Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Hercules: Full Circle by Bob Layton", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/258. Entry version as of November 05, 2026.

Bob Layton

Hercules: Full Circle

United States (2009)

TAGS: Heracles Hercules Olympus Zeus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Hercules: Full Circle
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	United States
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2009
First Edition Details	Bob Layton, *Hercules: Full Circle*. Marvel Graphic Novel (Series, Book 37), New York: Marvel, 2009, 128 pp.
ISBN	9780785139577
Genre	Action and adventure comics, Alternative histories (Fiction), Comics (Graphic works), Mythological comics, Mythological fiction
Target Audience	Crossover
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Courtesy of the Author.

Bob Layton , b. 1970
(Author)

Bob is a highly prolific and imaginative American comic artist with over 5000 comic book credits. Bob works on comics as well as television and films. He worked for many companies, including Marvel and DC Comics. He reinvented the Iron man series in the 70s. He also launched one of the first mini-series in comic history, *Hercules: The Prince of Power*.

Layton said in an interview that “it took a bit of pushing to have a finite series about a drunken super-hero published at Marvel... I loved the big dumb lug and I've always had a soft spot for forgotten secondary characters. Plus, I felt that Hercules hadn't found his niche' in the Marvel Universe, being relegated to supporting roles and such. Also... I felt that the Marvel books took themselves WAY too serious in those days. I wanted to lighten things up a bit. I've always enjoyed writing comedy and Herc was a perfect foil for my brand of humor” (Cited from online interview, accessed: June 27, 2018).

Sources:

Official website (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Profile on Comic Vine (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Online interview (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University,
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Questionnaire

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1. What drew you to writing/working with Classical Antiquity and what challenges did you face in selecting, representing, or adapting particular myths or stories?

Character… character… and character! The elements that make a good story are the conflicts that create change in the characters. A good character is always a work in progress, constantly adapting to challenges that life throws at him while trying to control the inner demons that sometimes push him down unexpected roads.

2. Why do you think classical / ancient myths, history, and literature continue to resonate with young audiences?

The positive aspect is that the film industry is keeping the super-hero genre alive and demonstrating that there is definitely an audience for this particular form of entertainment. I believe that these Hollywood producers, seeking to recapture the "sense of wonder" they experienced as youngsters, have now become a new creative extension for the medium of comics – taking their favorite icons back to their more accessible roots.
The truth is that many of the comic-based movies are what the comics themselves used to be, back when they were accessible on newsstands to a mass market.

And in a time where our belief in our time-honored institutions and public figures are being challenged, the genre offers hope that some of our ideals are being kept alive through these fictional heroes.

3. Do you have a background in classical education (Latin or Greek at school or classes at the University?) What sources are you using? Scholarly work? Wikipedia? Are there any books that made an impact on you in this respect?

I learned to read from comics when I was only four years old, after my older sister Sue became bored with reading the same comic to me about fifty times. As I matured, I began to comprehend the true potential that the medium had and became obsessed with becoming part of it. My early days were filled with the literary tales from Edgar Rice Burroughs and Arthur C. Clarke. Having grown up dirt poor,

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college wasn't in my future. Fortunately, I was able to educate myself through the local public library and eventually was awarded an apprenticeship with a famous DC Comics artist. I worked for him until I was competent to get work on my own merit.

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Additional information

Summary

Hercules is still roaming the universe in the 24th century alone and quite distressed, looking for galactic adventures. He now has a son, Arimathes, who is the king of the Andromeda galaxy. In this story, Hercules is confronted and united with the son he never knew he had. His former love, Lyana, whom he met in the "Prince of Power" series, is now back, bent on vengeance for his abandonment of her. She is a cunning and manipulative woman who wishes to turn the son against the father (to repeat the rift between Hercules and Zeus). Hercules understands this semblance and claims: "Wise father Zeus prepared me for this moment! My son's mind hath been poisoned with hate and arrogance! As Zeus strove to teach the lion of Olympus humility – so shall Arimathes learn!" (p. 65). Father and son then meet for a duel, hitting each other with all their might. Hercules emerges triumphant, yet the purpose of the battle is not to dethrone his son but to make a better emperor out of him. Then his son opens his soul and sees the truth. In the last picture (p. 87), Hercules is happily walking with his friends, while a happy Zeus looms over them. The son finally understands his father after he becomes a parent himself. It is truly a complete circle.

Analysis

In this story, Hercules, cast from Olympus by Zeus for his rowdy behaviour, faces a formidable foe who happens to be his son. The chain of the father-son relationship is being explored by the parallel stories of Zeus – Hercules and then Hercules and his son. Hercules thus learns the importance of family.

Another motif is humbleness; Hercules' son has been acting haughtily like his father and needs to be taught a lesson so he can be a better emperor. This is a different side of Hercules - a nurturing father and not just a reckless muscle man, which is his usual typecast.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

Heracles Hercules Olympus Zeus

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Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Character traits Emotions Family Friendship Values
Further Reading	Kovacs, George and C. W. Marshall, *Classics and Comics*. Oxford, 2011. Kovacs, George and C. W. Marshall, *Son of Classics and Comics*. Oxford, 2016.

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