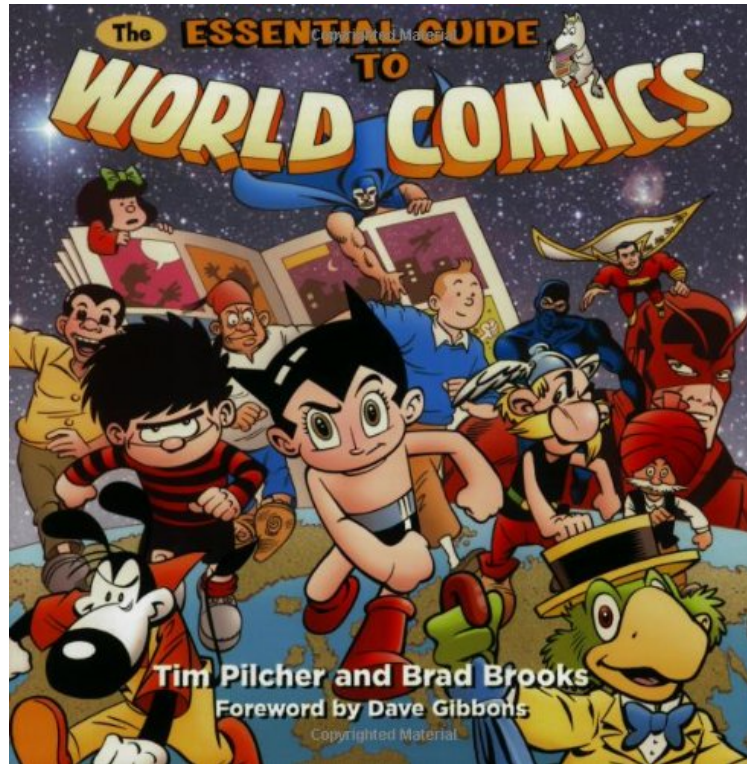


## The Essential Guide to World Comics

Tim Pilcher, Brad Brooks

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**Tim Pilcher, Brad Brooks : The Essential Guide to World Comics** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Essential Guide to World Comics:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A dream round-the-world ticketBy P. GravettIn The Essential Guide to World Comics, co-authors Tim Pilcher and Brad Brooks crisscross most of the globe on a 320-page whirlwind tour, which leaves them, and no doubt most readers, "flabbergasted at the sheer scope across the planet." Like TV film critics Siskel and Ebert, this guide benefits from Pilcher and Brooks' dual viewpoint, which strikes a balance between Brad's faith in comics as art and Tim's more prosaic view of comics as fun. As they say, "Both views are valid and the truth probably lies inbetween". Almost everywhere they turn, they find that the mass-market mainstream and the more artistic alternatives co-exist and often overlap. In fact, perhaps the most overused word in the book is "cross-pollination", as they observe how interconnected different countries' comics cultures have become. They carve up the world into ten chapters of between 20 and 36 pages, charting figures and favourites that made history, sometimes starting from the 19th century, but mainly from the 20th. North America and Britain lead off, followed by Japan, the rest of Southeast Asia, France and Belgium, and the rest of continental Europe. Next come South America, Scandinavia, and Australasia, and finally India, Africa, and the Middle East. They close each chapter with a spread on one 'World-Class Creator', like Kirby, Baxendale, Herg or Tezuka, or less well-known geniuses like Uruguay's Alberto Breccia, Denmark's Peter Madsen or New Zealand's Dylan Horrocks. They pack in some great anecdotes, masses of names, titles, facts and figures and rarely seen imagery from lovely crumbling antiquities to obscure small

press gems. My one quibble is that, while they offer an index of about 1,000 creators (some cited on the page only in a list), they did not index the vital characters or comic titles, surely more familiar to most readers. It is still a remarkable achievement, colourful and sharply designed. Of course, no single book can ever contain the entirety of the world's comics, but maybe the web could. As Dave Gibbons muses in his foreword, "Maybe someday in the future, comics aficionados will have the equivalent of the technology that brings music from around the world to my computer desktop." Already fan-created websites are sprouting with impressive resources, but imagine being able to read online archives or downloads of whole runs of any of the strips shown here, translated into whatever language you need at the touch of button. Whether this happens is probably more a question of when than if. Till then, this Guide is a dream round-the-world ticket.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Nice reference to comics from around the globe. By Jeff Nettleton Although this is a few years old, it is a fairly comprehensive review of comics from various regions. Each chapter focuses on a different country or region, giving a brief history of their comics, key figures, titles and characters and their evolution. It is packed with excellent information, with various sidebar articles on key creators and characters. The US is handled relatively briefly, since the reader is likely to have some familiarity to that world. Of course, no single volume can encompass everything, but this does a nice job of hitting the most vital areas. It makes a fine companion to Maurice Horn's earlier World Encyclopedia of Comics, as well as the various American histories, such as those of Ron Goulart, Mike Benton, Les Daniels, Gerard Jones and a few select others.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Nice book, very interesting. By Anne-Li I mostly bought this book as I heard it contains information about my favourite manga, *From Eroica With Love*. I'm glad I did, though, as I found it all very interesting, with plenty of information of lots of things I enjoyed reading and learning about. I'm not very knowledgeable in the field, but the things I do know sounded about right. However, as the author joked (or so I assume, though it wasn't very funny) about the way the main character in *From Eroica With Love* dresses, that does make me a bit concerned if there are other jokes I'm missing. However, nice with glossy pages and so on, so I will give it a fairly high rating anyway.

A beautifully illustrated guide to the global comics phenomenon. Every American is familiar with comic book heroes like Superman, Batman and Spider Man--but what about Bomber Girl, Bob Fish, and Rogan Gosh? Images of these international heroes--along with hundreds of others--are featured in this authoritative guide to comics around the world. Tim Pilcher and Brad Brooks examine the cultural impact of comics in over 20 countries, from Japan--where popular titles sell 6.5 million copies per week--to France, where comics are considered an art form on par with music and poetry. A sweeping global survey of the history and evolution of the medium, this informative volume is packed with fascinating stories, enlightening statistics, and colorful illustrations, many never before seen in the United States.

From Booklist Recently, U.S. comics fans have been given new opportunities to broaden the geographic scope of their reading by the proliferation of translated manga titles from Japan, which all but dominate many bookstores' graphic-novel sections, and by the translation of European works in record numbers. Yet vast areas of the globe remain underrepresented on American shelves. Help in rectifying that situation comes from British comics experts Pilcher and Brooks, whose opening chapter here succinctly but thoroughly surveys nearly a century of comics publishing in the U.S., focusing on superheroes while touching on other genres. Similar surveys of the comics scenes of Britain, Japan, Southeast Asia, France, elsewhere in Europe, Latin America, Scandinavia, Australia and New Zealand, and the Middle East and South Asia follow. Each chapter contains copious color illustrations and a mini-biography of a prominent "World-Class Creator." The authors know their stuff, and their different tastes--one elevates the comics medium to fine art; the other believes it can be "just big, dumb fun"--ensure balance. A stunning eye-opener to the comics medium's variety. Gordon Flagg Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved About the Author Tim Pilcher is a pop culture expert who has spent 20 years working in and around the comics industry, as an assistant editor for DC Comics' Vertigo imprint, and as an associate editor of the industry trade paper, *Comics International*. He also co-founded Les Cartonistes Dangereux publishing house. He lives in Brighton, England.