# The System

## Peter Kuper • Preface by Calvin Reid

Actions speak louder than words.

It's said that the flutter of insect wings in the Indian Ocean can send a hurricane crashing against the shores of the American Northeast. It's this premise that lies at the core of *The System*, a wordless graphic novel created and fully painted by award-winning illustrator Peter Kuper. From the subway system to the solar system, human lives are linked by an endless array of interconnecting threads. They tie each of us to our world and it to the universe. If every action has an equal and opposite reaction, get ready to run for cover!

A sleazy stockbroker is lining his pockets. A corrupt cop is shaking down drug dealers. A mercenary bomber is setting the timer. A serial killer is stalking strippers. A political scandal is about to explode. The planet is burning. *And nobody's talking.*

Told without captions or dialogue, *The System* is an astonishing progression of vivid imagery, each brilliantly executed panel containing a wealth of information, with layer upon layer forming a vast and intricate tour of an ominous world of coincidences and consequences.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Peter Kuper** is a cofounder of *World War 3 Illustrated*. His illustrations and comics have been featured in *Time*, *The New York Times*, and *MAD Magazine*, for which he has written and illustrated *SPY vs SPY* since 1997. He has produced over 20 books including *The System*, a Will Eisner Comic Industry Award Nominee, *Drawn to New York: An Illustrated Chronicle of Three Decades in New York City*, and *Diario De Oaxaca*, a visual journal of two years in Mexico. He was the 2009 gold medal recipient at the Society of Illustrators for sequential art.

## ABOUT CALVIN REID

Calvin Reid is a contributing editor for *Publishers Weekly* and is also the head of its comics department. He heads the magazine's annual African American issue, and coedits its online comics newsletter, *PW Comics Week*.

## ACCOLADES

"Kuper's brilliant visual novel, much like Fritz Lang, creates a comic noir of corruption and innocence in a city where the devil is always in the details."
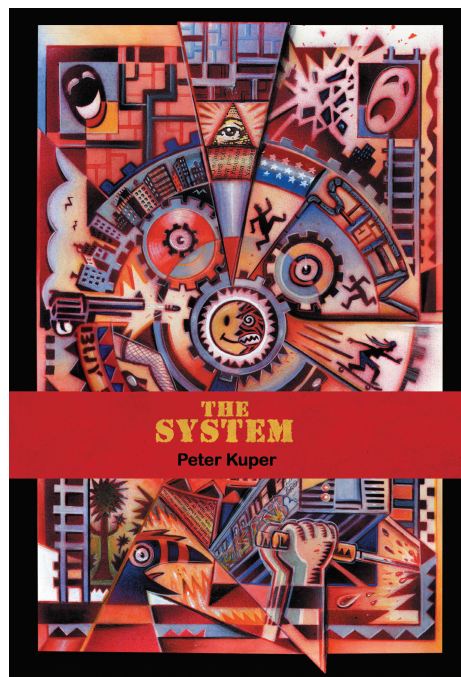    —Sue Coe, artist and author of *Dead Meat*

"A dark, dense, subtle portrait of the intricate continuum of urban life—and death—done in such bold strokes and shapes that you will never see the city in the same way again."
    —Kirkpatrick Sale, author of *After Eden: The Evolution of Human Domination*

"Though it has no word balloons or thought bubbles, *The System* is filled with so much urban clatter, you'll want to seal your windows shut. Kuper uses his trademark spray-paint/stencil art to send us careening through a kinetic New York landscape, jump-cutting from a crooked cop to a stripper, panning from a homeless guy to a cell-phone yuppie. The star of the story is the dark city itself, and the point is how money ties all its occupants—whether they know it or not—together."
    —Gavin Edwards, *Details*