

Warning!

Violence and the Supernatural

The fictional worlds of Palladium Books® are violent, deadly and filled with supernatural monsters. Other-dimensional beings, often referred to as “demons,” torment, stalk and prey on humans. Other alien life forms, monsters, gods and demigods, as well as magic, insanity, and war are all elements in these books.

Some parents may find the violence, magic and supernatural elements of the games inappropriate for young readers/players. We suggest parental discretion.

Please note that none of us at Palladium Books® condone or encourage the occult, the practice of magic, the use of drugs, or violence.



The Rifter® Number 40

Your guide to the Palladium Megaverse®!

First Printing – October, 2007

Copyright 2007 Palladium Books Inc.

All rights reserved, world wide, under the Universal Copyright Convention. No part of this book may be reproduced in part or whole, in any form or by any means, without permission from the publisher, except for brief quotes for use in reviews. All incidents, situations, institutions, governments and people are fictional and any similarity, without satiric intent, of characters or persons living or dead, is strictly coincidental.

Palladium Books®, Rifts®, The Rifter®, Coalition Wars®, RECON®, Nightbane®, Splicers®, Palladium Fantasy Role-Playing Game®, The Mechanoids®, The Mechanoid Invasion®, After the Bomb®, Phase World®, and Megaverse® are registered trademarks owned and licensed by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books Inc.

The slogan “A Megaverse of adventure – limited only by your imagination” and titles and names such as Dead Reign, Devil Muse, Rifts®: Promise of Power, Beyond the Supernatural, BTS-2, HU2, Chaos Earth, NEMA, MercTown, Merc Ops, Tome Grotesque, Beyond Arcanum, Naruni, Mechanoid Space, Dinosaur Swamp, Arzno, Lazlo, Victor Lazlo, Lazlo Agency, Lazlo Society, Heroes Unlimited, Powers Unlimited, Ninjas & Superspies, Aliens Unlimited, Mutant Underground, Mysteries of Magic, The Nursery, Hammer of the Forge, Hardware Unlimited, Gadgets Unlimited, Three Galaxies, Void Runners, Gramercy Island, Skraypers, Atorian Empire, Wormwood, Land of the Damned, The Citadel, The Palladium of Desires, Wolfen Wars, Wolfen, Wulfen, Cosmo-Knight, Cyber-Knight, Gargoyle Empire, Free Quebec, Xiticix, Xiticix Invasion, Fadetown, Siege on Tolkeen, Psyscape, Dweomer, ARCHIE-3, Northern Gun, Coalition States, Erin Tam, Emperor Prosek, Splugorth, Splynncryth, Mega-Damage, Mega-Hero, Skelebot, SAMAS, Glitter Boy, Dog Boy, Dog Pack, Techno-Wizard, Ley Line Walker, Shifter, Bio-Wizardry, Psi-Stalker, Brodkil, Juicer, Crazy, ‘Burbs, ‘Borg, ‘Bot, D-Bee, Chi-Town, Triax, NGR, and other names, titles, slogans, and likenesses of characters are trademarks owned by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books Inc.

Palladium Online www.palladiumbooks.com

The Rifter® #40 RPG sourcebook series is published by Palladium Books Inc., 12455 Universal Drive, Taylor, MI 48180. Printed in the USA.

Palladium Books® Presents:

THE RIFTER #40

BRANDT - 97

Sourcebook and Guide to the Palladium Megaverse®

Coordinator & Editor in Chief: **Wayne Smith**

Editor: **Alex Marciniszyn**

Contributing Writers:

James M.G. Cannon
Ed Emmer
Carl Gleba
S.E. Gibbons
Josh Hilden
Jason Marker
John C. Philpott
Jason Richards
Joshua Sanford
Kevin Siembieda
Josh Sinsapaugh

Interior Artists:

Nick Bradshaw
Kent Burles
Mark Dudley
Comfort Deborah Love
Allen Manning
Brian Manning
Mike Mumah
Apollo Okamura
Jeffrey Russell
Adam Withers

Cover Illustration: **Kevin Long**

Proofreader: **Julius Rosenstein**

Cover Logo Design: **Steve Edwards**

Credits Page Logo: **Niklas Brandt**

Typesetting: **Wayne Smith**

Keylining: **Kevin Siembieda**

Based on the RPG rules, characters,
concepts and Megaverse® created by **Kevin Siembieda**.

Special Thanks to all our contributors, writers and artists – and a special welcome on board to the artists and writers making their debut in this issue. Our apologies to anybody who got accidentally left out or their name misspelled.

– *Kevin Siembieda, 2007*

Contents – The Rifter® #40 – October, 2007

Page 6 – From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda

The Rifter® is 10 years old, and Publisher, Kevin Siembieda, reflects on what The Rifter® is all about – a cosmic fanzine – written for Palladium fans by Palladium fans. A forum to share ideas with other fans and have fun, and a chance to see your name in print. It is a vehicle created by Palladium for our fans by which fledgling writers and artists can test the waters, hone their skills and, perhaps, get discovered by the madmen at Palladium Books to go on to write full-fledged sourcebooks and games.

Ah, but it doesn't end there. Kevin reveals plans for therifter.com (should be up and running in October), and talks about the guy who has quietly kept The Rifter® running smoothly for ten years and counting, *Wayne Smith*.

Some Rifter® fun facts:

- The initial printing was 20,000 copies. It sold out in the first few months and we did a second printing of 5,000 copies. Today, the average printing is a modest 3,000-6,000 copies depending on the issue.

- *Jolly Blackburn*, a long time Palladium pal, did brand new, *Knights of the Dinner Table* comic strips for the first 12 issues or so before the workload became too much and he had to stop.

- *Apollo Okamura* is the only artist to contribute to EVERY issue of The Rifter®. He also got his start in The Rifter®.

- *Wayne Smith* has hand-picked every article in every issue of The Rifter®. Kevin Siembieda has pasted up every issue, #1-40, and handles the art direction.

- Issue #9½ was an elaborate *April Fool's Day* joke of *Wayne Smith* as well as a fun, bonus issue of The Rifter® for our fans. It is the only issue that is predominantly written by Palladium staff and professional writers. Wayne had no idea the issue was being produced until he was called into Kevin's office and asked to explain where this issue came from. The look on his face was priceless. The ruse was blown when Kevin started to laugh and Maryann started to take pictures.

- The cover to issue #10 is the *Simon Bisley* painting that was originally created as the cover to the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles RPG, Second Edition*. However, the TMNT RPG was cancelled due to lack of interest by distributors and retailers. Rather than let this fantastic piece of art sit unseen, we used it as a cover on The Rifter®.

Page 7 – 10 Years of The Rifter®

Long time fan and Palladium writer, **Jason Richards** stretches back into the recesses of his memory to talk about the early days of Palladium online (predominately the efforts of Maryann Siembieda in those early days), and reminds us of the Palladium Mailing List (the PML), and many other fun memories and emotions, leading up to the launch of The Rifter®.

Thanks Jason, your recollections made all of us at the Palladium office smile, laugh and fondly remember some of the good ol' days. And you are right, The Rifter® continues to be a rare and wonderful vehicle for fans to unleash their imaginations and maybe realize a dream.

Page 8 – Palladium News

All the latest goings on, more about therifter.com, Palladium podcasts, downloadable adventures, and more.

The big news – *Robotech®* is back! Yep, Palladium Books has reacquired the *Robotech®* license and are busy planning a series of new RPGs and sourcebooks. Read the "official press release" on page 10. Oh, and to heap good news upon good news, we're shooting to have the first book out in time for Christmas 2007. Sing about that, Minmei.

Page 11 – Coming Attractions

The latest updates and descriptions of books currently in production or development.

Kevin Siembieda announced it first in a podcast interview and it has become one of the most talked about and anticipated releases for 2008: **Dead Reign**, Palladium's first ever "zombie RPG." And you get your first look at it inside this very issue of The Rifter® (starting on page 42).

The *Minion War™* is off with a bang as fans go crazy over **Hades** and anxiously await **Dyval™**, **Dimensional Outbreak**, **Armageddon Unlimited™**, **Heroes of the Megaverse®**, and **Megaverse® in Flames**.

Rifts® and the **Megaverse®**, the **Art of John Zeleznik** is fabulous and available now, in three different versions.

Giveaway cards, four Zeleznik prints, books delayed but not forgotten, and a list of 2008 releases round out this issue's coming attractions.

Page 16 - The Palladium Fantasy RPG®

A Walk on the Wild Side – Barbarians, Part Two

John C. Philpott presents more interesting O.C.C.s, facts about barbarian society, stigmas, *Hand to Hand: Wild*, new *Shamantic Chants*, new skills, new abilities and more. Includes the *Berserker O.C.C.*, *Savage Warrior O.C.C.*, *Native Tribesman O.C.C.*, and *Wild Man O.C.C.*

Ferocious and wild art by Brian and Allen Manning.

Page 38 – Beyond the Supernatural™

The Devil Muse

Josh Sinsapaugh whips up a delightfully wicked and vile creature for *BTS-2*.

Frightening illustration by Kent Burles.

Page 42 – Dead Reign™ – A preview of a new RPG Your Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse

Josh Hilden and *Joshua Sanford* team up to give us the basic concept, setting, key types of zombies and even enough data for you to start playing! This game is gonna be awesome when it comes out Spring 2008.

Ghastly and gruesome art by Mike Mumah and Mark Dudley.

Page 55 – 2007 Christmas Surprise Package

Yep, it's that time of year again, when Palladium happily offers our annual Christmas Surprise Package or "Grag Bag." A fun way for us to dish out some Christmas cheer and for you to get a pile of gaming books, autographs and other fun stuff. Get all the details right here.

Page 57 – Rifts®, Palladium Fantasy®, and Others Spell Books of the Megaverse®

S.E. Gibbons outdoes himself with this epic and wide-ranging look at how magic spell books are used across the Megaverse®. Suitable for any setting where magic and spell books may play a role. Presents all the whos, wheres, whys, hows, dangers, advantages and more behind spell books. We predict this is destined to be an instant classic.

Artwork by Kent Burles.

Page 69 – Rifts® Short Story Circus! Circus!

Jason Marker gives us another poignant story in the Rifts Earth setting. Familiar characters and great personality makes this a joy to read.

Artwork by Mike Mumah.

Page 79 – Rifts® Adventure The Spoils of War, Part One

Ed Emmer comes through with an epic adventure that puts players at odds with Coalition soldiers, pirates, slavers and demons, and pits them against the Xiticix and rival forces. It's all part of a quest for treasure and magic that starts at New Lazlo and leads to danger.

The player characters are mercs hired in the days shortly after the fall of Tolkeen to acquire secret plans somewhere in the Kingdom of Tolkeen. The journey takes many twists and turns on a wild ride of adventure, intrigue and surprises.

Includes new (optional) skills: Coalition Tactics, Lore, Xiticix and other source material like the TW Holo-Vid, the town of Lakeside, a new Xiticix hive, and much more.

Dynamic artwork by Comfort Deborah Love, Adam Withers and Nick Bradshaw.

Page 120 – The Hammer of the Forge™

Chapter 40: Some new twists and turns, vampires and a scary realm to explore and escape in this latest installment by James M.G. Cannon. Read and enjoy.

Artwork by Apollo Okamura.

Page 126 – Rifts®, Palladium Fantasy® & HU2™ Hades, Pits of Hell – Source material

Outtakes from *Carl Gleba's Dimension Book 10: Hades, Pits of Hell*. A handful of characters who had to be chopped out of the Hades book due to space limitations. Includes Warlord Thantu, leader of the Brass Guard II, as well as other Baal-Rogs on the team.

Demonic artwork by Jeffrey Russell.

The Theme for Issue 40

As is always the case with the October issue of the Rifter®, the theme is horror and things that go bump in the night. Hence, the zombies, Devil Muse, and array of demons and monsters, savage barbarians and undead cover. This issue also focuses on magic and adventure. And no, your eyes are not deceiving you,

this is an extra large issue with an additional 32 pages to celebrate *The Rifter's* ten year anniversary.

Another fun-filled issue designed to provoke your imagination, and inspire and motivate players and Game Masters alike to try new ideas and expand their gaming Megaverse®. When are you submitting your ideas?

The Cover

The cover was supposed to be a zombie-filled horror by Mike Mumah. Unfortunately, zombies attacked him before the piece was finished. While Mike and his wife managed to escape with their lives, Mike's cover got eaten. So we dipped into our archives and thought it would be nice to use the undead classic cover by *Kevin Long* for the original printing of *Rifts® World Book 4: Rifts® Africa*. We reversed the image to make the piece a bit different and new. Hey, it's a Long cover, always a crowd pleaser.

Optional and Unofficial Rules & Source Material

Please note that most of the material presented in *The Rifter®* is "unofficial" or "optional" rules and source material.

They are alternative ideas, homespun adventures and material mostly created by fellow gamers and fans like you, the reader. Things one can *elect* to include in one's own campaign or simply enjoy by reading about. They are not "official" to the main games or world settings.

As for optional tables and adventures, if they sound cool or fun, use them. If they sound funky, too high-powered or inappropriate for your game, modify them or ignore them completely.

All the material in *The Rifter®* has been included for two reasons: One, because we thought it was imaginative and fun, and two, we thought it would stimulate your imagination with fun ideas and concepts that you can use (if you want to), or which might inspire you to create your own wonders.

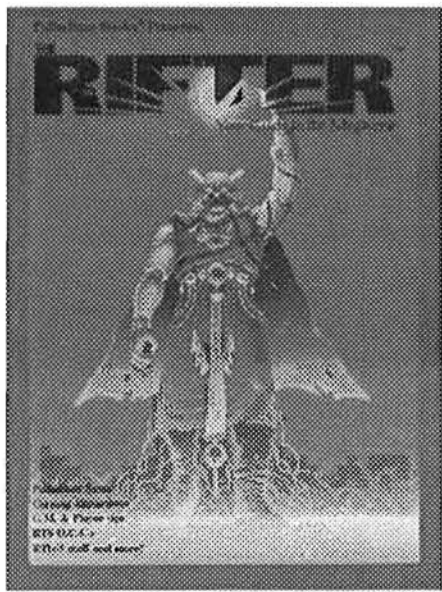
www.palladiumbooks.com – Palladium Online

The Rifter® #41

- Spoils of War conclusion.
- Material for *Heroes Unlimited™*.
- Material for *Rifts®*.
- Material for *Palladium Fantasy RPG®*.
- News and other developments.
- The next, epic chapter of *The Hammer of the Forge™*.
- Source material for the entire *Palladium Megaverse®*.
- Latest news and coming attractions.
- New contributors and fun. So please join us.

Palladium Books® role-playing games ... infinite possibilities, limited only by your imagination™

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda



Wow. Ten years of **The Rifter**®. I can hardly believe it until I look in the mirror and see all those silver hairs waving back at me. Ten years of giving fans, like you, a place where they can see their ideas published and shared by other gamers. Ten years of giving new writers a chance to test their mettle and artists to show off their craft. Ten years and 40 issues of **The Rifter**® offering alternative ideas and rules, realms of adventure, stories of horror and heroes, and hours of gaming fun.

The Rifter® is for the Fans

The cool thing about **The Rifter**® is that it is created for YOU, our fans. Not just as a quasi-magazine/sourcebook with game material, tips and adventures for your games, but as a vehicle – a voice – for YOU.

A place where *you* can get your ideas, stories, adventures and characters *published*. It's a way you can share your ideas and game creations with other gamers and see your name in print. Sadly, I think many people have forgotten that. I've actually had a few fans express a wish that they could send their game material to us and have it "posted or something where other fans could use it." That's what **The Rifter**® is for. It is an awesome way to reach other fans and see your name in lights . . . er, in print.

Send in your fan submissions!

Please, if you have some cool villains, a great adventure, optional rules, new magic spells or super abilities, or a hankering to write a short story (4-20 pages), write it up and send it in to **The Rifter**®! We are always looking for fun, cool source material to print.

We need material for everything: **Heroes Unlimited**™, **Ninjas and Superspies**™, **After the Bomb**®, **Palladium Fantasy RPG**®, **Nightbane**®, **Beyond the Supernatural**™, **Phase World**®, **Wormwood**™, and **Rifts**®!

The Rifter® Legacy

You can submit once and never again, or send in submissions for Wayne's consideration on a regular basis. **The Rifter**® is also an excellent vehicle for those of you with aspirations of becoming a professional artist or writer. **The Rifter**® has worked out great as a sort of talent show where we can find and cultivate new talent. The following artists and writers all got their start by contributing to **The Rifter**® and have gone on to illustrate and/or write for Palladium Books as freelance creators.

Adam Withers	Irvin Jackson
Apollo Okamura	Jason Marker
Brian & Allen Manning	Mark Oberle
Comfort Deborah Love	John Philpott
Nick Bradshaw	Jason Richards
Brandon Aten	Josh Sinsapaugh
Carl Gleba	Taylor White
Josh Hilden	. . . and others.

This makes **The Rifter**® sorta like Palladium's own *American Idol* except without the music, singing, competition, judges and television. Okay, it's nothing like *American Idol*, and even if it never leads to professional work in the game business, it's fun to see your work in print and seen by others.

If your fellow gamers have suggested you have great ideas and that you should send 'em in to Palladium, do it. It doesn't have to be a lot of material (4-20 pages of text can do the trick for writers, 6-10 photocopies of artwork can be enough for artists), we're looking for quality, new ideas and fun, not a polished masterpiece.

therifter.com

For those of you who might be *too chicken* to send in art samples or a short story or source material to see *print* in an "official" Palladium *publication*, how about submitting something to **therifter.com**?

You heard right, we're launching the **Rifter**® concept online. A place where Palladium gamers can post their favorite character(s), villain(s), monster(s), equipment(s), spell(s), adventure(s), house rules, short stories and a whole lot more for the whole world to read. We're calling it **therifter.com** because we want it to be an online resource created by YOU – Palladium fans – for other Palladium fans.

We will be keeping the printed material in **The Rifter**® separate from the material created and posted by the online community, so you'll get more unique material in two different mediums.

We only ask that you limit the source material and stories posted online to Palladium's Megaverse of role-playing games, keep the material suitable for ALL AGES, PG-13 (no gruesome gore, wild sex, decadence, gratuitous violence, etc.), and that you keep in mind that the whole idea behind **The Rifter**® (in any medium) is to share ideas and source material for role-playing games and to have FUN! Don't get snooty, no elitism, no cruel criticism, just have fun.