

FUMETTO > INTERNATIONAL

CHANGES OF CONTEMPORARY COMICS

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Abstract

The Event

Despite a decline in its mass appeal, in last twenty years comics have undergone a **profound change process**, on its language, editorial forms and consumption practices levels. These changes have redefined both its cultural status and its circulation strategies, creating **a new balance between its popular appeal and aesthetics research**, and situating comics as a crucial field for the elaboration of cultural globalisation processes during the 1990s and 2000s.

FUMETTO > INTERNATIONAL will be a national opportunity for an **organic investigation in the field of international contemporary comics**. Following this, the exhibition will provide a comprehensive look at the world of present day comic art, accompanied by some related events.

Aims

The exhibition offers the Italian audience, for the first time, a broad and structured view of international comics culture, focusing on the main cultural changes and innovations processes which have taken place on the artistic and editorial sides.

FUMETTO > INTERNATIONAL also intends to point out and promote Italian role within the cultural and artistic debate (currently less evident than in France, Belgium, United States, Canada, South Korea and Japan) on graphic novel Age and comics international development, thanks to the selection of different works and artists that contributed to the transformations of the cultural shape and the artistry of contemporary comics.

The exhibition will stimulate, with supporting events, dialogue and debate between artists, key players in the field and the general audience of both comics and Italian visual culture. This means that Triennale will offer in-site artistic interventions, conferences and public presentations along with moments for in-depth studies in cooperation with main academic institutions.

Structure

The exhibition is divided into two main sections, theme-based, and a finale part more focused on visitor experience (with videos, multimedia and large books presence). Pointing these areas, there will be small "boxes" or stands dedicated to a selection of four artists, particularly relevant in relationship to the main themes: Igort (Italy), Joann Sfar (France), Jiro Taniguchi (Japan), Chris Ware (United States). The main areas will show two very central dimensions of contemporary comics culture: innovation in editorial language and forms, and aesthetic globalisation processes.

Section A Graphic novel art. An introductory section will present a brief overview of the main steps of editorial and art changes that held, in the 1980s/1990s, to the growing success of graphic novel. The two main subsections will focus on:

- 1 cultural confluences that defined the graphic novel scene, in its early growing moment (underground and popular tradition, New Pop and avant-garde artistic research).
- 2 recent trends among current authors and editorial products and forms (graphic novels, anthologies, mini-comics, webcomics), with special attention on development on book design.

Section B Asian Wave. An introductory section will present the issue of cultural clash between East and West, thanks to a short anthology of significant cases from the first phase (the "second Japanese invasion" of the 1990s). The remaining space will be dedicated to the next and current phase of "creolization" through some photos regarding the hybridisation and the cultural dialogue in the transnational comics:

- 1 East side story, which shows some significant examples of the new aesthetic and narrative trends of contemporary "manga", which often "turns to the West" in terms of comics and visual cultures
- 2 Eastern pop style, that is the trend in "pop" reworking of artistic stimulus coming from the Eastern comics, with special attention for creativity in "new mainstream" and successful books/comic artists
- 3 West side story, in which the concept of graphic novel is taken up again, showing those cases of graphic novels which have faced with the different styles of the Eastern visual and narrative culture

Supporting Events

As a way of creating a ground for reflection on issues suggested by the exhibition, as well as promoting greater awareness on the evolution of the medium, a series of events have been planned to take place both at the museum and in different locations. Among these are:

- on-site interventions (decorations and wall-art for section of the exhibition and the Triennale building)
- seminars, scholar lectures, meetings and presentations
- a competition for young artists with special event (in collaboration with "Zero" magazine)