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Toulouse-Lautrec: The Moulin Rouge and the City of Light

By Robert Burleigh

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A picture book biography that tells the story of French artist Henri Toulouse-Lautrec. Illustrated completely with his artworks as well as those of his contemporaries, the book tells how he came to be an artist, despite being crippled and sickly. It includes his famous works of the Moulin Rouge as well as discusses the advent of the poster - a medium that he soon became the master of. The printing process for the poster is also discussed as well as how it heavily influenced advertising thereafter. His drinking problem as well as the sexual overtures of some of his work, especially the Moulin Rouge, is neither discussed nor illustrated. The book focuses on his technique and artworks.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 4-8—This short, vividly illustrated book is an excellent addition to the recent spate of artist biographies such as Jonah Winter's *Frida* (Scholastic, 2002), James Warhola's *Uncle Andy's* (Putnam, 2003), Michael Garland's *Dinner at Magritte's* (Penguin, 1995), and M. T. Anderson's *Strange Mr. Satie* (Viking, 2003). These excellent art-history primers afford respect and offer historical perspective to subjects who were misunderstood during their own lifetimes. This biography is no different. Burleigh confidently celebrates Lautrec's work and skill and allows readers to shake hands with the man as a great artist rather than as a fixture in Parisian nightlife. Not only does the book feature Lautrec's paintings in many mediums (watercolors, drawings, oil paintings, graphite), but it also includes large, clear photographs of Lautrec, his circle of friends, and Paris at the turn of the 19th century. The text is written in a brisk, conversational tone and includes anecdotes, asides, and rhetorical questions that serve to make the artist's life vivid, relevant, and even a little hip. The size of the book is also a plus as it allows room for large reproductions of Lautrec's work.—*Steev Baker, Kewaskum Public Library, WI*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 3-5. This handsome, oversize volume introduces the life and art of Toulouse-Lautrec. His childhood, the disease that stunted the growth of his legs, and his decision to study art in Paris begin the text, which goes on to discuss the nightlife in Montmartre, the young man's talent, his hard work, and his growing reputation. In his brief lifetime, his posters for the Moulin Rouge became renowned not just as advertising but also as art. Burleigh relates the facts in a way that is comprehensible to children, without talking down to them. He seamlessly incorporates information about the people portrayed in the pictures and the style of the art into the narrative account of the artist's life. The book's format allows for many illustrations, including period photos and paintings of Paris by artists such as Pissarro and Renoir, which are cleverly mingled with reproductions of Toulouse-Lautrec's arresting drawings, paintings, and lithographs, many in color. Together, they give a sense of the excitement that was Paris. Back matter includes a bibliography and an author's note. A beautifully designed book that provides a lively, accessible introduction to the artist's life and work. *Carolyn Phelan*

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About the Author

Robert Burleigh has written many award-winning books for children, including fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Booklist praised his work, saying, "Burleigh paints mesmerizing word pictures on the page," and School Library Journal said that his writing "encourages an understanding of the artistic process and self-expression." A painter as well as a writer, Mr. Burleigh lives with his wife in Chicago, where he received a M.A. from the University of Chicago.

Users Review

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Jesse Linder:

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