

# Startup merges comic books, digital journalism

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A Customer compares a new iPad mini (L) and an iPad at an Apple store in November 2012. Do comics, serious journalism and tablet computers mix? The founders of the new illustrated tablet magazine startup Symbolia think so.

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Symbolia is described as "a tablet magazine of illustrated journalism that pairs incendiary reporting with thoughtful illustration and comics."

The project is funded by The International Women's Media Foundation, the McCormick Foundation and J-Lab: The Institute for Interactive Journalism and seeks "to provide an immersive, engaging experience for a new generation of newshounds."

The magazine can be read on a [tablet](#) or as a PDF file on a computer. It costs \$2.99 per issue or \$11.99 for six issued.

The premiere edition includes "Secret Spies in the Congo," which explores fish species in the Congo River, "The Rollerblades of Sulaymaniyah," a dispatch from Iraqi Kurdistan, and a profile of an African rock group, "Ask Me About Psych Rock in Zambia."

"Powerful, thoughtfully crafted images represent a strong future for journalism," said co-founders Erin Polgreen and Joyce Rice.

"Comics and illustrations not only give audiences a unique experience, they are ideal for social sharing. Comics journalism stands out."

"Symbolia is the first US publication dedicated exclusively to 'comics journalism,'" says Jessica Weisberg in an article for the Columbia Journalism Review.

"While serious [graphic novels](#)—like Maus or Persepolis—have proven that comics can handle difficult subjects, serious nonfiction [comics](#) are still rare."

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