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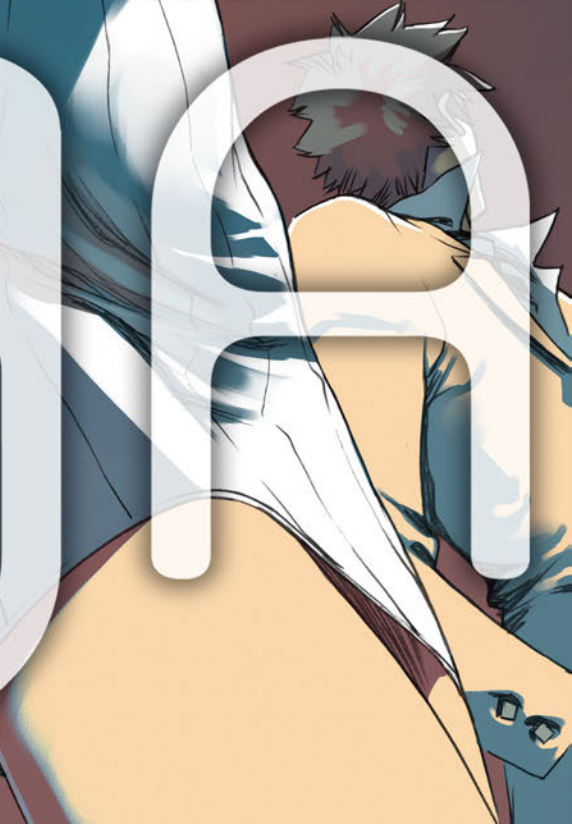
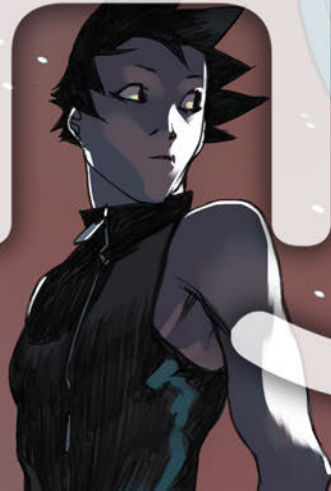
PRESS KIT



**BENGAL**

**MORVAN**

**NARBAR**



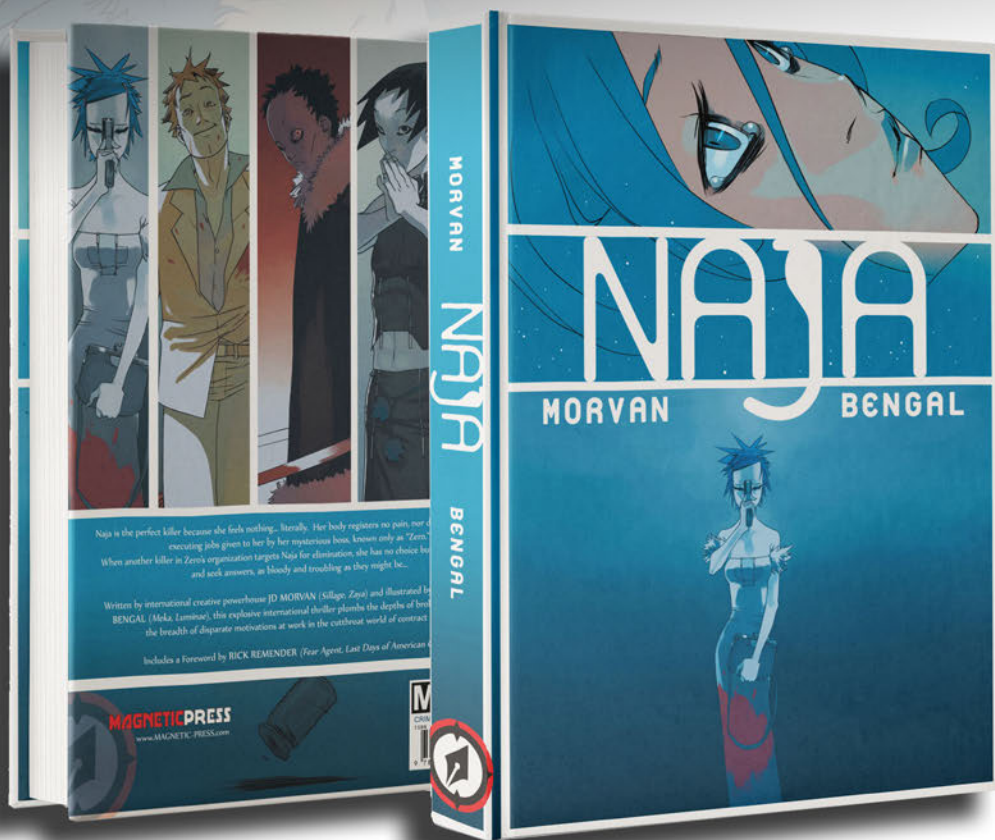


## Specifications:

- Hardcover
- 248 pages
- 8.5" x 11"
- Full Color
- Crime Thriller
- ISBN: 978-0-9913324-0-3
- Diamond Code: MAR141262
- Carton Quantity: 20
- Title Rights: Not Available

## Key Selling Points

- International sensation available in English for the first time!
- Gorgeous hardcover volume with ribbon book mark and spot glossed cover.
- Foreword by fan-favorite author RICK REMENDER



*"These two men together are a force to be reckoned with."*  
- RICK REMENDER, from his foreword

WRITTEN BY J.D. MORVAN

ILLUSTRATED BY BENGAL

TRANSLATED BY MIKE KENNEDY  
DESIGN AND LETTERING BY NEUROBELLUM PRODUCTIONS

### IN THE ASSASSINATION BUSINESS, NOBODY IS INNOCENT.

Naja is the perfect killer because she feels nothing... literally. Her body registers no pain, nor does her heart, coldly executing jobs given to her by her mysterious boss, known only as "Zero." When another killer in Zero's organization targets Naja for elimination, she has no choice but to fall off the grid and seek answers, as bloody as they might be...

Written by international creative powerhouse JD Morvan (*Sillage, Zaya, Wolverine: Saudade*) and illustrated by French sensation Bengal (*Meka, Luminae*), this volume collects the entire 5-book NAJA series into a single lavish album!

Foreword by Rick Remender (*Fear Agent, Last Days of American Crime*)!

## Notes:

**M** This book contains brief nudity, violence, and mild profanity. It is intended for **MATURE** readers.

CRIME THRILLER \$29.99 US

ISBN 978-0-9913324-0-3



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## Reviews & Awards:

"Action packed, sexy, and twists you won't see coming, Naja mixes it all into a gripping thriller filled with assassins and killers."

-Graphic Policy

"Naja redefines the genre by peeling away the glamour and the violence and replacing it with the deeper psychology of what makes a person willing to kill for money... you can be sure that I didn't put it down until it was finished."

-ComicBastards.com

## BEHIND THE STORY

Eschewing the tradition of the "bad-ass hitman" present in so many contemporary noir comics these days, writer J.D. Morvan decided to approach the psychology of the professional killer from the inside out. The obvious question of "what sort of person would kill for a living" is set aside in favor of the deeper question, "what sort of trauma could possibly turn an individual into that sort of person?" The central characters in the tale, including the title character, Naja, are each broken in their own private way, some acting under delusions of heroism, some seeking answers to Life's mysteries, some suffering physical and psychological illness, while others simply strive for misguided vengeance.

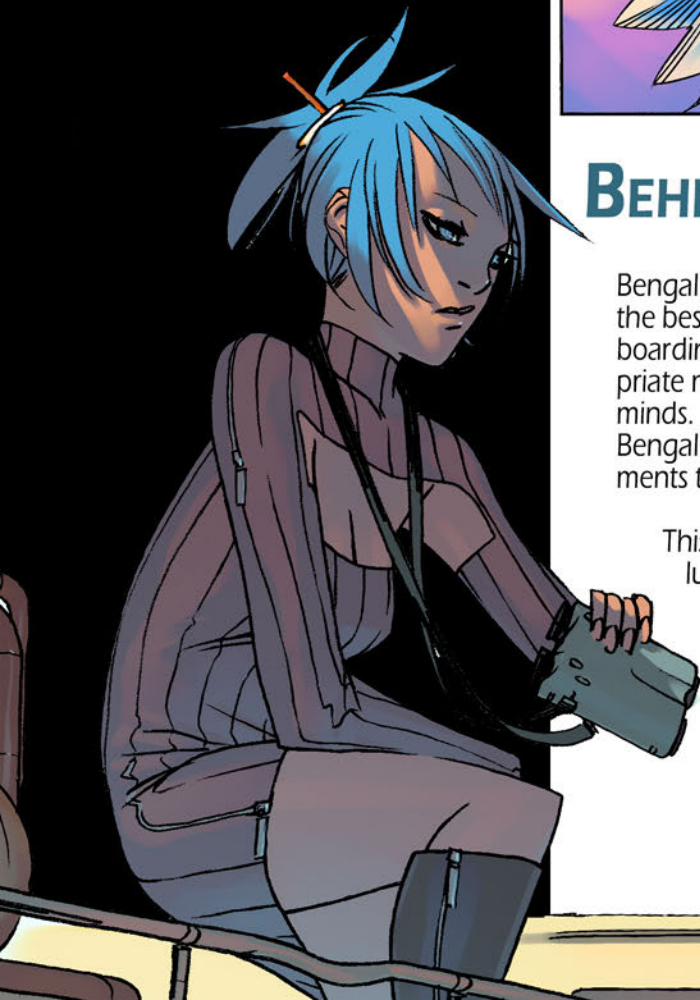
Part psychological-thriller, part globe-spanning espionage adventure, the real heart of the story lies in the twisted braid of secrets that tie these characters together. The reader is lured through the intrigue by a mysterious narrator who knows more than he is willing to share until the final chapter, when the explosive truth is finally revealed.



## BEHIND THE DESIGN

Bengal's signature visual style blends the expressiveness and dynamism of the best Japanese manga with the framing and pacing of blockbuster storyboarding. The palettes are carefully selected to convey not only the appropriate mood for the scene, but to enhance the state of the key characters' minds. At times suggesting still frames from a theatrical animated feature, Bengal's unique approach to storytelling both complements and supplements the drama in Morvan's script.

This volume is printed in full color on woodfree paper, bound in a luscious hardcover with strategic spot-UV bringing dimensionality to the package. Considering the length of this epic, the ribbon bookmark could very well become handy. A limited number of slipcased bundles will also be available, packaged with a limited edition original print signed by the artist.



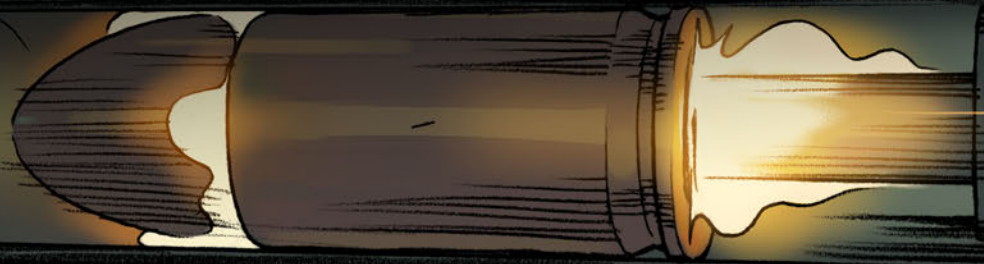


## J.D. MORVAN, WRITER

Born in Reims, France, in 1969, J.D. Morvan took the little world of French comics by storm. He graduated from the Institut Saint-Luc in Brussels, where he first aspired to be an illustrator, though he was convinced that he'd actually end up being a writer. After penning several major titles, including **NOMAD** and **HK** for Glénat, he created the wildly popular series **SILLAGE** for Delcourt, establishing himself as one of the most sought after writers in French BD (the French term for "comic books"). Extremely prolific, he has created several series for Dargaud, including **MON ANNEE** with Jiro Taniguchi, **AL'TOGO**, **LE PETIT MONDE**, **REALITY SHOW** and **NAJA**. He also authored a number of volumes of **SPIROU & FANTASIO**, with illustrator Jose-Luis Munuera, as well as the **MERLIN** series, co-created with Joann Sfar and Munuera. In 2011, he created **CRIME SCHOOL**, a manga-flavored series for kids, which was nominated for an award at the annual BD festival in Angouleme. In 2012, he created **ZAYA** with Chinese artist Huang Jia Wei, and he is currently working on a new series with Korean artist Kim Jung Gii.

## BENGAL, ILLUSTRATOR

Bengal chose to become an author and an illustrator in the late 90s. As an avid reader of BD, manga, and comics books, as well as digital painting, video games, animation, and film, he received his first professional work in 1998 with his published work, **THE ONLY ONE**, published by Glénat. Between 1999 and 2003, he worked in Paris as an illustrator and designer for video game developer Darkworks. He returned to comics with the dyptic series **MEKA**, written by JD Morvan and published by Delcourt, while simultaneously working on several short stories for various anthologies, including **FLIGHT** from Image Comics and **SPIROU** magazine from Dupuis. He also contributed to the popular French series **SILLAGE** from Delcourt and **SKYDOLL SPACESHIP COLLECTION** from Soleil. In 2008, he co-created **NAJA** with Jean-David Morvan for Dargaud. He recently completed the two-part series **LUMINAE** for Ankama, and has started his next project with Jean-David Morvan, **BIEN DU MAL**. He also co-founded the online artist community **CFSL** (or "café sale"), established to give European artists a digital forum to share their work, much like Deviantart in the US.



## INTERVIEW WITH **J.D. MORVAN** AND **BENGAL**

**NAJA is a taught, action-packed thriller set in countries spanning the globe. What inspired you to this project?**

**JD MORVAN:** Well, it's the journey itself that inspired NAJA. I was traveling in the car and I had this idea: "When the number 1 killer of a criminal organization takes a contract out on the number 3 killer, what does number 2 do?" I texted the idea to Bengal, and during the rest of that trip we invented Naja. On arrival, we had the concept of the entire series. I know, it wasn't very safe because I was driving, but Inspiration arrives when she wants...

**BENGAL:** It was JD's idea, every new setting where the action takes place allows us to bring a new analysis on a category of people, and a new opportunity for Naja to despise something. The repeating aspect of it, without making it an actual running gag, makes it quite funny for me: there's really no way to please her!

**The narration carries the reader through the story, with an abundance of psychoanalysis and political commentary. What was the intention behind keeping the narrator's identity mysterious (until the end)? And what were the challenges keeping that mystery without revealing the identity through the commentary?**

**B:** Well, the most obvious challenge, I reckon, was to make sure it was impossible to know who the narrator could be, while giving several hints it was someone close to Naja. The mystery behind it was important, in my opinion, to keep in the reader's mind that there was someone above all the players, someone possibly almighty, someone seeing it all... which, in a way, adds an oppressive ambiance to the story sometimes.

**JDM:** I wanted to write a story like (Milan) Kundera, in that it is told by a narrator who knew the characters' psychology better than the characters themselves. An omniscient narrator, capable of explaining psychologically the actions that seem natural to the characters.

**The book has a very unique visual style – slightly loose, but carefully framed with very expressive details and dynamics. How was the look and visual direction of NAJA inspired?**

**B:** I decided from the get-go that I would mostly work the narration, the energy, the angles, all the storytelling details that would make the reading as fluid as I could, moreso than the actual graphics. The documentation as well – with all those countries Naja visits (and not me, sadly), I tried to give as much ambiance as there were locations.

**JDM:** As for the character and her coolness, I was inspired by an illustration Bengal made of a young woman smoking on a sofa. Everything grew from that paleness and her lost look.

**You have created numerous popular and successful titles in France; do you think this US debut will open a gateway to more of your work appealing to North American and English-speaking fans?**

**JDM:** What is interesting in Naja, is that it takes place all over the world but not in the USA. Fortunately, because of that, Naja never says why she hates Americans! Haha. Maybe with a little luck it will allow us to work directly for the American market, that perhaps misses me a little since writing WOLVERINE: SAUDADE. And Bengal has dreamed of drawing Superman for a long time...

**B:** it's our biggest story so far, and I also believe it benefits from the roots JD and I have together in the industry – we've known each other for a long time now and so far he's the only writer I've worked with! JD's work is tailored for my style, and he knows exactly how to rely on my storytelling. We are in a comfort zone when we make a book together. I deeply hope we will bring something enjoyable enough to readers, and we would love to keep working for the US market – it's actually what we're aiming at lately!



