



The Art of Maurice Sendak

Selma G. Lanes

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Creator of *Where the Wild Things Are*, *In the Night Kitchen*, *Higglety Pigglety Pop!*, and the illustrations for dozens of other memorable children's books, Maurice Sendak has ranked among the best-known and best-loved artists in America for nearly thirty years. Now his life and work are explored in affectionate detail in this charming, fun-filled book, enticingly illustrated with hundreds of the award-winning illustrator's fantasy sketches, black-and-white squiggly line drawings, full-color fold-outs, and working dummies of his most important works. The author draws (no pun intended) upon many conversations with Sendak to write an intimate biography, enhanced by perceptive quotes from Sendak himself. The result is a volume full of key insights into the artist's keen mind as well as fascinating glimpses into his extraordinary varied technique. 11" x 11".

The Art of Maurice Sendak Details

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Marti says

What an incredibly talented man Maurice Sendak was! This is a real toe crusher of a book--large and definitely heavy! I had seen a short YouTube video about Sendak, but this really fleshes that out. Having a Max in our family, I am certainly partial to *Where the Wild Things Are*--in fact, I sewed a Max costume for our grandson. I was interested to read that the love of his life was Jennie, his Sealyham dog, who figures in both prose and poetry in his work. My husband considers his art inconsequential, but I disagree. He has changed the face of children's literature. Selma G. Lanes does a nice job of summarizing, and presenting the life of Maurice Sendak.

Kimberly Zebrowski says

This book is perfect for any Maurice Sendak fan! It has some great info about Sendak's earlier work and a few fold-out pages in the middle of the book that are illustrations from *Where the Wild Things Are*. This is one of my favorites in my art book collection.

Megan says

Great art! A bit slow, but worth a read if you love his work. The author gives you insight into why he draw they way he does compared to other artists of the same time. The book however, only focuses on his life as an artist, not on particularly on his whole life, just those parts that impacted his art. In other words, if you want to know why he never married or had kids, the book won't tell you.

Mariah says

This is a book for adults who love children's books. The most interesting part of the book is the information about Mopsy, Sendak's beloved dog, who appears in a number of his books. I also enjoyed reading about *In the Night Kitchen* and how Sendak dealt with criticism.

Dominick says

This is a biography of Sendak as artist, focusing primarily on his artistic development, with relatively little information about his personal life. Consequently, one comes away from the book not really feeling as if one knows the man, though there are certainly hints and moments of insight. Nevertheless, it is a lovely book, and it does deliver what it promises: its title specifies that its focus is the *art*, so its reticence about the *man* should not be surprising. The illustrations are lavish and include selections from most of Sendak's work as well as rarities and unseen pieces (e.g. sketches, pages from dummies or mock-ups), and the reproduction is first-rate. I might quibble with some of the selections, especially in cases when the book discusses an image

in some detail without actually including it. Some works are given oddly short shrift, as well. I was surprised at how little was said about *Outside over There*, for instance, given how important I see that book as being. Nevertheless, this is a treat for Sendak fans.

Perssis Namour says

Loved reading about Maurice. I only wish they had given more detail about him growing up. There was a lot dedicated to his 20's and growing into adulthood but I feel robbed of his youth and culture. They left out any significant detail about his parents. Besides being Jewish immigrants and his love of storytelling inherited by his father again there is something lacking. This book while very detailed and colorful it's like someone describing the wonderful 5 star restaurant to you and the three course meal they enjoyed and only seeing it through their eyes and never tasting it.

John Millard says

I remember this from my childhood. My mother liked the book and we enjoyed it as well although I do have a vague feeling that I found it a bit scary. Anyway, jump ahead 45 or so years and my wife Amy and I own The Night Kitchen Bakery <http://www.nightkitchenbakery.com/> in Philadelphia. So, once again my mother came through and bought this book for me a couple years ago which my wife remembered. I had forgotten it and just thought that it was there on our shelf going back to who knows when and it would always be there to read. My daughter pulled it out and started to look through it so I decided to read it. I cannot even draw a decent cube so the work by any artist fascinates and leaves me in awe whether it be drawing, music, books or movies. Anyway, I loved this book. There is so much to this wonderful person who happens to work so fantastically hard to bring a work of quality to the rest of the world. I agree that the life of a child is full of wonder both good and sometimes bad. Children know bullshit. It is only the adult who sometimes loses that ability to detect. For those things I forgot books like this touch me on a subconscious level which I will never be able to explain beyond the giddy "ooooh, I like that!". Amy and I took our daughter Izabella to The Rosenbach museum in Philadelphia to see his work that was showcased there before being transferred to his home/museum in Connecticut after his death. I am happy we made the effort and am delighted that Amy and my hard work has garnered us admiration and respect in our chosen home of Philadelphia. We love Maurice Sendak and what he gave to the world. May he find whatever he believed he would both in this life and in whatever might come next whether wild or not.

sofie jacobson says

"It's only adults who read the top layer most of the time. I'm generalizing again, of course, but I'll bet my pictures don't surprise kids. They know what's in Grimm. They know that stepmother probably means mother; that the word step is there to avoid frightening a lot of older people. Children know there are mothers who abandon their children, emotionally if not literally. Sometimes they have to live with this fact. They don't lie to themselves. They wouldn't survive if they did. And my object is to never lie to them." (205)

Maurice has a lot of passion about illustration. I never realized that so many of my favorite books growing up were by him! Ha. Reading this biography definitely got me thinking about the importance of treating children like they are people and being "real" with them.

Sheree says

Wonderful. The work and life story of one of my favorite illustrators compiled into one gorgeous book. This is a forever book that I will revisit again and again.

Yvonne says

Ah, Maurice! Some about his beginnings and lots about the history of his art. Lots of sketchbook examples and lots and lots of his finished art. The story of books he illustrated and books he wrote and illustrated. A joy.

Jonathan Dearborn says

A collection of some of the most important moments of childhood for me. I own most of his books, and got them as they came out. The Nut Shell Library etc. If u like him at all, and Love good Books. This is a MUST. Well made, large, Color Prints to die for. His early art made as a boy, his later works unreleased, all perfectly displayed . If on wishes to learn about him, or just view his art, this is it!

Natalie says

Dominick has put it better than I could.

Margaret Willey says

I learned so much about Sendak and his artistry and his life and how the two were so closely intertwined. Sendak is one of my all time literary heroes because he stayed so true to his own vision of both childhood and art.

Gwen says

This is a huge book (physically large) at 270ish pages. Selma G. Lanes provides a historical perspective to M. Sendak's life's works. The pictures are absolutely amazing. Having only seen a few of Sendak's work, I thought he could only draw in one particular fashion. It was amazing to see what he is capable of. Sendak incorporates much of his life into his illustrations and stories. It was particularly interesting to see the drafts and progress to his final work. This book was written in the 1980s and therefore tells about Sendak's life without telling about his life. Lanes respected Sendak's closeted lifestyle and it seems that Sendak only loved his dogs, his mother and father and his work. I would be interested in reading a more inclusive history of

Sendak's life now that he is openly (ish) gay and how that reflects in his work.

Robin says

Although this is an oversized, coffee-table style book, it has a lot of great information in it, not just the wonderful art of Sendak. I learned more about this man as an artist and creator of children's books. It's especially interesting to read about all the writers he collaborated with over the years in addition to creating his own books.
