



Satyavrat Bhargava is a cop with conviction! With his faith firmly rooted in the honesty is the best policy maxim, only the truth will set you free from the handcuffs of this policeman

BY ROXANNE MEHTA

Mohit Srivastava and Gagandeep Kochar had no idea what was in store when they submitted their comic book to be considered for Comic Con's freshly introduced Grant for Best Unpublished Work. This grant was launched to encourage budding Indian comic book writers and artists at last year's Delhi Comic Con. And encouraged they were when they became the first ever winners of the grant for their comic book, 'Satya Police'. They won a cash prize of ₹50,000 and a publication deal from Pop Culture Publishing. This comic book made its debut at the Delhi Comic Con last month.

Kochar and Srivastava were actually oblivious of the Comic Con grant. They were going to create just a single page of their comic book and participate in another contest at Comic Con 2012. In the midst of that, Srivastava learned about the grant and with just five days before the deadline they thought 'Satya Police' deserved a chance for a grant consideration. They then went head-long and submitted the first five pages of the comic book along with a short synopsis of the story.

The idea for 'Satya Police' stemmed from the familiar human fantasy of acquiring superpowers. Unfortunately, superpowers are far-flung from the di-

mensions of reality, and it was this impossibility that triggered the idea for 'Satya Police'. Srivastava was returning from a regular office day when he realised that there is in fact a superpower that anyone can possess and use: 'The Power of Truth'. "At first, it did sound funny and vague at the same time but I developed this one liner, finished the script and shared it with my close friend and partner, Gagandeep. He liked it and we took the concept forward," says Srivastava.

'Satya Police' is the story about Satyavrat Bhargava, a policeman driven by the power of truth. It is believed that when someone attempts to tell a lie in his presence, his Satya Sense starts tingling. This man is in fact an icon of honesty; his shadow is literally white, and his gun holster sheathes a boomerang. Satyavrat has his own very unconventional, odd but legal ways of fighting crime. Srivastava says, "All that we can say for now is, to the holy and the good, he will bring his protection. But to the evil and wrong doers he will bring 'Satya-Naash'." He



is without doubt an extraordinary cop. Kochar says that readers will fall for his courage, ever ready plan of action and shiny teeth.

'Satya Police' is Srivastava's first attempt at writing a comic book. He generally writes for animation media. Adapting to a different style wasn't difficult but there were tricky spots. When he started, he wasn't even sure of all the processes involved in creating a comic book. As he was working he realised that he could illustrate in the same panel in probably a hundred different ways but choosing the best of those can sometimes prove to be the biggest challenge. "Having a great idea is just half the work; conveying it effectively and



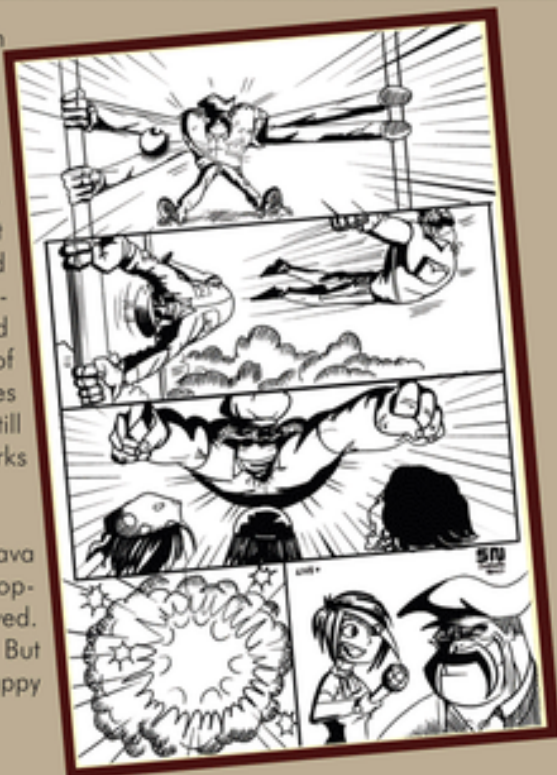
perfectly is a bigger challenge. I had to re-write the script a couple of times till we moved on to production," he says.

Before developing the plot the creative duo gave themselves approximately a month's time to brainstorm ideas and concepts. "We would get ideas at very unexpected situations for example at traffic lights, office meetings, inside elevators," says Kochar.

Kochar believes artwork for a comic book is very different from other artwork in terms of consistency. "It is easy to maintain it in small projects as there are only few illustrations. But for a comic book it requires a lot of attention from the consistency end," he says. It took a while to get the mood of the comic in terms of colours. They went through three drafts of illustration for the whole

comic to get more dynamism and boldness. "Every kind of artwork or illustration has a specific audience, and that is what defines the guidelines for every particular kind of illustration and differentiates it from others. We ourselves had to revise the artwork a couple of times, before we locked onto the final look and feel of the book. Although it consumes a lot of time and coffee, it is still one of the most interesting works to do," says Srivastava.

Both Kochar and Srivastava are happy about this novel opportunity they have received. "The feeling was incredible. But more that winning I am happy about the opportunity.





It couldn't have been better," says Kochar. Their winning moment last year was one of absolute exhilaration. "They hadn't even finished the announcement completely and I had already run across the hallway to grab the opportunity of a lifetime. Apart from the thrill, excitement and crazy jolts of laughter that I was going through, the event also did boost a lot of confidence and motivation in me. On this note, I would like to thank Comic Con, again, for the wonderful opportunity," says Srivastava. He also says that there are many opportunities available for artists. "I think there are plenty of places and opportunities out there. What artists and story-tellers have to do is keep trying to reach these places, stay attentive and be aware of such organizations, exhibitions and bodies. Sooner or later, everyone gets noticed and offered a chance." Kochar says that as an artist he is also always on the prowl for opportunities where he can showcase his work. "Comic Con is a hub for artists, fans and storytellers. Missing out Comic Con is missing out a big opportunity," he says.

The first volume of 'Satya Police' is in the final stages of production and is due to be released very soon. Volume 1 will see him getting transferred to a remote city that has lost all hope for sanity and justice. Volume 1 took nearly a year to finish, but the publishers are

confident to release two more volumes in 18 month's time. The storyline is ready and the script of the second volume is currently in the works. Check out more details about the release and order of 'Satya Police' at www.comicconindia.com



Artists' Bio



**Gagandeep
Kochar**

Gagandeep Kochar grew up in Ludhiana, Punjab where he kept himself busy with sketching, painting, sports, Cartoon Network, Disney movies, Bollywood and a bit of Hollywood.

He had a great time in school making caricatures of his teachers which once earned him a slap. After high school, he went to MIT institute of Design, Pune for Animation film Design course in 2006. Here he met some really talented people who have inspired and motivated him.



**Mohit
Srivastava**

After finishing high school with a science background, Mohit Srivastava's only plan was to go home and plunge into his comic book chest. Driven by the urge to read as well as tell stories majorly through graphic

media, he pursued a course in Design from MIT Institute of Design, Pune. He's been working in the animation industry with Content and Story Development for the past two years, but he recently quit his job to further explore his skills and work on his own. His website is www.penciltree.com