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Musashi (A Graphic Novel)



Synopsis

A graphic novel version of the life of legendary samurai Miyamoto Musashi. Miyamoto Musashi, the legendary samurai, is known throughout the world as a master swordsman, spiritual seeker, and author of the classic Book of Five Rings. Acclaimed manga creator Sean Michael Wilson has created both a vivid account of a fascinating period in feudal Japan and a portrait of a courageous, iconoclastic samurai who wrestled with philosophical and spiritual ideas that are as relevant today as they were in his time. For Musashi, the way of the martial arts was about mastery of the mind rather than simply technical prowess. Over 350 years after his death, Musashi still intrigues us and his Book of Five Rings is essential reading for students of all martial arts and those interested in cultivating a strategic mind.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As a lifetime student of numerous martial arts (Judo, Jujitsu, Karate, Kenjutsu, Kendo, Wakizashi-Jutsu, Tanto-Jutsu etc.) I have read numerous versions of "The book of five rings" by Miyamoto Musashi as well as many articles and books on Japan's most famous "Sword Saint." This is the first graphic novel version of Miyamoto Musashi (by Sean Michael Wilson illustrated by Michiru Morikawa) I have ever read on this famous figure in Japanese history. This wonderful book is organized into nine chapters and the story of Musashi is told through his adopted son Miyamoto Iori. The story begins with the completion of a monument to Miyamoto Musashi designed by Yonemura-Sensei. Yonemura-Sensei desires to know more about Musashi and his

son, Miyamoto Iori is happy to answer all questions concerning his father. The nine chapters relate the various stages in the life of Musashi, including his most famous battles. Even though I had read much about Musashi in other books and articles I still learned a lot of other information on Musashi reading this graphic novel version. Musashi was not only an undefeated swordsman, fighting sixty duels, but was also an accomplished and respected poet, garden designer, and Zen master. Besides his most famous work, *The Book of Five Rings* • which is still read today by all serious martial artists, he also wrote *The twenty-one maxims of the way of walking alone*. • These maxims are considered the basic philosophical principles he has followed and they are included at the end of chapter nine. If you are into the martial arts this is a book that should be in your personal library, along with his *The Book of Five Rings*. • A beautifully fully illustrated book. Rating: 5 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: *The Samurai Soul: An old warrior's poetic tribute*).

I can't say enough good things about this graphic novel. There are many fictionalized accounts of Musashi out there, including the long running *Vagabond* manga series, but this is the only factual historical graphic novel. Sean Michael Wilson manages to tell an engaging story while maintaining rigorous attention to detail. The artwork is also beautiful yet carefully researched. This book is a real treasure. It's obvious that the creators have a real love for Musashi and Japanese history, and they really do it justice here. I was surprised to see how complete of a life story this was, given the relative brevity of the book. After finishing this I went back and re-read *The Lone Samurai*, and was pleased to see that not only wasn't anything left out, they even added a few extra details. And using a brilliant storytelling move of having the story told by Musashi's adopted son Iori, they were even able to deal with some of the historical controversies surrounding Musashi's life. After seeing so many fictionalized movie portrayals of his duels (many of which are frankly quite silly), it was exciting to see the famous duels as they really were, over in a matter of seconds. Musashi's precision was astounding, as seen in the scene where Sasaki Kojiro's famous long sword (*The Laundry Pole*) slices through the cloth tied on Musashi's head but leaves him untouched, while the wood sword (which he famously carved from a boat oar only that morning) came crashing down into Kojiro's forehead. And Sean Michael Wilson applies this same precision to his storytelling. Simply AWESOME!

It was by chance that I came across this book. Having never heard of Musashi, I decided to try it out after watching the movie *47 Ronin*. It's interesting to read about ancient legends. Worth it for sure if you enjoy Japanese tradition.

Purchased as a gift for my father who enjoys Japanese culture and loved reading books about Musashi. The occasional writing in the novel is really small, but the graphics are cool.

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