

pierre wazem

Winner of the Prix International de la Ville de Genève

Wazem is one of those real talents, one of which the comic scene seldom produces. Having started just on ten years ago, he manages to roam through the most varied areas with an amazing level of self-assurance, succeeding as an illustrator, comic drawer or script writer.

Pierre Wazem (born in 1970) had trouble deciding between comics or illustrations during his four years of studies at the Ecole des Arts Décoratifs in Geneva. He solved this dilemma quite easily: He decided for both comics and illustrations, with success. The numerous book releases and jobs for important newspapers and magazines like Le Journal de Genève, Le Temps etc., plus also for advertising agencies.

“Livre Vert Vietnam” was his first book released back in 1997 with the small publishing house, Papiers Gras – a sketch book journey through Vietnam. Just one year later the renowned publishers Les Humanoïdes Associés released “Le Chant des Pavots” (Scenario: Penel), a melancholic ballad about two young jazz fans and their somewhat unfortunate encounter with their idol Joe Big. The first comic novel “Bretagne” then followed in 1999, written by Wazem and drawn in vivid black & white – his ability to work with dynamic drawings and his brilliant usage of light and shadowing reminds one of the great masters Hugo Pratt and José Muñoz.

Since then, Wazem has released another dozen comic albums for various publishers – as an author/ drawer, but also as a script writer for other artists like Tom Tirabosco or Frederik Peeters.

Wazem experienced a (commercial) highlight when he was given the job of stepping in for his idol Hugo Pratt, who died in 1995, writing and drawing the sixth band of his “Les Scorpions du Désert” series. It was a risk that most artists wouldn’t have dared to take – remembering that Hugo Pratt is looked upon as a god in French speaking areas. Wazem mastered the challenge with style.

In less than nine years, Pierre Wazem has managed to break through as a comic author, impressing with both variety and productivity. These types of real talents who seem born for the comic world, are a rare commodity – no wonder really that Wazem was awarded the 2005 Geneva International Prize.