Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: The Incredible Hercules: Love and War by Salva Espin, Clayton Henry, Greg Pak, Fred Van Lente", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/273. Entry version as of October 30, 2026.

Salva Espin , Clayton Henry , Greg Pak , Fred Van Lente

The Incredible Hercules: Love and War

United States (2009)

TAGS: Amazons Ares Athena Atlas Hera Heracles Hercules Hippolyta Poseidon





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

General information	
Title of the work	The Incredible Hercules: Love and War
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	Greg Pak and Fred Van Lente, *The Incredible Hercules: Love and War* #121–125, vol. 3. New York: Marvel Pub., 2009, 128 pp.
ISBN	9780785132462
Genre	Alternative histories (Fiction), Comics (Graphic works), Fiction, Mythological fiction
Target Audience	Crossover (Age 9 and up)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, mauril68@gmail.com Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk

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



Salva Espin (Illustrator)

Espin is a comic book artist.

Source:

Profile at the marvelcinematicuniverse.wikia.com (accessed: July 3, 2018).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com



Clayton Henry (Illustrator)

Henry is a comic book artist. He was born in Jamaica and moved to the USA at the age of three.

Source:

Profile at thecomicvine.gamespot.com (accessed: July 2, 2018).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com

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.



Greg Pak , b. 1968
(Author)

Pak is a Korean-American filmmaker and comic book writer who was born in Texas. He studied at Yale, Oxford and New York University. In 1991 he went to study history at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. His films have strong Asian-American themes. He worked for Marvel as well as DC comics. He is known for his work on Hercules, Hulk and other characters. His series on *Incredible Hercules* won appraisal from critics and also succeeded in sales. Pak's feature film *Robot Stories*, won 35 awards.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: June 26, 2018).

Profile on Comic Vine (accessed: June 26, 2018).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com



Fred Van Lente , b. 1972
(Author)

Van Lente is #1 New York Times bestselling, award-winning writer of comics who currently resides in Brooklyn. He has a BA (Hons) in Film and English literature from Syracuse University. He is the co-founder (with Ryan Dunlavey) of Evil Twin Comics which produces his non-fiction comic books. He also works for Marvel.

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.

Courtesy of the Author.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: May 30, 2018).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com

Questionnaire

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?

I had been asked by Marvel Comics to work on a series about their Hercules character. My primary contribution was the idea to work the Classical myths themselves as flashbacks into Herc's adventures in our time. The readers really responded to this quite nicely and the series was a surprise success. Later, Osprey Publishing asked me to do a non-fiction book about Herc for their Legends series and I had quite a lot of fun doing that.

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

They are so many touchstones for what became the modern world and the way we think about humanity. They've become classics simply because they've been retold so many times. Whether there is some special quality to these myths specifically and that's why they're repeated constantly or their uniqueness comes from that repetition itself I can't say.

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?

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.

No. I think Robert Graves' book *Greek Myths* was our main source material although a big inspiration was Euripides' tragedy *Heracles*.

Prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com

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.

Additional information

Summary

The series explores the adventures of Hercules and his companion, the teenage Amadeus Cho, the seventh smartest person in the world. The setting is semi sci-fi in which Atlantis is the main city. It is part of the Marvel universe. In the current issue Hercules and Amadeus are fighting a fierce gang of deadly amazons who declare war on Atlantis and kidnap Amadeus Cho.

Analysis

This series puts Hercules and his sidekick Amadeus Cho at the center and tells their many adventures. There is no direct connection with the original Hercules' myth, but it is alluded to. For example, Hercules tells his lady friend that he tricked Atlas and says that Atlas was stupid enough to be tricked by him, demonstrating Hercules' awareness of his own shortcoming. Hercules is the good-natured, dim-witted, muscular hero while his sidekick provides the brains for their adventures.

There are also mixtures of other mythological elements in the narrative. For example, Athena is presented as Hercules' half-sister. In a flashback Hercules is reminded of his ninth task to take Hippolyta's girdle (dated 1270 BC.). He fondly remembers Hippolyta and blames Hera for causing a rift between them.

While Hercules was known in the myth for having many sexual relations with many women, since this series is aimed at young readership, these encounters are only referred to obliquely. For example, we do not see any specific nude scenes between Hercules and Hippolyta.

The authors studied literature and history and are therefore familiar with the Hercules myth. In his questionnaire, Fred van Lente noted that his "primary contribution was the idea to work the Classical myths themselves as flashbacks into Herc's adventures in our time." He does not have any specialised classical background, but is quite familiar with Hercules' myth.

There are three excurses in the volume in which the classics are manipulated by the authors. The first is a poem by Sappho (poem 31) whose lyrics are supposedly changed by Amadeus Cho (as is mentioned in the comic) to refer to Hercules' exploits. The second is a

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.

	"Homeric Hymn" dedicated to Poseidon and used by Amadeus, who prays for the god's protection against the warring Amazons who attack him and Hercules and take over Atlantis. The third reception of a classical element is less obvious. In this case there is a picture of a full-spread picture of Washington, with Atlas in the background holding up the sky. There is no explanation regarding this image, which is perhaps meant to show a mixture of mythology and history.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Amazons Ares Athena Atlas Hera Heracles Hercules Hippolyta Poseidon
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Character traits Family Friendship Heroism Intellect Tricksters

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.