Western 1: Guns and Gotham was part of the New 52 relaunch of the DC Universe and features a more incorporated Jonah Hex with the DC Universe plus featured back-up stories in issues All-Star Western #2-3 (El Diablo) and All-Star Western #4-6 (The Barbary Ghost).

I like All-Star Western. I have a soft spot for both the DCU and the Marvel Universe's Western characters since I find it rather interesting that they exist in the world of superheroes as the first superheroes of the universe. In the New 52, the stories are much more incorporated and contain many more aspects of the present day stories since the Jonah Hex story is set in Gotham City.

The Jonah Hex stories essentially are two mystery/suspense Westerns. The Jonah and Arkham combo is kind of fun and almost equals a Holmes and Watson...with a mostly violent Holmes. The quest to find the serial killer leads to a fun showdown and a secret society like a Western Illuminati with appearances by ancestors

of some of Gotham's upper crust. The second story of kidnapped children leads to Gotham's underground and an encounter with the Miagani which played a prominent role in *Batman: The Return of Bruce Wayne*. It also features Bruce Wayne's ancestors Alan and Catherine Wayne and an early visit to the Batcave. Plus, the story sets up the next storyline with a cameo by Cinnamon and Nighthawk (and hints to the Night of the Owls).

Other than All-Star Western #1, each issue features a back-up story. The El Diablo story is a bit undercooked and could have used more development. All-Star Western #4 (February 2012) is the first appearance of the Barbary Ghost, and I hope that she has a future and possible feature stories in upcoming issues. The character shows a lot of promise and is rather interesting.

All-Star Western 1: Guns and Gotham isn't going to be everyone's thing since Westerns are a bit of a niche culture, but with more incorporations to the DCU, I hope this series will survive. *Jonah Hex* the movie didn't help this series, but hopefully people will overlook that and take a trip to the Wild West (or Wild East in this case). All-Star Western 1: Guns and Gotham is followed by All-Star Western 2: The War of Lords and Owls.

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### **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

This was a good read. *Jonah Hex* is a hero whose demeanor is as disreputable as his appearance. He's not afraid to get his hands dirty, and probably enjoys violence too much. But he's not an amoral killer either. He makes his way to Gotham, and that place is definitely in need of a tough hero like him. Set in the late 1800s, more than a 100 years before Bruce Wayne is born, but Gotham is already a cesspool of corruption in the making. There is already a secret society who really runs things, and they are committing murders to send a message. Jonah teams up with the future founder of the Arkham Asylum, a psychologist who cannot help analyzing him, and there's a lot to analyze. He eventually comes to respect Hex for his methods, because there is no better man to have at your side or cutting a swathe of destruction in front of you to clear the way.

I'm not sure how much Bruce Wayne would respect or get along with Hex. Probably a certain level of respect, but I'm sure Batman wouldn't be as fond of all the killing that Hex does as a matter of course.

Other stories featured different western heroes like El Diablo and the Barbary Ghost. I liked the Barbary Ghost because she is a kickbutt Chinese woman who takes on the crime syndicate who wiped out most of her family. How could I not like her?

This graphic novel is fans of good, old-fashioned western action. The supernatural elements are light here, but that's okay. There's plenty of action to keep this reader happy.

I already picked up the next volume.

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### **Sam Quixote says**

Gotham, 1880s, and *Jonah Hex* rocks up to the burgeoning city with his eye on a bounty for a trio of bank robbers but gets more than he bargained for when he becomes embroiled in a plot involving Gotham's richest and most powerful and a series of grisly murders.

I was hoping for a more inspired take on the western genre but unfortunately all the stories here are pretty standard hero + sidekick vs. the baddies templates. Joining Hex is Amadeus Arkham, a prominent psychologist yet to establish the infamously easy to break out of prison for the criminally insane Arkham Asylum, and whose presence allows he and Hex to banter while fending off goons.

The second Hex/Arkham adventure is basically a “Temple of Doom” rip-off and, like the first story, is predictable in the way both manage to overcome impossible odds, etc etc. The book rounds out with 2 very dull shorts, one about some guy called El Diablo and some zombies, and the other featured a woman called Barbary Ghost.

The art by Moritat is pretty bad. If you’ve read the Wonder Woman New 52, it’s like that artwork but scratchier. It does have its moments, for some reason his women characters’ faces are very clear but the rest all look too roughly drawn like a storyboard.

I was hoping “All Star Western” was going to be a guns-blazing, inspired action-fest but it’s a collection of weak pseudo-detective stories and brief appearances by forgettable characters. A disappointing addition to the New 52.

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## **Anne says**

### **Jonah Hex aka The Sexiest Man Alive.**

Well, I didn't hate it.

And I really thought I would, because Westerns are soooo *not* my thing.

*I don't wish I could travel back in time and be a gunslinger in the Old West.*

*I don't fantasize about riding a dusty unwashed cowboy into the sunset.*

*And I don't want to go have a drink in some establishment called **Saloon**.*

*Hell, I don't even like horses! They're expensive, time consuming, and every time you turn around those fragile bastards are sick or hurt.*

I see a lot of my friends weren't too enamoured with this one, but I think they'd been reading the previous run of Jonah Hex, and just didn't like the direction this one had taken.

*Me?*

I'm a Jonah Hex virgin.

Ok, that's not entirely true, but I've only been to (at best) second base with this guy. There was an All Star Western issue in one of the volumes of Batman, that had something to do with a Court of Owls crossover. It made little sense to me at the time, and I dismissed it as yet another New 52 fuck-up.

Alrighty, I'm going to admit something...and you're going to promise not to laugh.

I thought Jonah Hex was some sort of gun-slinging wizard.

I mean, **Hex**, right?

But it turns out he's just really good at tracking down bad guys, and then shooting them in the head.

So. No magic.

He's kind of like Batman. You know, except he doesn't have any prejudice against guns, and he's horribly

disfigured.

Though there *was* a surprising amount of supernatural stuff in this considering the poor bastard can't cast a spell.

If the cover didn't give it away, this is set in Gotham. And Hex ends up getting partnered up with Amadeus Arkham, who's the town's resident psychological profiler...of sorts.

There are quite a few foreshadowing links to the Court of Owls stuff while these two try to catch a serial killer...and then try to break up a child slavery ring.

The last two issues in the volume introduce El Diablo and the Barbary Ghost.

El Diablo is some sort of Shaman guy that got cursed, and now has a demon living inside him. And the Barbary Ghost is a chick who uses her ninja skills and fireworks to avenge her family.

All in all, it wasn't bad. In fact, I liked it enough to request the second volume from my library.

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### **Charles says**

I bought this because I like the Jonah Hex character, but this collection was a tie-in work bringing Hex to a western age Gotham City. There were various setups to connect this story with the future Batman tales and I didn't think they worked all that well. The writing and art are fine but I didn't find the story lines very compelling. I normally finish graphic novels in a day but this one took me a while just because I wasn't that interested in it. Others might feel differently.

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### **Nicola Mansfield says**

I've been looking forward to this one, and it didn't disappoint. I'm a fan of westerns and love them in any format. This is kind of an anthology of stories all taking place in the 1880s in western America. The first and longest story features Jonah Hex who takes up two different cases in Gotham City with Dr. Amadeus Arkham as his sidekick. Next up is El Diablo helping out a town under an Indian curse and finally, we meet The Barbary Ghost and her mission of vengeance against the man who killed almost her entire family. Of course, I enjoyed the stories taking place in Gotham the best which had famous last names popping up: Arkham, Wayne, and Cobblepot. The others were good too, though.

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### **Cale says**

Justin Gray and Jimmy Palmiotti really know what they're doing when it comes to Jonah Hex. They've been the writers behind his best adventures for years if not decades now, and even the New 52 can't knock them off track.

Set in 19th century Gotham, Hex ends up on two adventures with unlikely sidekick Amadeus Arkham, the founder of the asylum (still in the future). The odd couple team-up works really well, as Arkham spends half of his time psychoanalyzing Hex's behavior, and the other half shrinking away while Hex solves the cases.



Hex is fascinating in the hands of Gray and Palmiotti - he's an antihero, doing the right thing the wrong way, and not caring how many he kills on his way. There's a scene where he attends an upscale party in the north in full confederate regalia that works really well.

Actually, the entire book works really well. The pair are fun to watch together, the stories are interesting (although a turn in the middle of the second story seems a little strange), and the staging in Gotham allows for a goodly number of callouts to Batman's mythology, and even sets up pieces for the Court of Owls storyline. This is definitely on the high side of the New 52's creations.

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## **Chad says**

Jonah Hex comes to Gotham and teams up with the founder of Arkham Asylum to track down the Gotham Butcher. Lots of little tie-ins here with the Court of Owls and the Religion of Crime. Then Hex and Arkham go after a missing child in a story ripped out of Temple of Doom. I like Moritat's moody art for a Western. The backup stories of El Diablo and Barbary Ghost were subpar.

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