

THE ART OF
OSAMU TEZUKA
GOD OF MANGA

HELEN McCARTHY



I L E X



Contents

Foreword by Katsuhiro Otomo, creator of Akira	6	CHAPTER 5	
Introduction	8	The Doctor and the Demons	164
CHAPTER 1		The 1970s: Black Jack—Tezuka’s alter ego, Eulogy to Kirihiro, The Line of Winged Species, The Three-Eyed One, MW, Phoenix, Cleopatra, Queen of Sex, and Jetter Mars.	
Meet The Gang	12	CHAPTER 6	
An introduction to Osamu Tezuka’s life and work, and the key figures in his “repertory company” of characters.		What Was Lost—the unfinished works	214
CHAPTER 2		The 1980s: Phoenix, Bremen Four, Neo-Faust, Blue Blink, Don Dracula, Fumoon, Galaxy Search 2100, Broken Down Film, Jumping, and Legend of the Forest.	
Rocket Man	34	CHAPTER 7	
Tezuka’s 1940s science fiction and fantasy output: Ma-Chan’s Diary, New Treasure Island, Lost World, Metropolis, and Next World.		The Neverending Story	264
CHAPTER 3		Tezuka’s legacy: His continuing influence on artists and writers around the world, Tezuka Productions, and Tezuka Museum	
Adventure Books for Boys—and Girls	74	Filmography	302
The 1950s and Tezuka’s growing influence on other artists: Jungle Emperor, Tetsuwan Atom—The Origin of Astro Boy, The Adventures of Rock, Princess Knight, Zero Men, and My Son Goku.		Bibliography: Books, periodicals, websites, and recordings	306
CHAPTER 4		Chapter notes	310
Brave New World	114	Index of English and Japanese titles, names, and places	314
The 1960s screen success in Japan and America: My Son Goku, Alakazam The Great, Astro Boy TV, Kimba TV, Captain Ken, Big X, Ambassador Magma, Dove! Fly Up To Heaven, W3, Vampires, Dororo, Hi No Tori—The Eternal Phoenix, Lion Books, Arabian Nights, and Baghi.		Acknowledgments	320

Osamu Tezuka

Tetsuwan Atom The Origin of Astro Boy

ASTRO BOY MADE his first appearance in 1951, starting life as a supporting character, and conquered America in 1963, going on to become a hero to millions. The fictional character was “born” on 7 April 2003, and he and his equally fictional mentor, Professor Ochanomizu, were given the full legal status of Japanese citizenship when his birthday finally came, amid national celebration.

Astro Boy is better known in Japan as *Tetsuwan Atom*, or “Mighty Atom”—although in that first supporting role he was called Captain Atom (Atom Taishi). First published in April 1951, when Tezuka was 22, the comic is a tale of conflict between indigenous Earthlings and immigrants from a vanished planet, whose battles over scarce resources are resolved through the mediation of a humanoid robot.

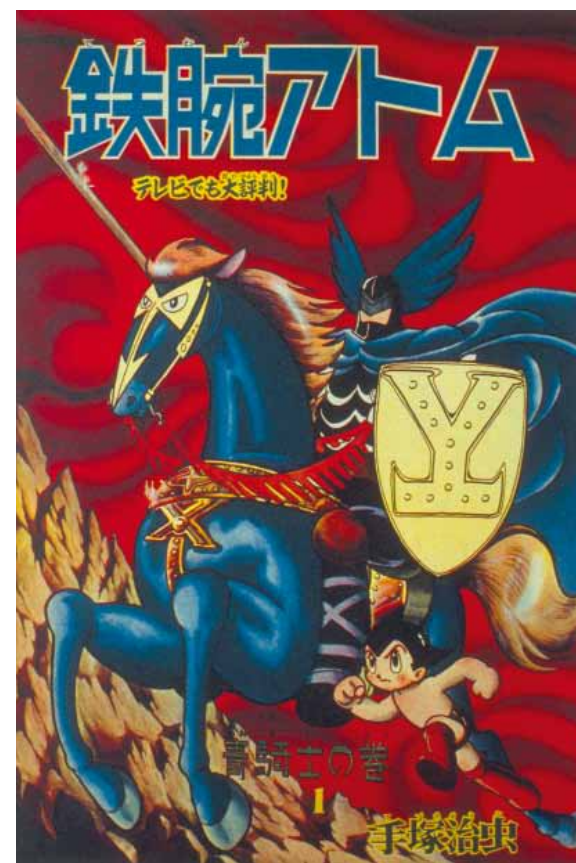
Atom Taishi predated Tezuka’s manga version of *Pinocchio*—published by Tokodo in July 1952—but he always acknowledged the inspiration of the 1940 Disney movie and Carlo Collodi’s original 19th-century novel. Tezuka also took elements from Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* and his own manga adaptation of the film, taking aspects of the robot girl Mitchy to forge the childlike androgyne Atom. In a nod to one of his manga heroes, Tezuka “borrowed” Atom’s 100,000 bhp reactor from Perri, a robot character created by science fiction manga pioneer Yokoi Fukujiro.

Atom became more than the sum of his influences. When he came to rework the character to headline in his own book, Tezuka looked at his own inner conflict, asking whether science and humanity can comfortably coexist.

This wasn’t just about the day-to-day struggles of a young scientist juggling the demands of medical school with a burgeoning career as a manga artist. Only five years after Hiroshima, the question was loaded with significance. Science was changing Japan, and the world, forever. Could those changes be positive?

The Atom mythos isn’t only about technology. At its heart is a searing indictment of the wastefulness and injustice of discrimination. Atom was born as a mediator, a communicator between warring factions, but Tezuka went on to use him as a means of exploring other, darker issues.

Tetsuwan Atom commenced publication in April 1952 in *Shonen* magazine from Kobunsha, where it continued to appear until March 1968. The little robot also made appearances in various other publications, and in 1959 Atom starred in his own live action TV show. His biggest break came in 1963, when he conquered the small screen in Japan and in America just six months later.



OPPOSITE TOP: Cover of *Astro Boy Club* magazine #8. Available only by mail, the monthly magazine featured new *Astro Boy* stories from Tezuka alongside work by other artists and writers. It was the forerunner of Tezuka’s later magazine *COM*.

OPPOSITE BELOW: *The Blue Knight*, published from October 1965 in *Shonen* magazine, sees a powerful robot fighting humans to stop discrimination against his own kind. Will Atom defend humans against the interests of justice?

BELOW: Atom vs Atlas! In the 1980 TV series *The New Adventures of Astro Boy*, a nine-episode story arc sees a classic confrontation between good and evil.

BOTTOM: Astro Boy makes his debut as the golden robot in *Captain Atom*.



BELOW RIGHT: Atom soars above a packed freeway, as Dr. Ochanomizu and Higeoyaji follow in a flying car. This quintessential cover encapsulates Tezuka’s vision of a high-tech future where science fiction is everyday reality.





Hi No Tori The Eternal Phoenix



TOP: A towering Phoenix statue hovers at the end of the walkway leading to the Tezuka Osamu Manga Museum in Takarazuka.

ABOVE: In 1987 Kadokawa released *Phoenix: Chapter of Yamato*, a stylish animation based on Tezuka's version of the legend of Yamato Takeru. Character designs are deliberately more mature than those in the manga.

RIGHT: Prince Oguno plays the flute to soothe the legendary Firebird in a color cover image from *Phoenix: Yamato* in *COM* magazine.

TEZUKA CALLED THE *Phoenix* cycle his life's work. He began writing it in the mid-1960s and published the first volume, *Dawn (Reimei)* in 1967 in *COM*, the magazine he had set up as a home for manga too experimental for other publications. Over 20 years *Phoenix* grew to include twelve graphic volumes, a feature film made in 1980, three shorter films in 1986 and 1987, and a 13-episode TV series aired in Japan in 2004.

Tezuka's starting point was his passionate belief in the importance and validity of all life. Every being in his epic is part of the eternal cycle of death and rebirth over millennia. Because the seasonal rhythms of the universe are too vast and slow for narrative, Tezuka anchors the whole structure on one universal desire—the primeval urge to cling to life.

Using the ancient myth of immortality through drinking the blood of a sacred or supernatural creature as a starting point, he created a huge work encompassing comics and animation, with a strong claim to be considered a contemporary equivalent of Wagner's *Ring* cycle. Beginning in Japan's Yayoi period, around 350 BC, and traveling to an unspecified date in the future, the story moves across Japanese history, with seemingly random excursions into the 35th century AD and the legendary era of Japan's prehistory.

At every point, the quest for immortality and its consequences are linked with themes like the meaning of art and consciousness, the significance of politics, the futility of war, the process of evolution, and the familiar yet constantly surprising vagaries of human nature. Aliens, androids and robots, amazing technologies, and highly evolved animals all play their part.

Tezuka's galaxy-spanning story has a very simple message: be careful what you wish for. Immortality, lusted after by so many, is presented as an impossible dream or a terrible curse. The immortality of life is what matters, above and beyond the survival or any individual. The most apparently insignificant creatures are key to the continuance of life, and the cleverest, Man above all, are the greatest threat.

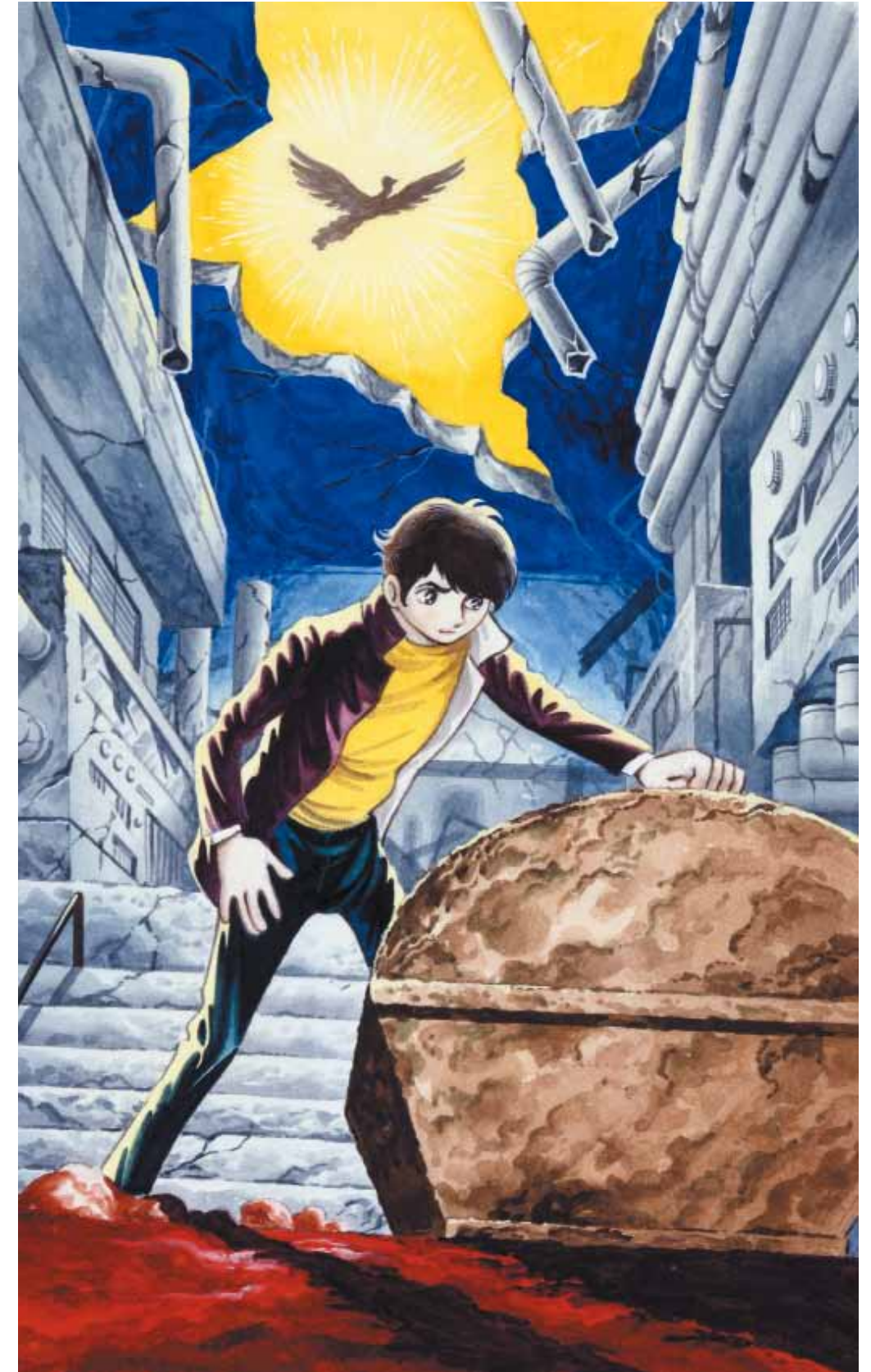
The cycle lacks anything that could be described as a final resolution. Frederik L. Schodt, a personal friend of Tezuka and a leading manga scholar, wrote in his book *Dreamland Japan* that he imagined a secret ending, locked away to be revealed after Tezuka's death; but perhaps that would have contradicted the whole purpose of the cycle. If life reasserts itself throughout cycle after cycle of destruction and vanity, how is an ending possible?





LEFT: Four pages from *Phoenix: Book of Civil War* (also known as *Turbulent Times*) show Tezuka's facility at mixing stylized characterizations with precise drawing and flowing page layouts.

RIGHT: A color page from *Phoenix: Future* shows protagonist Masato Yamanobe in the ruins of a highly developed civilization like the one Tezuka depicted with such panache in *Astro Boy*.





Black Jack Tezuka's alter ego

BLACK JACK COMMENCED publication in November 1973, in Akita Shoten Publishing's *Weekly Shonen Champion*, a popular boys' comic anthology. It was originally planned to celebrate the 30th anniversary of his career as a cartoonist, as a series of five independent stories featuring his entire cast of manga characters under the title "Osamu Tezuka's One Man Theater Production"; it stands as proof that plans change.

Tezuka produced more than 230 stories over the next five years. Even then, he couldn't let go, creating another 13 *Black Jack* tales. This was his alter ego, the kind of doctor he would have liked to be had he abandoned manga for medicine instead of the other way round. Dynamic, inventive, with his own code of honor, Black Jack follows his own star, ceaselessly seeking the answers to two puzzles that never ceased to fascinate Tezuka—the meaning of life, and the roots of human happiness.

Tezuka's medical training came into play on *Black Jack*, both in his often stomach-churningly accurate medical illustrations and in his evident contempt for the sycophancy and corruption of the medical establishment. Black Jack would rather be considered heartless and grasping than be bracketed with the so-called "good" doctors who put their own career and well-being ahead of their Hippocratic oath. The tone of the series is often dark, the hero sometimes a gentle and compassionate savior, sometimes a cold and unforgiving avenger, but always frustrated by the inevitable victory of death and his own inability to submit to fate.

Jack was one of Tezuka's repertory performers, playing cameo roles in a dozen manga outside his own. He even showed up in *Astro Boy* in 1975 as the Minister of Science. His anime series came after his creator's death, but Tezuka cast him in three TV specials and a movie. His place in his creator's heart is demonstrated by the work schedule on TV special *Marine Express*. Tezuka allowed his team to draw the other characters, including *Astro Boy*, but insisted on drawing every cell of Black Jack himself.

OPPOSITE: This art for *Black Jack*—without the background art or lettering—was used for the cover of *Shonen Champion Comics* #9 (September 1976) and as the cover for a collected volume of the eponymous surgeon's adventures.

RIGHT: Tezuka often depicted Black Jack holding his own card. These images were title pages for stories 192 and 210, with black and white space designed to provide a dramatic layout and room for captions and headings.





**Black Jack:
the facts behind the mystery man**

REAL NAME: Kuroo Kazama. Kuro means "black" and "o" is short for otoko, or man, but Black Jack is an English adaptation of his real name.

APPEARANCE: Scars all over his body as a result of a childhood accident when he and his mother stepped on a landmine.

FACE: Half his face is darker in tone because a black classmate gave him a skin graft after the accident.

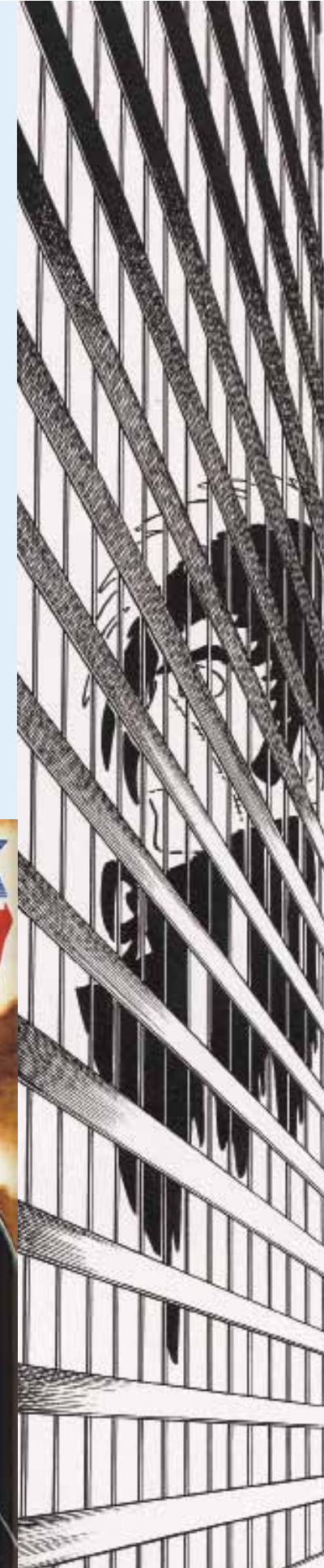
FAMILY: His mother died of a broken heart. After the accident his father abandoned them and now lives overseas with his new wife and daughter.

ASSISTANT: Pinoko

ROMANTIC ATTACHMENTS: Two brief relationships, as a student with Megumi (aka Kei) Kisaragi, and later with brilliant female surgeon Konomi Kuwata.

SECRET PROJECTS: Uses his fees to preserve an unspoiled island, to help victims of crime and corruption, and to pursue revenge on those responsible for the explosion that devastated his life.

BELOW AND RIGHT: Color cover image for *Love Call From The Sea* (August 1978) and black and white images from 1977, 1975 and 1982.



OPPOSITE: Title image from 1975, graphic from 1978 as displayed in Kyoto's Tezuka Museum, and two pages from 1975's *Where Are You, My Friend?*, in which Black Jack searches for the classmate who gave skin to rebuild his face.



ABOVE: In this image from the series you can see the lines of the background drawing, used to guide the painting of the dark stormclouds, to the left of Kakeru's head.

LEFT: The trio team up with bus driver Tanba and comical crooks Nitch and Satch to travel in search of Kakeru's father.

OPPOSITE TOP: Blink and Kakeru are joined on their adventures by the cute but spoiled Princess Kirara.

OPPOSITE BELOW: Blink and Kakeru are pursued by Rupappa in the episode *Heart Stealer of Purple Town*.



Blue Blink and Neo-Faust

BLUE BLINK (AOI BLINK) is a 39-episode animated series aired on NHK starting on 7 April 1989. Tezuka based the story on a classic Russian children's animation, Ivan Ivanov-Vano's *The Magic Pony (Konjok-gorbonuk)*, which in turn is based on a Russian folktale sometimes called *The Humpbacked Pony*. This was also one of his inspirations for work on the Phoenix cycle.

Tezuka reworked the basic elements into a science fantasy adventure, where the young hero Kakeru meets a magic blue pony named Blink. He helps the little creature escape a thunderstorm and Blink promises to return the favor if Kakeru ever needs help. When Kakeru's writer father is kidnapped, the two embark on an adventure.

Blue Blink was the last animated series Tezuka actually worked on. He completed the synopsis for episode five shortly before his death. Director Seitaro Hara took over, and the first episode aired just two months after Tezuka's funeral. This classic children's show demonstrates Tezuka's determination to make stories for every kind of audience. Translated into French for release in 1990, the show became a computer game from Hudson Soft the same year, and was also dubbed into Spanish and Arabic.

Neo-Faust was Tezuka's third retelling of the legend, following on from *Faust* (1950, manga) and *A Hundred Tales*, published in 1971 as an episode of the *New Lion Books* series. An animated film of *Faust* was announced in 1984 but had to be abandoned. Disappointed and reluctant to let the idea go to waste, Tezuka continued to work on the synopsis. Meanwhile he turned the concept into a manga and offered it to *Asahi Journal*.

It was unfinished when *Asahi* ran the first part from January to November 1988. They began publishing the second part in December. By then Tezuka's stomach cancer was far advanced and he never completed the work, making the story of an ageing professor, depressed at his failure to discover the truth of the universe after half a century of effort, especially poignant.

On the verge of suicide, he is accosted by beautiful demon Mephist. She agrees to give the Professor a new life in exchange for his soul, and whisks him back to the past. Reborn as a handsome young man, with a brilliant mind but no memories, he is adopted by a rich industrialist. On inheriting his fortune, he begins a series of dreadful experiments, which prove that he has already lost his soul far more completely than in any deal with Satan. As evil possesses him, the lives of those around him are thrown into confusion.



The Art of Osamu Tezuka

Osamu Tezuka has often been called the Walt Disney of Japan, but he was far more than that. Tezuka (1928–1989) was Disney, Stan Lee, Alan Moore, Tim Burton, and Carl Sagan, all rolled into one incredibly prolific package, and he changed the face of Japanese culture forever. Tezuka achieved international acclaim with the phenomenally successful TV series *Kimba the White Lion* and his celebrated *Astro Boy* animation and comics, and his star is set to rise further with the release of a new *Astro Boy* animated film in spring 2010.

Osamu Tezuka was born in 1928 and died in 1989. In between, he was instrumental in creating the Japanese animation and comics currently electrifying fans all over the world, and generating huge revenues for Japanese, American, and European companies.

This book reveals what makes him one of the key figures of 20th century pop culture. Packed with stunning images, many never before seen outside Japan, it pays tribute to the work of an artist, writer, animator, doctor, entrepreneur, and traveler whose insatiably curious mind created two companies, dozens of animated films and series, and over 150,000 pages of comic art in one astonishingly creative lifetime.

■ Includes an exclusive DVD documentary, never before seen in the West.

Animation and comic images, promotional materials, and photographs of Osamu Tezuka are © and used by special permission of Tezuka Production, not to be reproduced in any form. With thanks to Mr. Kotoku and Ms. Suzuki for their kind assistance.

Image from *Phoenix: Chapter of Yamata* © and used by special permission of Kadokawa Pictures Ltd., not to be reproduced in any form. With thanks to Ms. Tomoko Suzuki for her kind assistance.

Photographs of Tezuka Osamu Museum Kyoto and Tezuka Osamu Manga Museum Takarazuka are © and used by permission of Steve Kyte, not to be reproduced in any form.

SPECIFICATION

Publication date September 2009

ISBN 978-1-905814-66-4

Price £25.00

Trim size h 305mm x w 225mm

Extent 272pp

Approx 60,000+ words

Illustrations 350+ images

Binding Hardback PLC with vinyl

jacket and DVD in clamshell

Color 4x4

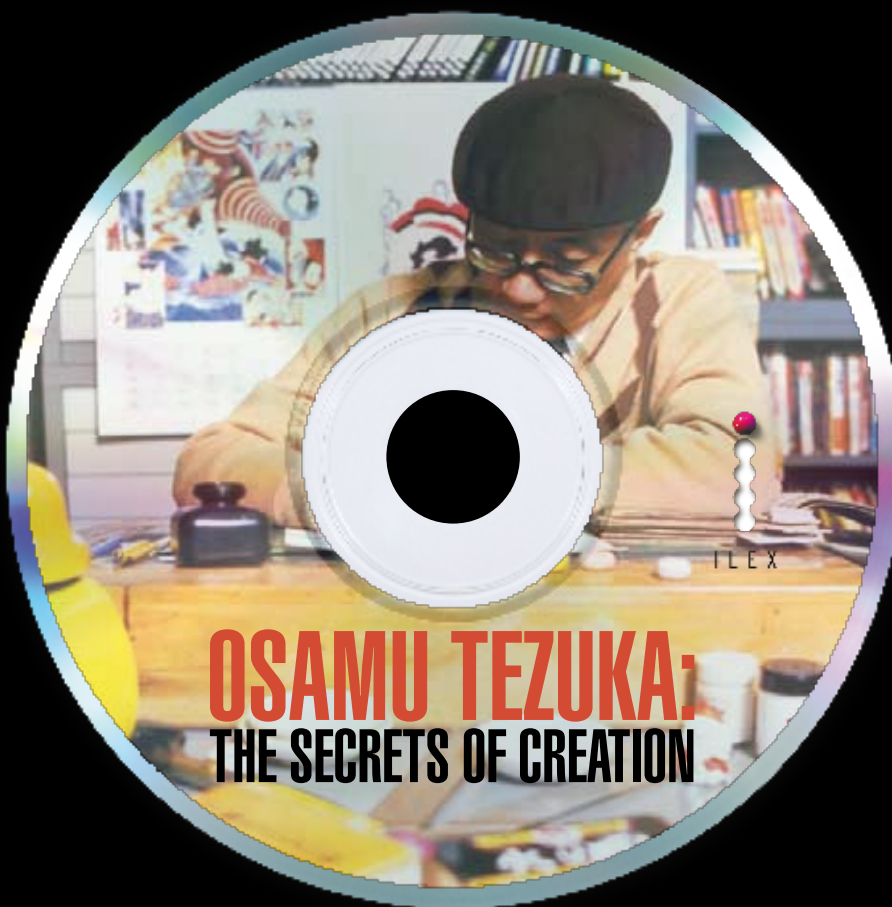
Helen McCarthy

Helen McCarthy is the author of eight books about Japanese animation and comics, including the first book in the English language devoted to anime. She visits Japan as often as possible and is fascinated by the whole range of Japanese culture, from the deep spirituality of mountain shrines to the extravagantly trashy world of the pachinko parlor. A lifelong sci-fi fan, she was first drawn to Tezuka's work by his visionary futures and inventive characterizations. She is curator of the Osamu Tezuka Film Festival at London's Barbican Centre, and is developing a documentary film on his life and work.

The Art of Osamu Tezuka's accessible style, timelines, and references to other Asian and world events will enable the general reader to place Tezuka's work in its wider context, while the bibliography and indices will be invaluable to animation and comics scholars.

With a foreword by *Akira* creator Katsuhiro Otomo, and a DVD documentary never aired outside of Japan, this is the most comprehensive tome on Tezuka ever produced in the West, making it a true collector's item, and an essential "must have" purchase for any fan of comics, animation, and popular culture.

Like Tezuka's own work, **Osamu Tezuka: God of Manga** is an amazing adventure for the manga and anime neophyte, an essential reference for the confirmed fans, and a visual treat for anyone who loves art.



THE ILEX PRESS LTD

210 High Street, Lewes,

East Sussex BN7 2NS, England

phone +44 (0) 1273 403124

fax +44 (0) 1273 487441

e-mail sales@ilex-press.com

www.ilex-press.com

