



Sledgehammer 44

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A man in a suit of iron drops from an American warplane onto a French battlefield and unleashes a powerful cosmic force on an army of Nazis, their massive war machine, and their most dangerous agent, the deadly Black Flame! Collects Sledgehammer 44 #1–#2 and Lightning War #1–#3.

Sledgehammer 44 Details

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Author : Mike Mignola , John Arcudi , Jason Latour (Illustrator) , Laurence Campbell (Illustrator)

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Download and Read Free Online Sledgehammer 44 Mike Mignola , John Arcudi , Jason Latour (Illustrator) , Laurence Campbell (Illustrator)

From Reader Review Sledgehammer 44 for online ebook

Matthew Brady says

Yep, it's another pretty good entry in the Hellboy/BPRD-verse, about that Vril-powered suit of armor that Johann has ended up controlling in the present day. Here, we see it in action in WWII, with a cool story about fightin' Nazi robots and soldierly sacrifice, and then another one where it fights that era's version of the Black Flame. I think I like the first one better, partly due to the art by Jason Latour and partly because it's simpler in scale. The second one is a little bit too superhero-y for this universe, with the combatants flying and blasting each other until one of them wins. Also, I'm not really into Lawrence Campbell's art, which can have an interesting hard edge to it sometimes, but is a little too photorealistic for my tastes. BPRD art is best when it's slightly cartoony, which somehow manages to emphasize the horror that often occurs. Anyway, this is still a good book, and even if it's not essential to read it (the basics of what happens get covered in the main BPRD series), it's still worth checking out.

James says

"Sledgehammer 44" read like "Iron Man Hellboy fights Nazis in World War II," with all the benefits and detriments that entails. Our story starts with a squad of grunts backing up a new secret weapon on its first deployment in occupied Paris. Things don't go quite according to plan, though, and one of the soldiers in the squad ends up inhabiting the mystically powered suit, a turn of events that lets him save his buddies but may end up costing him his soul.

This opening sequence has nice action, characters and dialogue, even if it's familiar to anyone who's read a few old Sergeant Rock comics. What follows is a little different. Before our protagonist can get down to the business of slugging saboteurs, he has to come to terms with his transformation, which has left him marooned from humanity.

It's an interesting choice...but it's also a bit inert, as we spin our wheels a bit before the hero can be prodded into action. The approach slows down the story--and also calls for a literal, over-the-top baring of scars to get the conflict started again.

From there, we're in familiar Hellboy territory, with average-joe heroics and lots of punching. There are spies everywhere, which seems implausible, and the fisticuffs themselves lack dramatic tension, as Sledgehammer always seems to have an extra reserves to draw on when things get tough. (I have the same problem with the Hellboy series as well.)

It's fun to see World War II reflected in the Mignola-verse, but a similar time period was explored to much greater effect in the B.P.R.D. 1946 and 1947 storylines. I'd check those out first and only come back to this if you're fully hooked.

Orrin Grey says

The concept of this one is neat, but feels a little... underdeveloped, maybe? And I'm still not sold on the art of

either Jason Latour or Laurence Campbell. Not because there's anything wrong with their art--both are good--but because they just don't seem to fit into the Mignolaverse as well as some of the other artists, at least to my eye. That said, this is a fun piece of WWII comics action, the Sledgehammer character (originally in the first Lobster Johnson book) looks great, and I really liked the writing on the Black Flame's dialogue (monologue?).

Col says

One of the better Hellboy spinoffs in that has its own independent story to tell. It isn't a mindblowing story or anything, but it's functional. An experimental mechsuit is deployed against the nazis in WWII, but its wielder is killed quickly, only for the soul of another soldier to become trapped inside. The art is a mixed bag, in that the first half has an excellent slightly cartoony style, and the second half is drawn by Laurence Campbell. Has some connections to Lobster Johnson and B.P.R.D., but it works quite well as an independent story.

Simon Chadwick says

From Mike Mignola's Hellboy universe comes this second world war tale of a powerful iron battle suit, The Sledgehammer, deployed into France in 1944. Supported by US Soldiers, the aim of the suit, and the man inside, is to test the suit's capabilities whilst confronting a group of bedded-in Nazis. Although the suit performs well, it encounters some strong, and unusual, resistance that overpowers it and it's only the determination of the few surviving soldiers that get him carried out of there, now little more than a dead weight. They meet more Nazis on the road, keen to take the powerful suit for themselves, which sees a heroic action by the retreating US group but a chest wound for perhaps the meekest member of the group, Redding, after he displays some outstanding courage. They end up hiding in a barn, surrounded by German troops, heavily outnumbered, and facing certain defeat.

Redding is now dying, and receives a vision of what will happen to his comrades in the coming hours, but he also learns a little more about the occupant of the suit, what powers it, and how he can help. He leaves his body and takes possession of the suit, bringing it back to fighting strength and enabling it to confront the menace outside the barn.

But it's not just the Allies that have a secret weapon weighted very much towards the paranormal. The Germans have the Black Flame, and now the two creatures are set to clash when The Sledgehammer is sent to retrieve a stolen experimental plane and its pilot.

This is billed as Horror, but of all the Mignola books this reads more like a straight superhero comic than anything else he's done. Horror elements are present, but the strong and somewhat obvious parallels between Iron Man and Captain America can't help but steer your preconceptions. It's not a bad tale, but personally I felt the artwork prevented us from getting to know the characters in any depth which kept the unfolding events at a distance. I would have liked to have got to know Redding a little more and for there to have been time to make the Black Flame a little less two-dimensional. If you like Mignola's other work you'll no doubt enjoy it, but perhaps not as much as the likes of BPRD and Hellboy.

Cale says

This collects two related stories about a World War II 'man in iron suit' fighting on the front lines of Germany. The first story, which introduces the character of Sledgehammer 44, seemed much stronger to me, with its immediate action and delayed pathos, and its ultimate resolution being fairly touching. The second story, Lightning War, doesn't quite reach the emotional depth of the first, with Sledgehammer 44 being sent behind the front lines to rescue a soldier and experimental aircraft. There's some philosophy in the early sections, but by the time the action really starts, it seems to fall to the wayside. And the villain isn't memorable at all. I also like the art of the first story better; although both use a lot of muted or dark colors, the angular forms of the first story seem more in keeping with the story than the more realistic work on the second.

This isn't up to the better Hellboy or BPRD volumes; it's not even up there with Witchfinder or Lobster Johnson. But it is an interesting aside into that universe that works on its own fairly well and is entertaining if not much more.

Timothy Boyd says

Nice spin off mini series in the Hellboy universe. Good WWII tale of the early days of the B.P.R.D. Nice art made this an enjoyable read. Recommended

Marc Pastor says

Quan creia que l'univers Hellboy començava a donar símptomes d'esgotament, apareix aquesta delícia ambientada en plena Segona Guerra Mundial amb infanteria, aviació, agents dobles, mad doctors i lluitadors de sumo que piloten avions ultrasecrets.

Brillantíssim, a nivell de guió i d'il·lustració.
Una col·lecció a seguir de prop.

Chad says

Spins out of Lobster Johnson: Iron Prometheus. The first 2 issue miniseries feels underdeveloped and Jason Latour's art is not very good. The main character looks like Jughead from Archie. The second miniseries is a better as we get an appearance from the Black Flame.

Wing Kee says

Latour Campbell

Wow this shit be good!

I knew nothing about Sledgehammer 44 going in, all I knew it was Mignola and Arcudi and that it somewhat

ties into the Mignolaverse and the Vril storyline from Lobster Johnson. What I found was amazing! Absolutely bloody brilliant!

World: World War II, Nazis, Occult Hitler, Vril and Black Flame what else do you want to make it awesome, oh the art, let's talk about the fanfuckingtastic art. There are actually 2 mini arcs here and both artist here are amazing, they are both subtly different but in line with in asthetics for the series. I will say that Campbell's Black Flame is amazing and his framing quite evocative. The world building in terms of writing here is very rich and deep, this is fertile ground as it is before the BPRD and HB. A lot of story has not been told about the formation of the bureau but more importantly Professor Broom. Strong stuff!

Story: Two small tales here but very well done and pulls at our emotions. Redding is a wonderful character and one which the reader can immediately relate to (I'll get back to him below). Though this is a fantastical tale taking place during the War with larger than life characters, the emotional core of the tale is strong. Kudos to Mignola and Arcudi in pulling from the Mignolaverse for background and story making this story richer and more meaningful if you are a fan of the world. A wonderfully poetic ending that opens the door for more story, I can't wait for more.

Characters: Strong strong strong. At the core is Redding and he's a wonderful character to dive into the world with, Black Flame is a force of nature but with Campbell's art and Mignola and Arcudi's dialog he is amazing. The rest of the cast serve the story and feel right in the world. The characters are not deep as the arcs are short, but they, especially Redding make their stay memorable.

A wonderful addition to the Mignolaverse, in one trade Sledgehammer has left a mark for me and now I just want more please!

Onward to the next book!

Sam Quixote says

A powerful new Allied weapon enters the closing stages of World War 2: Sledgehammer 44, a robot imbued with supernatural Vril power. But during a mission to retrieve a prisoner and experimental plane, Sledgehammer 44 comes up against a formidable Nazi figure: the Black Flame!

Though Sledgehammer 44 turns out to be a fairly uninteresting dude, nor are his stories particularly memorable, the book is not without its charms. The first two-issue arc introduces us to the character and tells us a bit about him, what he is, what he can do, etc. It's not a bad story but not a very impressive one either – spirits haunting physical suits is a very common theme in Mike Mignola's comics as are strong man characters! Jason Latour's art is ok but feels a little sketchy and rushed.

The second and final three-issue arc sees Sledgehammer 44 (what an unwieldy name!) go up against the Black Flame. The story is minimal, a contrivance to get these two fighting Dragon Ball Z-style, in the sky, smashing each other as hard as possible. While it's more superhero-y than we usually get in Mignola's books, it looks awesome – Laurence Campbell's art is great and his photorealistic style makes the Black Flame look really chilling, like when he lands on the airplane wing and starts walking towards the reader!

The irony is that in his own book, we don't really get to know who Sledgehammer 44 is. When he's not punching or blowing stuff up, he's gloomy and silent with the reader rarely given the occasional glimpse into

his mind. Instead of delving into his background we get page after page of, sigh, characters punching each other some more. It's not exactly the most compelling character portrait and, in keeping the reader at arm's length, makes it hard to care about him.

Even though the stories and characters are underdeveloped, Mignola and co. can still just about hold your attention and while I was never on the edge of my seat, I was more-or-less engaged – Nazis and Mignola, you can rarely go wrong with that pairing! - and Laurence Campbell's art is straight dope. But Sledgehammer 44 is basically just for fans of the Mignola-verse who dig the writer's style and aren't too bothered about his (increasingly frequent) lack of substance.

George says

This one made me tear up a little. Very emotionally powerful and meaningful, with a lot to say about war and meaning and happiness and life. The primary villain is also one of my favorites in Hellboy, and I loved seeing more of him. Art was good, not bad like some other stories, but nothing superb like the work of Mignola, Guy Davis, Ben Stenbeck, or Ton?i Zonji?. This is also, interestingly, the first Hellboyverse comic that involves any abnormal paneling, which was a very interesting choice that worked really well. I loved this story and I can't wait to revisit it someday.

Canavan says

★★★

Paul E. Morph says

I enjoyed this trip to the World War II era Mignolaverse. I really liked the concept of the Sledgehammer armour and was relieved when the book turned out to be a heckuva lot more than 'WWII Iron Man' as I'd originally suspected. I should have known better.

This volume actually collects two shorter story-arcs; the original Sledgehammer 44 two-parter, which is the obligatory origin story, and the three-part 'Lightning War' which has much better artwork and a much more engaging story. In particular, I really liked the ending of the final issue of 'Lightning War'.

This is currently all there is, Sledgehammer 44-wise, but if Dark Horse release any more I'll definitely be reading.

Gabriel Wallis says

I really enjoyed reading *Sledgehammer 44* (volume 1). It's a part of the Hellboy/B.P.R.D. universe, and definitely a unique idea. Parts of the graphic novel were a little frightening, in the old sense of the word. It had a "Twilight Zone" feel to it in a few parts, and "Band of Brothers" feel to it in others. Hopefully, they write more stories, 'cause I couldn't get enough.

