



Indian Summer

Hugo Pratt , Milo Manara (Illustrator)

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Siamo nel XVII secolo, ai tempi e nei pressi delle prime colonie americane, e i giorni sono quelli dell'estate 'indiana', quando l'autunno finisce e l'inverno deve ancora arrivare. L'apparente serenità del piccolo villaggio in cui la storia è ambientata è a un tratto interrotta da un tragico evento, lo stupro di una ragazza, che scatenerà una terribile lotta tra indiani e coloni. Ma dietro tutto quest'odio c'è molto di più di un singolo episodio di violenza: grande ruolo giocheranno anche i morbosi legami, le relazioni incestuose, le ipocrisie nascoste di una piccola comunità in cui non è facile distinguere fra buoni e cattivi, onesti e corrotti. Il primo frutto della collaborazione tra il genio narrativo di Hugo Pratt e il talento inconfondibile di Milo Manara.

Indian Summer Details

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Costas says

Disclaimer: **This is an adult-themed comic book. It contains (maybe unnecessary) female nudity.**

You've been warned.

This one served as an introduction for me to both Pratt and Manara. And I'm sure Pratt's fans, as much as Manara's, would have much to say about how inappropriate an introduction this volume would be to each artist's body of work, but truth is, Gaiman brought me here (See his introduction to his 'Endless Nights' Sandman-verse related volume) and I was already prejudiced that I would read a fantastic piece of art. Although I can already hear the criticism against Manara's strips being filled with unnecessary, male-gaze eye-candy nudity and misogyny (and I'll admit some nudity felt indeed out of place at times), we need to consider this work in its proper context.

"Indian Summer" (or "*Everything started with an Indian Summer*" as the actual translation of the Italian title goes) is a 33-year-old comic book, its story set in America, where the English settlers have recently arrived, and revolves around a matriarchical family, put together by Abigail Lewis, an abused and beaten woman cast out of the Protestant colony of New Canaan (and marked with a scarlet letter), who raises her children among the White colonists (and the Puritan morals they brought along from Old Europe) and America's native Indians. When one of her sons murders two Indians after they have raped New Canaan's Pilgrim Black's niece, the revenge of the tribe is a fierce wave that spawns revelations about the Puritan settlers' hypocrisy, the Lewis's and Black's families (incestuous and traumatic) past and leads to a tragic catharsis.

Manara's strips, if one can get past the nudity, which I found suitable for this context, with their wonderful depictions of nature, and the long, deep, intense and meaningful silences, make a great pairing with Pratt's story. Punctuated by the sexual acts (always with a critical subtext), Manara's illustrations create a masterful rhythm in telling the story, from the introduction, to the episodes, their revelations and the denouement, which is concluded by an excellent post-climactic/post-coital epilogue that elevates this historical graphic novel to an epic of the American Odyssey.

Powerful, moving, thought-provoking. Highly recommended.

Xan says

Manara & Pratt, un gran libro de dos maestros del cómic.

Marquise says

I had to mull over how to rate this carefully, and, boy, is this one hard book to rate!

On one hand, there's the story itself, scripted by Hugo Pratt. It's a gritty tale of conflict between English settlers in 1600s North America and Indian natives that starts when a white girl from the town is cornered by two Native young men whilst taking a walk and is raped, which calls bloody vengeance on the culprits. But although that's the opening plotline, it's not the central one. Instead, the focus is on the Lewis family, a single

mother and her four children, and their vicissitudes that result from one of the Lewis boys taking the victim to their farm, which in turn becomes a battlefield for the English soldiers and the Indians.

The Lewises are an interesting family, and very messed up, too. The mother is a Hester Prynne type of "fallen woman," who carries her own "scarlet letter" in the form of a mark on her face, and lives in an isolated farm and is shunned by Puritan society from the town as she's never revealed the identity of the father of her four children. But unlike Hawthorne's heroine, she's a really tragic woman and whose true story, revealed near the end, is a gut-wrenching one and can be really hard to read. Her eldest son, Elijah, is the most likable of them all and the noblest, not to mention the only one that is right in the head. The two next, Abner and Phillis, elicit very conflicting feelings, especially the latter, because on one hand you can understand why they're so shocking in their ways, but on the other hand you might dislike them for that same reason. Their story is very dark, and it doesn't pull no punches, yet at the same time you feel like the author didn't waste ink in trying to romanticise one side and demonise the other, for both sides are at fault in this conflagration. But whilst no camp is clear-cut good or bad, the same cannot be said of the characters, for they're not all gray; there's black and white too.

So far, so good. And now we come to the art, and that's where I find issues to take note of. In reality, my issues could be summed up in two words: Milo Manara.

Had it not been for Pratt, I'd not have picked this up, because Manara I know well and have an endless list of observations to his work from all my prior reads. No, it's not that it's adult level of eroticism; there's plenty of artists who always are drawing only erotic or sensual art, like Luis Royo, and I love them. No, it's not that he is explicit, more so than other erotic art illustrators. It's that Manara panders to the most perverted side of men with his provocative and often problematic handling of dubious consent and non-consensual intercourse. When Manara is illustrating, it's all male gaze, male gaze everywhere, and nothing but male gaze. For that, he often inserts sudden and out-of-nowhere nudes, women all of a sudden lift their skirts and show everything, or appear suddenly nude from one panel to the next in inviting poses even when the story doesn't call for it, and so on. And it's so grating! It sours the storytelling up. He already courted a big controversy when he drew a cover for Spider-Woman in which he drew the superheroine in an overtly provocative pose (and it wasn't even the first time he did that, just the one that got more press coverage). And he doesn't stop at unnecessary nudity and shock, which in itself would be bothersome but depending on the reader it can be ignored for the sake of the story. It's that he crosses the line into depicting what's totally unacceptable from whichever angle you look at it: (view spoiler) That's frankly disgusting, and it cannot be excused with any argument about time period mores as it has nothing to do with such. There's plenty of adult themes here, violence, etc., and it'd have called for a more responsible handling than Manara was able to bring forth. Other than that, the art is visually appealing and with a pleasing palette of colours; I suspect it's his talent what allows the artist to get away with a lot of what he does.

This isn't a book I'd recommend if you don't think you can take all this in. If you think you can have a try at this, or are used to grimdark storytelling, then consider yourself forewarned about what you may expect from this.

Nacho Cuadrado says

Un pre-western que nos cuenta la historia de como da inicio la guerra entre una tribu de indios contra una comunidad de colonos, todo por la violación de la sobrina de un líder religioso de dicha comunidad a manos de dos indios de la tribu. y la posterior muerte de estos, causantes de dicho estupro.

Con una trama que mezcla drama apasionante con violencia explicita, ademas de contar con un arte de lo mas arrebatador y llamativo. Sus creadores logran transportar al lector y hacerlo sentir parte de todo lo transcurrido en la lectura.

Ziolum says

Western storicamente documentato, sceneggiato da Hugo Pratt e disegnato da Milo Manara. Un dream team che realizza un lavoro notevole: tavole ricche molto belle e dettagliate, una storia di frontiera che sul finale "finge" di essere un episodio reale che avrebbe ispirato Hawthorne per il suo celeberrimo "La lettera scarlatta", in uno dei giochi di specchi e rimandi tanto cari a Pratt.

Personalmente però ho un problema con Milo Manara: i suoi disegni sono tanto belli quanto poco evocativi e coinvolgenti, le espressioni dei personaggi sono spesso sgradevolmente fuori contesto, così come lo è l'erotismo forzato per cui le ragazze sono obbligate a esporre la patata al vento ogni 4 pagine - anche in un racconto western. L'unica sequenza che funziona davvero è l'amplesso nella vasca da bagno: lì si vede che Manara gioca in casa. Il resto era meglio se fosse stato lasciato a Pratt.

Kim says

I did not know that Angoulême gave an award to pornography

Alex Panagiotopoulos says

Κάλ? κ?μικ και προφαν?ς πολ? σκληρ? ?πως αναμεν?ταν. Πιο πολ? Μαν?ρα παρ? Πρατ κατ'εμε. Πολ? πιο πολ?. Στο σεν?ριο σαφ?ς μιας και το σκ?τσο ε?ναι εξ'ολοκλ?ρου. Να πω την αμαρτ?α μου ?μως; Πιο πολ? ευχαριστ?θηκα τα μικρ? κειμεν?κια στο τ?λος της ιστορ?ας γραμμ?να αποκλειστικ? απ? τον Πρατ παρ? ?λο το υπ?λοιπο, και αυτ? γιατ? εν? γουστ?ρω τον Μαν?ρα αρκετ? ?στε να ευχαριστηθ? το στιλ του, ?ταν οι λ?ξεις ?χουν α?ρα Πρατ και το σχ?διο ?χι, μου φαντ?ζει ημιτελ?ς. Σαφ?ς ?χι κακ?, αλλ? με Πρατ-ικ? σκ?τσο θα απογειων?ταν. :) Τ?ρα ?χει μπει απλ? στον αεροδι?δρομο, οι επιβ?τες ?χουν β?λει τις ζ?νες τους και οι αεροσυνοδο? δε?χνουν τα σωσ?βια και τις εξ?δους κινδ?νου. :) Αλλ? δεν απογει?νεται. :)

Τ?ρα για την Ελληνικ? ?κδοση που ε?χα και τ?σο κ?ψα να βρω, τι να σχολι?σω ακριβ?ς; Τα ε?δωλα στην εκτ?πωση στο τελευτ?ο 1/3 του κ?μικ; Την μετ?φραση που ακο?γεται λες και την ?κανε καν?νας δωδεκ?χρονος με τις πρ?τες κ?ψες να βαρ?νε την π?ρτα και αυτ?ς να ντρ?πεται γ'αυτ?ς; Ρε αγγλικ?ς εκδ?σεις ξαν? και ξαν?, το μ?νο που καταφ?ρνουν αυτ?ς οι απ?πειρες των 90's ε?ναι να καταστρ?φουν την α?γλη και να κλ?βουν λ?γο (?ως πολ?) απ? την ευχαρ?στηση που προσφ?ρει το original υλικ?. Οκ, για τον αντ?στοιχο Αλ?ξανδρο του 1990 η δυνατ?τητα να το διαβ?σει στα Ελληνικ? θα ?ταν επαρκ?ς για την προσπ?ραση ακ?μα και των πιο χτυπητ?ν και ερασιτεχνικ?ν λαθ?ν. Για του 2018 ?μως, κερδ?ζουν απλ? ?να μειδ?σμα που ξεπερν? το μ?νιμο "ε και π?λι καλ? να λ?γαμε που βγ?κε ?στω και ?τσι..".

Nina says

IDEK, gorgeous art except apparently Manara deliberately draws one identical 'cock goes where?' face for ALL of the female characters and the male gaze is so overwhelming that I kinda wanted to go and take a shower after every few panels. Decent story though.

Jonathan says

Beautifully rendered account of settlers and savages inflicting violence and rape upon one another.

Alvaro Soffia says

Se trata de una colaboración entre Hugo Pratt y Milo Manara, lo que equivale a muchísima calidad. Hay que agradecer la edición integral que reúne los tres álbumes francobelgas y deleitan con un largo desarrollo de la historia, que narra episodios de la "convivencia" entre los colonizadores de Canadá y los nativos, que dialoga con "El gaucho", otra de sus obras en conjunto, pero que profundiza más en el conflicto humano de las generaciones de ambas culturas que crecieron juntas y se deben enfrentar por un asunto de honor, desencadenando lo peor de la barbarie contra los nativos, los que tampoco se andaban con chiquitas. Es un cómic histórico negro, con escenas duras y un sublime manejo de la composición y dibujo por parte de Manara, quien nos obsequia -era que no- con sus salvajes e inocentes musas. En suma, una lectura entretenida y cautivante de principio a fin.

Danijel says

Prva suradnja dva sunarodnjaka po nacionalnosti, **Huga Pratta i Mila Manare**, za koju se može reći da su uspješno pronašli zajednički stripovski jezik. Iz njih progovara ona istinska strast, strast prema crtanju stripova. Indijansko ljetovanje bavi se osobnim dramama pojedinca kao i kolektivnom sudbinom indijanskih i puritanskih zajednica. Možda bi čitatelju bilo jasnije kad bi se poslužili originalnim, doslovnim prijevodom "Sve je ponovno započelo s babljim ljetom". Radnja Ljeta se odvija u kolonijalnoj Novoj Engleskoj sredinom 17. stoljeća. Bilo je to znatno manje civilizirano doba, na sam korak od divljeg, i tu budući Granicu nastavili su tvrdi ljudi, ljudi odlučni ostvariti svoju budućnost na tom području.

U Prattovom ljetu glavni sukob odvija se između dvije strane, svijet licemjerja puritanskih kolonista supostavljen je prirodnom, paletariziranom i produhovljenom svijetu Indijanaca. Pratt u potpunosti apsorbira Manarinu osobnost, likovi kao da zaista izviru iz Manarinih pripovijesti. Ima tu strašnih obiteljskih tajni koje uključuju desetljeća ponižavanja i seksualnog iskorištavanja - što je direktan prikaz sve licemjernosti puritanskih zajednica; zatim tajnih života svećenika purista, muško-ženskim odnosima i lova na vještice koji je samo najgori produkt puritanske paranoje i religiozne zatucanosti. U izopačenom paketu uz preljub, sodomiju i pedofiliju dobivamo i incest, što bismo mogli reći da je standardno za našeg erotomana Manaru...

Indijanska vjeljud u stripu produhovljeni je narod. U tragovima u pijesku vide put, ili istinu. Znaju čitati srca i

duše bijelaca (oh, kad su tako prozirni), i iako vezani obvezom krvne osvete, vendete, pojedinci znaju priznati snagu prijateljstva i odanosti. Iako nisu ?uli ni za Isusa Krista, ni puritanski pokret i amoral i licemjerje onih koji ljubav najviše zagovaraju, ponašaju se kao pravi ljudi. Indijanci su u stvari Corto Maltese, sanjari otvorenih o?iju. Razgoli?eni, vide stvarno stanje svijeta i osje?aju duh vremena.

Ako ništa drugo, ukru?enim udom mogli ste široko otvorenim o?ima gledati surovo nali?je puritanske Amerike... ;)

Victoria Haf says

Milo Manara dibuja hermoso y hace momentos muy eróticos, lo que me gustó es que es una historia de peregrinos contra indios pero no cae en decir que uno es bueno y otro es malo, lo que no me gustó es que romantiza demasiado a las violaciones haciendo parecer que las mujeres en realidad lo querían y lo disfrutaban.

Graziano says

Forse perche'
come tutti gli
animali giovani quando
comincia l'estate indiana,
poco prima delle notti
fredde dell'inverno, si
ha bisogno di giocare
con le femmine.
(50)

Thomas says

This book is beautifully illustrated by Italian cartoonist Hugo Pratt. I think the story and dialouge gets a bit lost in the translation, but is easily made up for in the amazingly clear visual storytelling. It's very hard to find Pratts work here in the states , but i'm on the hunt for more.

Algernon says

My second historical stand-alone comic from Hugo Pratt (a hefty one at 150+ pages), drawn by Milo Manara. They play to each other's strengths, as Pratt is a thorough researcher and a great plotter for dark tales but a more modest draughtsman, and Manara is a very good artist when he is held in check and not going overboard with nudity and with being provocative. I liked the colour palette in particular in this issue, a lot of yellow and orange and ochre and desaturated greens and blues.

And I should mention from the start that this story is also adult oriented material, like my previous **El Gaucho** experience, dealing with rape, incest, murder, witch hunting, war.

I'll let the images talk, and limit my synopsis at mentioning it is a tale set in New England in the seventenn century, in a Puritan settlement next to an Indian village. Some connections could be made to The Last of the Mohicans, but the focus is more on the lack of communication between the natives and the settlers and on the hypocrisy of the moralists who hate women (references to Salem events)
