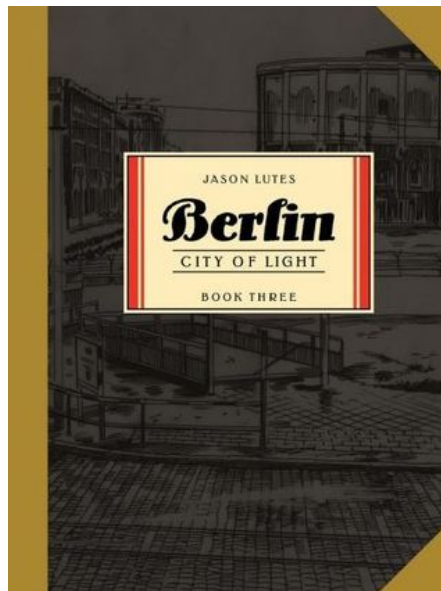




Berlin, Vol. 3: City of Light

Jason Lutes

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The conclusion to a masterful graphic novel trilogy that follows Berlin citizens as Nazism rises

The third and final act of Jason Lutes's historical fiction about the Weimar Republic begins with Hitler arriving in Berlin. With the National Socialist party now controlling Parliament, the citizenry becomes even more divided.

Lutes steps back from the larger political upheaval, using the intertwining lives of a small group of Germans to zero in on the rise of fascism and how swiftly it can replace democracy. The idle rich, the naïve bourgeoisie, and the struggling lower classes: all seek meaning in the warring political factions dividing their nation. He especially focuses on the Brauns—a working-class family torn apart by a political system that doesn't care about them. Lovers couple and uncouple; families and friends share rituals and laughter; most of Berlin's citizens go about their day with little sense of the larger threat to their existence. Meanwhile, the journalist Kurt Severing and the artist Marthe Muller watch in horror as their society begins a dizzying descent into extremism.

Berlin, Vol. 3: City of Light Details

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From Reader Review Berlin, Vol. 3: City of Light for online ebook

Ilana says

All three books get a 4.5 star rating. I may or may not write a full review on this one. It was both satisfying in that it ties up storylines between the characters presented in the trilogy, but we as the readers know only too well that the horrors of the Holocaust are pending and things are about to go from absolutely horrible to an unthinkable nightmare. Maybe not the best book for when you're already feeling low low low and spending the night alone when original plans were otherwise, but that's life.

Laurent says

De vijf ?? zijn voor de hele, verdomd sterke reeks. Lezen die handel.

Álvaro says

Escribo esta reseña en el último tomo de la trilogía , pero es aplicable a todos sus volúmenes.

No creo que el cómic, como vehículo de comunicación y arte, alcance cotas tan altas como con esta historia.

Su guión funciona como un mecanismo de precisión, y como las muñecas rusas, va conteniendo capas y más capas.

Las historias cruzadas de las personas anónimas del Berlín de entreguerras, con sus amores, sus problemas, su humanidad, se enmarcan en ese proceso de locura y fascinación colectiva que llevó a Alemania a convertirse en un monstruo que devoró a sus propios hijos.

Visualmente es un portento de narración y ejercicio artístico en blanco y negro. Homenaje a las xilografías de maserel, expresionismo, ecos de rouault, línea clara...maravilloso.

Para mí es una novela que está escrita no sólo con palabras.

Si el comic es arte y literatura , sin duda esta obra define al cómic.

Imprescindible.

Ji Le says

J'ai commencé la lecture ce troisième et dernier tome, ayant lu le précédent, à sa sortie, il y a 10 ans. Le premier a débuté il y a plus de 20 ans. Je me suis demandé si ce serait difficile sans avoir les deux premiers tomes de cette trilogie. Il en a été tout autrement.

L'histoire se reprend facilement grâce à une histoire simple, tout en ayant des connaissances de la Grande Histoire. Le scénario se bâtit en connaissance de nombreux autres récits connus, et moins connus, sur le

même lieu, à la même époque et se lit de manière limpide, avec une dramaturgie sobre, sans concessions, en prévision des événements à venir. Le dessin est à l'image de l'histoire, sobre, avec un magnifique mise en scène, utilisant le matériau de la BD à son plein potentiel.

Je relirai avec empressement les deux premiers.

Magistral

Su says

If you were like me and came to the “Berlin” party late, you only waited a year for this while others waited 10. I do believe the wait was worth it.

So you’re wondering what the but is? I definitely expected more, but I’m not really sure why. The final installment of the series remains tonally consistent and the pacing from the previous books also remains intact. The narrative is really focused, this volume, on endings and the quiet desperation for more life out of life that the characters all feel in some sense or another. Reading these final chapters, you can feel the suffocating hopelessness and frustration of the characters, but you also get a sense of relief and perhaps the glimpse of a silver-lining at the series’s conclusion.

Coming fresh off the highs and tension of the first two volumes, makes volume three a hard, long read. For this American young adult, the sudden switch from drug-fueled desperate longings and bright-eyed-bush-tailed naïveté to the cold glint of reality was sad and not what I was hoping for. But when I step back, I can appreciate the work for what it is. Berlin was never an exercise in romanticizing the rise of the NS-Party. It was never a project intent to relive the glamour of the times. I believe, Berlin has always endeavored to take an objective look at the humans and history of Berlin in the late 1920s and 1930s - the way you might look in the mirror one day after a shower and say “Huh, I’ve got some sun spots, need to use more sunscreen. I’ve got bags under the eyes, should get more sleep.” You know, those times where you neither praise yourself for realizing you’re cute or deride yourself for not living up to society’s current ideals of beauty. Berlin is that kind of look at what was. And this volume justly meets those ends and wraps up the story.

I’m just in my American fairytale feelings and sad that it ended this way. If you’ve read the first books or are considering giving this series a go I say do it!

Pablo says

Magnífica obra, por fin completada 23 años después de su inicio. Ambicioso relato de la caída de la República Weimar a partir de la clásica estructura de vidas cruzadas. Su gran mérito es la delicadeza y la pausa con que retrata unos personajes perfilados con una pericia que los hace muy humanos, cuando hubiera sido fácil caer en estereotipos. La muy europea línea clara del dibujo transmite la historia con sencillez y eficacia, pero también con sutil belleza y emoción.

Clemens says

Das lange Warten auf den abschließenden Band der Berlin-Trilogie von Jason Lutes hat sich mehr als gelohnt. Mit „Berlin. Flirrende Stadt“ legt Lutes den krönenden Abschluss vor.

Lutes bringt die Geschichte von Kurt Severing und Marthe Müller sowie weiteren Einzelfiguren zu ihrem verdienten Ende. Anhand der Geschichten der verschiedenen Personen breitet ein Panorama der späten Weimarer Republik und zeigt unprätentiös den Absturz in den Nationalsozialismus.

Lutes gelingt es mit der Berlin-Reihe einen umfassenden Einblick in das Berlin der frühen dreißiger Jahre. Die Tiefe und Genauigkeit der Darstellung dieses Berlins in einem Comic lässt einen Staunen. Dagegen wirkt „Babylon Berlin“ nur künstlich und aufgesetzt.

Und in wirkliches Staunen versetzen einen die letzten vier Doppelseiten des Comics, die den Bogen noch einmal weit über das kleine Zeitfenster des Comics hinaus spannen.

Lutes hat 23 Jahre an diesem Comic gearbeitet und damit ein Kunstwerk geschaffen.

Santiago L. Moreno says

Última entrega de una obra monumental. 22 años ha tardado Jason Lutes en realizar los 22 capítulos en los que se divide esta maravillosa novela gráfica cuya calidad, sin embargo, solo puede ser juzgada desde la valoración unitaria.

En este tercer y último volumen todos los niveles -político, histórico, social e individual- confluyen en un desenlace inevitable y pleno de emoción. El aspecto gráfico se me antoja incluso superior al de los tomos anteriores, no sólo en lo estético, en su cada vez más definida línea clara, sino también en la propia narrativa gráfica, que crea espacios de contenidos con varias lecturas. Son muchos los aciertos, las metáforas ofrecidas en páginas que se configuran a veces como entes autónomos, pequeñas microhistorias dentro del desarrollo narrativo. El trazo limpio en los primeros planos de Hitler; el fondo en blanco inexistente, en viñetas sin texto, que resalta a los personajes en sus momentos definitorios; la barba de Kurt Severing, cada vez más poblada, más negra, que llega a parecerse a una mordaza cuando el personaje enmudece; las transiciones que trasvasan parte del contenido de la escena anterior a la siguiente, todo arroja una certeza de estudiada elaboración en cada uno de los elementos y las historias que componen esta maravillosa conclusión de la obra. Especialmente el magnífico final, que emociona al recordar de forma brutal y a doble página lo que acontecería años más tarde, la realidad que sobrevendría a la ficción.

Desde el cierre de la contracubierta, incluso antes de la obligada reflexión, entra a formar parte de mi lista de cómics favoritos.

Maureen says

I read this the day I got it. I was so excited to read this final volume and it really delivered. What a beautiful series.

Alex Tongue says

In this volume, the desperation of the previous book has given way to despair. No longer clinging to each other, the desire to fight has given way to apathy and retreat - some with the bottle, some with a train.

Nothing it seems can stop the incoming destruction, and nothing will. I find myself relieved that the Jews in the story do manage to leave, but it doesn't save the other millions who would perish.

Heartbreaking ending, especially in how hopeful it seems. Irony hits hard.

René says

Me imagino volviéndome hacia la ciudad.

Vinayak Hegde says

The final book in the 3 part trilogy concludes with the intertwining of the characters of the stories in unexpected ways. The artwork is brilliant as usual with a couple of facing page large panels with detail of the city. But the ending seemed a bit abrupt and unsatisfying as compared to the buildup in the last two volumes. Still the story holds it's own with the fascism burgeoning in the background and reaching it's climax with WWII.

D.M. says

Well...damn. That was a disappointment.

After over 20 years, this trilogy has finally wrapped up, and I applaud Lutes for sticking to it. It would have been so easy to have let this become another one of those lost epics of independent comics (Big Numbers, you know I'm looking in your direction), so to see it conclude at all is massively satisfying.

But then, it's not. It's not satisfying. At all. I wish I could pinpoint what it was that let me down here, but I'm having trouble getting to it.

Let's start with the images. Lutes has always had a deft touch with his lines, whether crafting meticulously detailed cityscapes or suggesting inner conflict with the merest of expressions on his beautifully formed faces. Here, his faces seem to have gotten sloppy, unable to convey anything and not even maintaining semblance from one panel to the next. His world is still fairly lovely to look at, but even that tends to disappear in the backgrounds more often than ever.

His writing is still quite nice and the characters for the most part still act as one would expect within the world he's created, but the narrative takes several sudden and unlikely turns here that are just unbelievable.

There are also a few sudden interjections that are just baffling (just who the hell is that on p. 63?!). I give nothing away to mention that Hitler appears for the first time here, but he fails to make much impact (in spite of the impact he clearly had).

I don't want to nitpick this book, I really, really don't. The trilogy is over, and it was an honourable accomplishment. I just wish it had ended better.

Stanislav Matiychyn says

Not as in-depth as the first two novels of the trilogy and it felt a bit rushed, which is unfortunate for a conclusion. In addition, the drawings felt sloppy and unfinished at times.

Ignacio says

Pues ya está. Lutes aprovecha el último tercio de la historia para medio cerrar las historias que tenía planteadas, una serie de derrotas personales que contextualizan la derrota máxima que supuso el ascenso del nazismo. Hay secuencias poderosas, como la de Kurt colándose en una mansión para contemplar desde una ventana una fiesta en honor a Hitler o esa pelea en un sótano entre jóvenes arrastrados hasta ese punto por fuerzas externas a ellos. Pero ninguna tan elocuente como las últimas viñetas en las que vemos a Kurt y a Marthe y cómo Lutes representa las disyuntivas que se presentan ante ellos.

He seguido este tebeo durante casi dos décadas. El viaje me ha merecido la pena en todo su recorrido.
