



Gus & His Gang

Christophe Blain

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In Gus, Blain plays on every trope of the classic Western. Perfectly blending caricature and cinematic pacing, humor and high-octane action, he delivers an exuberant graphic novel ode to men and women chasing each other, and to the bonds of friendship that tie together three unforgettable cowboys.

Gus & His Gang Details

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Author : Christophe Blain

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From Reader Review Gus & His Gang for online ebook

Damien says

I was excited when I heard this book was out, based on Isaac the Pirate. I think I like those books more however. Gus & His Gang is more rambling. Short, seemingly extemporaneous episodes. In fact "Clem & His Gang" might be a more appropriate title since the book ends up focusing on him.

The story is a fun adventure story. Wild West outlaws trying to get laid. Doesn't try to be anything more than that. The artwork is inspiring in that it's descriptive without being fussy. That makes it sound boring, but it's just fun to look at. I wish it had been printed larger!

On the last page of Gus they ride off after dropping a coy dramatic development. It's frustrating that none of "Chris" Blain's titles seem to reach a conclusion. It would be nice to see the next volume of The Night Shirt or Isaac the Pirate before a new adventure in a new setting. Is Gus another inspiration that leads nowhere? Maybe he can juggle all these storylines and there are new volumes of the other titles waiting to be translated into English? Hope so.

Jamil says

A set of stolen reviews, copy & paste style, of Gus & His Gang by Joe McCulloch, /Dustin Harbin, & Abhay Khosla, respectively. If you're interested in more, please visit the links.

& yes, The colors in this thing are absolutely freaking AMAZING!

"...a pastiche of American cowboy fiction carried across thirteen chronological vignettes, following long-nosed Gus, oval-headed Gratt, and broccoli-haired Clem as they ride, shoot, and love their way across the Old West. Blain especially delights in the love; his frequent jest is to undercut his outlaws' tough-guy attributes by blasting through their two-fisted exploits in narrative fragments and then lingering for pages on romantic anxiety—long trawls through dancehalls looking for dates, heated notes written to an indecisive fancy, and passionate frolics with a pretty mistress, accompanied by an imagined broccoli-haired cyclops looming on the horizon with a spotlight-beam eye of aching guilt..." - JM

"...Gus And His Gang employs a really gestural, expressive art style—similar to the kind of high-energy, fast style of fellow Frenchmen Joann Sfar and Manu Larcenet. What looks at first to be rushed or even sloppy, reveals itself to be well-planned, well-executed storytelling, without a lot of the fussiness that often gets in the way with lesser storytellers. You can almost FEEL the artist making his brush strokes and pen lines on the paper, you imagine him bent across his drawing board, making decisions, deciding when a panel is done, how much nuance is enough...

"...But I think maybe my favorite thing about Gus & His Gang, or at least the thing I find myself thinking about the most, is the colors. The palette the colorist uses is just crazy, all these bright colors from all over the spectrum. He goes from super bright, almost magenta shades to electric blues, but it's never noisy,

everything always makes sense. And the pages are so BRIGHT. He's also not afraid to just leave a background totally white—the pages seem to breathe, everything seems so airy. It might even undermine the overall sense of danger that most “Wild West” stories have, but I guess I don't mind much.” - DH

“...Stories about characters deciding this or deciding that-- those are fun. When you read them, you get to pretend to believe fun things like “You create who you are. You're in charge of how you respond to conflicts. You decide your destiny.” But it's pretty relieving, something like GUS AND HIS GANG. Sometimes, you don't get to decide how your brain works, or control every last thought; sometimes, you just enjoy the ride. That doesn't seem like such a bad thing to me for a comic book to be about.” - AK

Romain says

Christophe Blain aime particulièrement les univers bien masculins. Après les marins, il s'attaque aux cow-boys, à quand le football, la course automobile et la guerre — la politique c'est déjà fait et puis il y a la parité ! Si ces rudes gars sont capables des pires actions et n'aiment rien de plus que leurs camarades — et l'argent —, il n'en sont pas moins très intéressés par la gente féminine. Et c'est justement sur ce sujet qu'est centré ce premier tome des aventures de Gus et de ces deux compagnons Gratt et Clem. Dans cet exercice nos trois bandits ne sont pas aussi à l'aise que les fesses plantées sur leur cheval sillonnant les grandes étendues désertiques à la recherche de quelqu'un à détrousser. C'est bien évidemment sur ce contraste que joue l'auteur, en nous montrant comment sont ces hommes au contact des femmes. C'est dans cet exercice que nous en apprendrons plus sur leurs forces et leurs faiblesses, avec évidemment une bonne dose d'humour.

La forme est particulière, il s'agit de plusieurs histoires distinctes reliées entre elles — cinq au total. Ce ne sont pas de courtes histoires indépendantes sur une ou deux pages comme on l'habitude d'en voir dans les bandes dessinées mais quelque chose d'intermédiaire. La mise en couleur est elle aussi surprenante. L'utilisation de couleurs vives et contrastées est de mise à tel point que ce parti pris est assez déroutant au début. Les couvertures des trois volumes que compte la série annoncent la couleur en proposant des déclinaisons très vives de rouge, bleu et jaune. Cet album comporte quelque très bonnes trouvailles comme la vision embarquée à partir des yeux des personnages. Vu la taille de son appendice nasal, celle partant de l'oeil de Gus est particulièrement impressionnante. La belle et troublante rousse que rencontre Clem n'est pas sans rappeler certains personnages féminins de Joann Sfar, serait-ce un clin d'oeil de l'auteur à son ami ?

J'ai trouvé cette lecture plaisante sans plus. Pourtant, la fin m'a plus convaincu que le début en révélant le jardin secret des trois compères et les liens qui les unissent — au final, je serais curieux de lire le second tome. Si vous aimez les cow-boys et rigoler, je vous conseille également la série *Lincoln* de la famille Jouvray. <http://www.aubonroman.com/2012/08/gus...>

Matt says

Shockingly good. I expected a ludicrous spoof of cowboy Westerns. While it is funny, what I got was more post-modern and interesting, with complex characters containing elements of the poet, the father, the gambler, the lover, the thug. It reminded me of a synthesis of Trondheim's *Dungeon* and Sfarr's *Vampire Loves*. Since Blain has worked with both creators, I shouldn't be surprised.

Really top-notch cartooning, good dialog, and genuine weirdness. Highly recommended.

For more on comics, horror, humanity, morality and the world check out The Stupid Philosopher, aka a place where I put my words.

Eva Inzu says

No wonder I feel reading european comic, I just read the biography that Chris Blain is French. If you ever encounter European Comic, this book is a compilation of Gus titles, which format exactly the same mostly 8 panel per page. If you think about it, most european comic is full color, if because of that they were called graphic novel than they are all. But none that's matter, I have uncomfortable moment reading this book, the size is too small with picture a bit unusual (need time to adapt with the character picture), the letter is, of course ok but the font type is not comfortable to the size. You need fatter font type for small size font.

What I really like about is the carefree of most characters. It strangely made me happy.

not an english native, pardon mine k :-

Will says

It took me a few pages to recognize the writng and graphic awesomeness of this tome. The more I read/viewed the more in love with it all I became. Beautiful stuff. Typically the western genre is not my forte, however this french comic-tician is above all an artist and a story-teller supreme. Gus and his Gang are bright and vivid characters. The fact that they are basically superhero outlaws is just a minor, albeit spectacular, point of interest. The core of these stories (and guys) is their longing for love, a "true love" and for two-thirds of them it constantly eludes them. Which sort of baffles them because they are all extremely talented in almost all other areas. One of the gang members gets lucky, but it also is a curse. I love, love, love how this old timey western world is not all phony 60's TV clean (Bonanza), but actually has real life adult goings on. For example, clumsy love-making, "stage-fright", and sex guilt. Really, really enjoyed this one.

Juju says

Calling this a western is somewhat misleading. For Christophe Blain the bank robberies and train heists are really only the background for the love lives of these three outlaws. I wouldn't be surprised if there are more volumes in this story, and I'll read them, too, if they're anywhere as good as this one.

Roderick McGillis says

Much fun. I especially like the homage to Dean Martin and Ricky Nelson, "My Rifle, My Pony, and Me." Chris Blain has obviously immersed himself in western fiction and film. We have everything from Butch Cassidy to The Villain, Deadwood to Goin' South in this book. We even have Rooster Cogburn's two-gun ride with reins in teeth from True Grit. Anyone who knows and likes westerns will enjoy this romp.

Michael says

The book should've been called Clem and his gang, since Gus disappears halfway through the book and never comes back. It's a collection of short stories, all about a gang of train robbers, dealing mostly with their desire to meet beautiful women. Clem's the only of the trio who's married, so of course, he also winds up with the torrid affair while the others meet women they can't stand. Blain does some fun stuff - Clem's guilt, manifested as a giant cyclops whose eye shines light on Clem always, is great. The characters are well crafted, and the art is scratchy and rough, but very lively and engaging. Yet I still felt somewhat let down by the book - it never seemed to find a coherent focus, just following the characters from one adventure to the next, and then, only slightly over halfway through, the trio of outlaws part ways and it becomes Clem's book entirely. Then, rather than being robbing trains or banks, or about meeting girls, it's about Clem and his mistress or about Clem and his family moving to San Francisco. The chapters are all good, but they don't add up to a whole. I'm curious how this was originally published in France and if it was intended to be a full-length book.

Felipe Assis says

Tanta gente foda recomenda essa série, mas não me agradou nem um pouco... Isso causa um incômodo rapaz...

Dave says

The art in this book seemed almost too hasty in its execution, but was nevertheless gripping. I think the childish nature of the art provided an interesting contrast to the adult nature of the story and may have been borderline disconcerting. I also found it interesting that the book meandered away from it's titular character as much as it did, though given that Gus was one of the more two dimensional characters I've ever read I can't blame Blain for making that choice. Overall I'd say that this book came off as childish and vulgar, but only vulgar for the sake of being vulgar. For all its talk of sensitive cowboys and sweeping romance, there was really none to be found within.

Sally Siawidjaja says

About horny outlaw cowboys. Confusing story and I don't understand the ending.

Robert says

This is the second book in a row I read blind and the second in a row I did not enjoy. It claimed to be a translation (with no mention of the original language) and the stories were confused and pointless - not the good kind of 'I don't know where this is going but really want to know' pointless but rather the 'why am I

still reading' pointless.

Mike Sgier says

'Gus and His Gang' is a collection of short vignettes following a band of outlaws in the old American West, as they rob banks and trains, and embark upon various romantic entanglements as they bounce from town to town. The story is loose and a tad disjointed, so anyone looking for a complete narrative might be disappointed. And the focus of the stories half-way through falls on Clem, one of Gus's outlaw buddies, and his relationships with a mistress, his wife, and daughter. Blain's artwork and cartooning is superb, and keeps your interest as you go from story to story.

Stuart says

There's simply no getting around it. This is my FAVORITE comic book ever made. Non-stop laughs coupled with a story that grows and matures thematically as you turn its pages. Blain really captures what it feels like to be a young man talking with your buddies about girls, girls, girls as is typical and eventually segways into the inevitable stages of growth that all boys must endure to become men. A book that really hit me deeply, I simply can't say enough about it.
