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Mastering Comics

Olivia Hales

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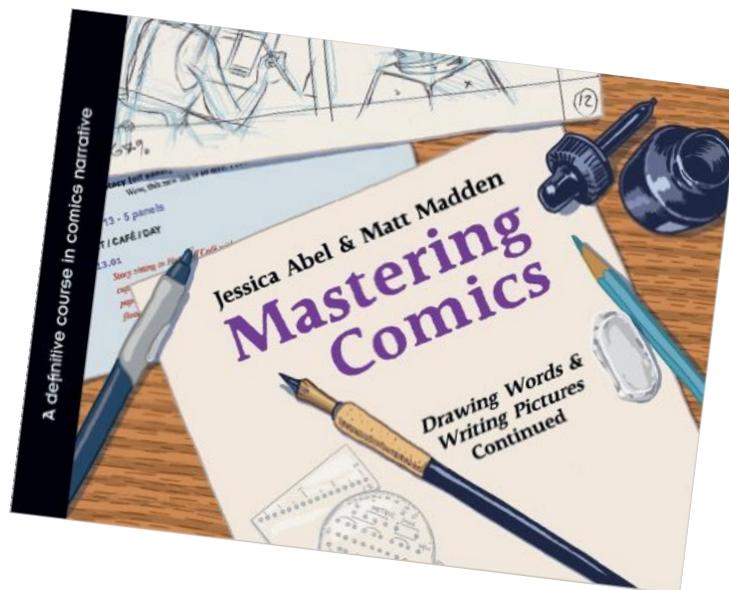
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Book Review

Title: Mastering Comics
Author: Jessica Abel & Matt Madden
Reviewer: Olivia Hales
Publisher: First Second
Publication Year: 2012
ISBN: 9781596436176
Number of Pages: 318
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Outstanding



Review

Mastering Comics is an instructional text created by Jessica Abel and Matt Madden that provides a closer look at what it takes to make engaging stories in the comic book medium. The book is adapted to be used in a classroom by students and teachers or by the individual. The book is comprehensive in its choice of subject. Topics range from linear perspective drawing to methods of coloring, print history, and contemporary distribution considerations, to name only a few. At the end of each chapter, a homework and extra-credit assignment are proposed to give the reader an opportunity to apply what was taught in the chapter. Online resources as well as recommendations for further reading on any given subject are provided for readers seeking to further hone the more particular skills needed in crafting comics.

Mastering Comics is frankly, the most complete comics instructional text in the world. What every other "How to" book glosses over or simply ignores, *Mastering Comics* picks apart and reduces to clear, well-informed lessons designed for your average aspiring comics creator. Another excellent aspect of this book is in its mindfulness of the broad readership it holds. Oftentimes How-to-make-Comics books adopt an approach of "one size fits all," in regards to content, presentation, and real life application. *Mastering Comics* is consistent in the way that it offers varying levels of difficulty and detail for its readers to sample, explore, and incorporate. The clarity of information will come as a great relief to readers who, in their quest for a deeper understanding of the comic book genre, may have become over saturated in the theoretical aspects of comic making. The book itself is very well designed, and contains a remarkable amount of information for being so compact. The wider format and paper quality make the book perfect for laying open on a drafting table or other surface. This book is an ideal guide in the quest for making fluent and artful comics.

*Example comics and excerpts contain language, violence, and sexuality.