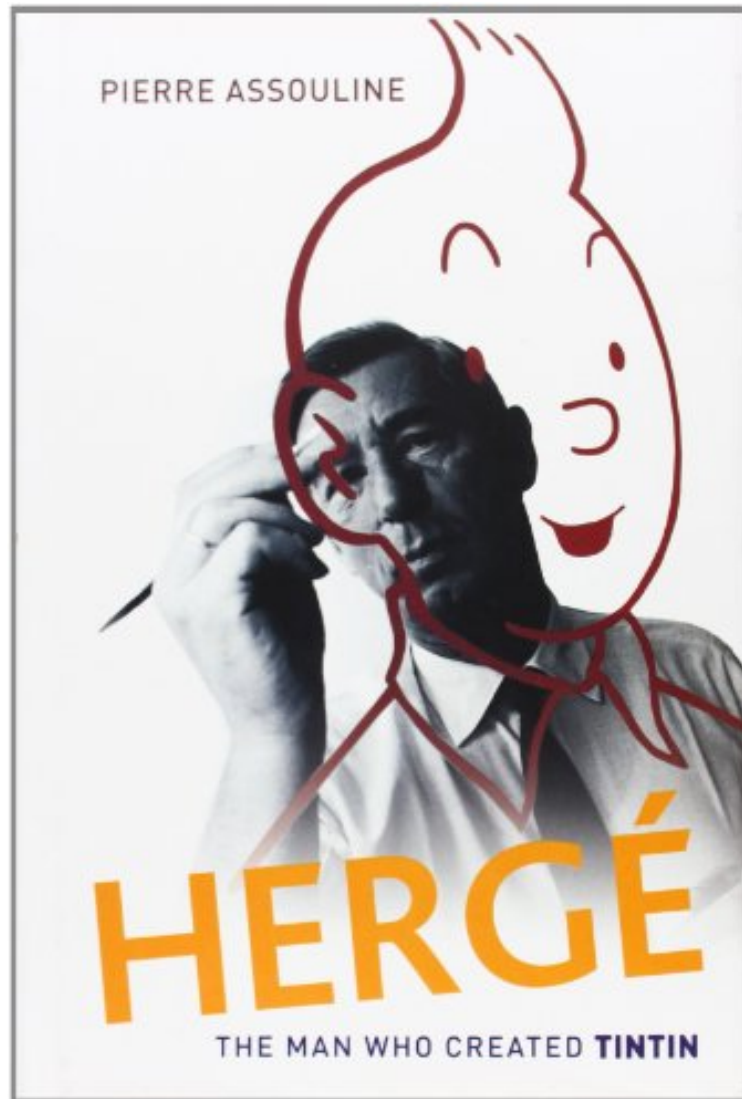


(Free read ebook) Herg: The Man Who Created Tintin

Herg: The Man Who Created Tintin

Pierre Assouline, Charles Ruas
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Pierre Assouline, Charles Ruas : Herg: The Man Who Created Tintin before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Herg: The Man Who Created Tintin:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Interesting Insight into Hergé's Life By Ganapathy Subramaniam For anyone who is a fan of Hergé's works, be it the evergreen reporter Tintin and his adventures, or his funny Quick and Flupke, or the more familial Jo, Zette and Jocko, there is no such thing as enough when it comes to any literature related to the artist or his art. Last few years has seen a surge in books on Hergé and Tintin, Michale Farr's works in particular, and the newly translated Art of Hergé series have given new insights into the working of Hergé. How he

went about creating the stories, what he used for his ever so detailed art work as reference, etc. This book by Pierre Assouline is a refreshingly new look at the life and times of Hergé. The focus is now on the happenings in the background as Hergé went about spinning tale after tale of adventure and fun. It gives a very balanced and unbiased view on Hergé, his political social situation, his views and attitudes, and how the political situation in Europe during the early twentieth century was shaping the creativity of Hergé and others like him. It talks about interesting things that artists, readers and anyone interested in Tintin, French/Belgian, European art/journalism in that part of history, will find very informative. This also gives a good coverage on some controversial aspects such as racial stereotyping and such. And how Hergé was simply being himself, in tune with the times, plain and straight and not worrying about "political correctness" or being a hero. Those were indeed strange times, to learn that Hergé was imprisoned for alleged 'collaboration' with the German occupation and some even thought he should be hanged!! The book is full of little stories that give answers to so many questions that we might have, artistically and otherwise, for instance, here is a story about how Hergé hired a very talented Jacob who influenced Hergé in bringing in meticulous details to the mechanical drawings of cars and airplanes. Numerous such stories fill the book. How people, events and situations influenced the artist in his creation are a very interesting read. The book takes the reader through the life of Hergé during his creative professional years, evolution of the stories, evolution of the formats, how it all started as political journalism, as newspaper strip with the journalist investigating communist Russia, colonial Africa etc., and how the Tintin series itself matures and became more sophisticated as time progressed, with adventurous stories such as the Red Rackham's treasure and the The Destination Moon sequels. We also learn about how the series was revised, reformatted, colored and transformed into a uniform series, and how much of time and labour went into it. The book is very well paced, like that of an exciting novel, that you want to finish it all in one go. but being a great fan of Hergé and his works, one wants to sip it in ever so slowly, enjoying every bit of it as we enjoy Hergé's works. 6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Informative, but distant. By George M. Seminar I approached this biography with great excitement. It's author, Pierre Assouline's previous biography on mystery author, Georges Simenon, was amazing. Unfortunately, Hergé: The Man Who Created Tintin, isn't as good. He seems so mired in touching on the facts that he never draws a proper portrait of the man. Unfortunate, because Hergé is deserving of a proper biography. As interesting as this book is, it isn't the book we have been waiting for. It's a great teaser for a better book. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A HIT By Memommie of 10 My grandson is infatuated by Tintin. He received the Complete Set for Christmas. Although he is only 13, he is interested in the creator of such a character. Some of it could be over his head, but he is diligent in getting through the biography. It was the favorite thing in his stocking this Christmas.

One of the most beloved characters in all of comics, Tintin won an enormous international following. Translated into dozens of languages, Tintin's adventures have sold millions of copies, and Steven Spielberg is presently adapting the stories for the big screen. Yet, despite Tintin's enduring popularity, Americans know almost nothing about his gifted creator, Georges Remi--better known as Hergé. Offering a captivating portrait of a man who revolutionized the art of comics, this is the first full biography of Hergé available for an English-speaking audience. Born in Brussels in 1907, Hergé began his career as a cub reporter, a profession he gave to his teenaged, world-traveling hero. But whereas Tintin was "fully formed, clear-headed, and positive," Assouline notes, his inventor was "complex, contradictory, inscrutable." For all his huge success--achieved with almost no formal training--Hergé would say unassumingly of his art, "I was just happy drawing little guys, that's all." Granted unprecedented access to thousands of the cartoonist's unpublished letters, Assouline gets behind the genial public mask to take full measure of Hergé's life and art and the fascinating ways in which the two intertwine. Neither sugarcoating nor sensationalizing his subject, he meticulously probes such controversial issues as Hergé's support for Belgian imperialism in the Congo and his alleged collaboration with the Nazis. He also analyzes the underpinnings of Tintin--how the conception of the character as an asexual adventurer reflected Hergé's appreciation for the Boy Scouts organization as well as his Catholic mentor's anti-Soviet ideology--and relates the comic strip to Hergé's own place within the Belgian middle class. A profound influence on a generation of artists such as Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, the elusive figure of Hergé comes to life in this illuminating biography--a deeply nuanced account that unveils the man and his career as never before.

"Assouline has sketched a portrait of Hergé that is as clean and concise as one of the man's own drawings."--Financial Times "Assouline handles his difficult subject with objectivity and occasional distaste. He has interviewed Remi's closest surviving associates, including his wives, and is an expert on the stories and Remi's many later revisions. It is hard to imagine the job being better done."--The Sunday Times (London) "Assouline highlights yet again that all-too-common divide between the flawed private man and the admirable creative genius. ... [T]hose fascinated by the strange lives of creative geniuses may want to read Assouline's fine, if somewhat disillusioning, biography."--Michael Dirda, Washington Post "Assouline ... serviceably captures the major events of Hergé's life."--Bookforum "Assouline will inform and edify America's Tintin devotees."--San Francisco Chronicle "[A] scrupulous but stolid biography."--New York Times Book "Mr. Assouline, a journalist and film producer...is generally judicious and fair, determined to

make his subject sympathetic."--New York Times"[A] well-written biography ... Assouline, a journalist, makes the best of the grey-all-over Georges Remi by exploring the contrasts between his life and the colorful figures he invented, Tintin and Herg."--The New Republic "Assouline is the highly-regarded biographer of Georges Simenon and Henri Cartier-Bresson, and his penetrating study, *Herg: The Man Who Created Tintin*, will add to a growing international reputation."--Taki's Magazine About the Author Pierre Assouline is a prominent French journalist and writer. He has written several novels as well as acclaimed biographies of photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson and detective novelist Georges Simenon. He is also a film producer and was the 2007 winner of the prestigious Prix de la Langue Francaise. Charles Ruas is the author of *Conversations with American Writers* and a frequent contributor to *ArtNews* and *Art in America*. From The Washington Post From The Washington Post's Book World/washingtonpost.com ed by by Michael Dirda Some years ago I was teaching English in a lycee -- a French high school -- in a poor, working-class district of Marseille. One afternoon I asked my class to tell me the names of their favorite writers. Would they, I wondered, pick Stendhal or Boris Vian or maybe Franoise Sagan or even the pulp detective writer San-Antonio? To my surprise, many of these 16-year-olds sang out "Ren Goscinny" and "Herg." They laughed when I failed to recognize either name. Goscinny, I soon learned, was the co-creator of the comic-book hero Astrix, whose witty, pun-filled and sometimes anachronistic adventures are set during the Roman occupation of ancient Gaul. In effect, Goscinny wrote what we now call graphic novels. I soon bought and read most of them. As for Herg: Not knowing his name revealed to everyone that I was but a callow, provincial American, a mere aspirant to European culture. For Herg was, of course, the Belgian writer and artist who, between 1930 and 1976, chronicled the Indiana Jones-like adventures of the immortal boy reporter Tintin and his dog, Snowy. Just this past June, an Herg Museum opened near Brussels, with considerable fanfare. Nowadays, the 23 canonical Tintin albums, translated into English, can usually be found in the children's section of most public libraries. Yet fans range from philosopher Michel Serres to novelist Marguerite Duras to filmmaker Steven Spielberg, who is at work on a series of Tintin movies, starting with "The Secret of the Unicorn" (1943). Moreover, there are scores of scholarly books and articles about the young reporter, including that foundational work of Tintinology, the 1984 study by Jean-Marie Apostolids, which has now been translated as "The Metamorphoses of Tintin." This last is a labor of love but also of sophisticated analysis, examining the evolution and changing character of the Tintinesque universe. A new Herg biography by Pierre Assouline highlights yet again that all-too-common divide between the flawed private man and the admirable creative genius. Tintin was originally conceived as the ideal Boy Scout: virtuous, brave, resourceful and (in his earliest days) religious, as well as eternally 15 years old. Children were virtually encouraged to practice the imitation of Tintin. After all, Herg -- born Georges Remi -- himself grew up a devout Catholic conservative. He invented his hero for the juvenile section of a Catholic publication called *Le Vingtime Sicle* (The Twentieth Century), and for years followed closely the spiritual and artistic direction of its charismatic editor, Father Norbert Wallez. It's especially deplorable, then, that the initial versions of "Tintin in the Land of the Soviets" (1930), "Tintin in the Congo" (1931) and "Tintin in America" (1932) were spattered with crude political caricatures, fanatical Belgian nationalism, colonialist attitudes, anti-Semitism and racism. Villains, for instance, bore Jewish names and exaggerated features. Good Africans loyally pledged their allegiance to their homeland, Belgium. Tintin's friend, the short-tempered, moody and alcoholic Captain Haddock, spluttered racially offensive epithets in his colorful bouts of cursing. Still, one might excuse such things as being period prejudices, typical of the time. It's an argument that Herg later made himself. But the artist's behavior during the Nazi occupation of Belgium is another matter. In order to keep working and, quite callously, to advance his career, Herg agreed to supply Tintin strips to *Le Soir*, a collaborationist newspaper whose editors toed the Nazi line. So, while other writers and artists chose an honorable silence, Herg blithely earned pots of money as a valued member of the *Le Soir* team. After the war, Herg barely escaped prosecution as a collaborator, largely because he opportunely accepted a chance to collaborate again -- this time by starting Tintin magazine with the very men in a position to save him from indictment. For a long time, he was nonetheless widely considered a traitor or "incivique" (noncitizen). Little wonder that by the late 1940s, the once highly energetic Herg began to suffer from severe depression, sought escape in casual love affairs and grew increasingly absolutist in his business arrangements and artistic views. To produce the postwar Tintin adventures, Herg established an almost medieval-style workshop, relying on talented employees for historical research, story development and a fair amount of drawing and coloring. Yet he always took sole credit. In his art, at least, there could be no hint of collaboration. Still, the mature Herg never found real contentment. In his later years he divorced his wife and married a woman nearly 30 years his junior, studied the quietist "Tao Te Ching" for spiritual solace and published nothing new after 1976. He died in 1983 at the age of 75. Most readers of the Tintin albums generally agree that those produced in the late 1950s and early '60s were Herg's most heartfelt, deepest or funniest: "The Calculus Affair" (1956), "The Red Sea Sharks" (1958) and "The Castafiore Emerald" (1963) are often mentioned as his best, while Herg's own favorite was "Tintin in Tibet" (1960). In the first I ever read, "The Crab With the Golden Claws" (1941), a discarded tin can leads our hero to a ring of opium smugglers. In short order, Tintin and Snowy meet Captain Haddock for the first time, suffer near drowning, and almost die of thirst in the Sahara, where they eventually fight a pitched battle straight out of "Beau Geste." I know that Herg eliminated some objectionable elements in the original story, but what now remains is clear, fast-moving and surprisingly sweet. Tintinatics of a scholarly turn will

certainly want to acquire Jean-Marie Apostolids's "The Metamorphoses of Tintin," while those fascinated by the strange lives of creative geniuses may want to read Assouline's fine, if somewhat disillusioning, biography. But, "blistering barnacles!," as Captain Haddock would say: All that really matters are those 23 albums, perennial classics of reposeful adventure. bookworld@washpost.com Copyright 2009, The Washington Post. All Rights Reserved.