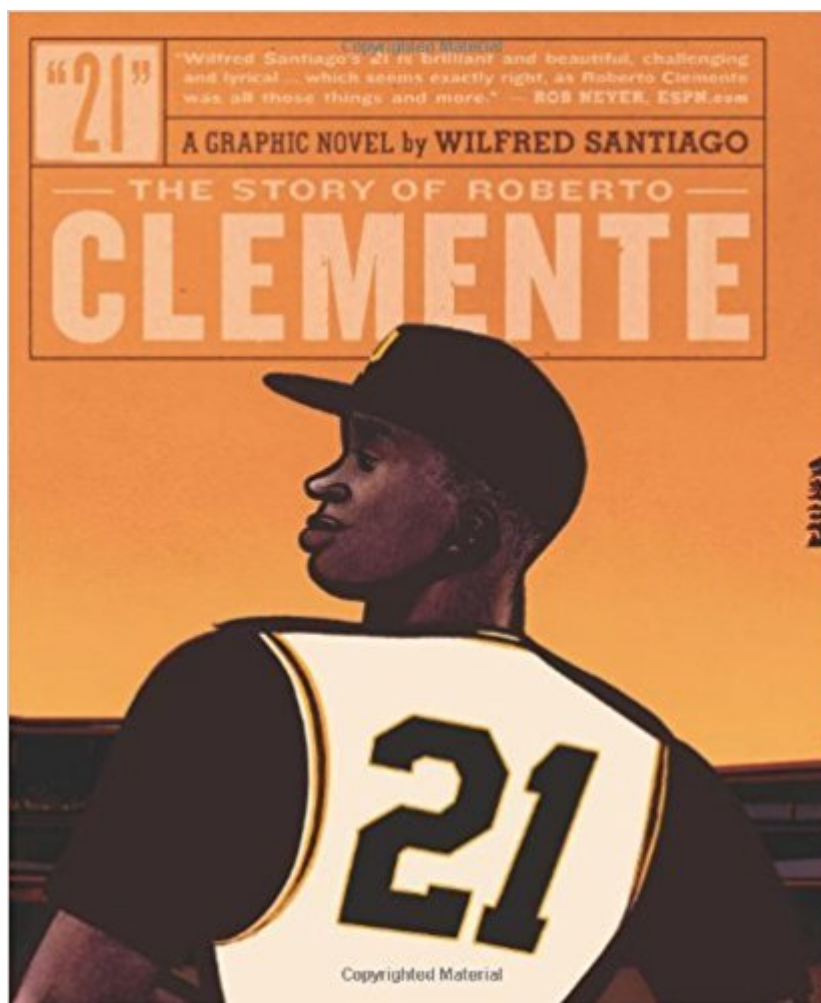


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21: The Story Of Roberto Clemente



Synopsis

A graphic novel biography of Puerto Rico's greatest baseball star. 21 is an all-ages graphic biography of baseball star Roberto Clemente: No other baseball player dominated the 1960s like him and no other Latin American player achieved his numbers. 21 chronicles his early days growing up in rural Puerto Rico, the highlights of his career (including the 1960s World Series), the prejudice he faced, his private life and his humanitarian mission. Santiago captures the grit of Clemente's rise from his impoverished childhood, to the majesty of his performance on the field, to his fundamental decency as a human being, in a drawing style that combines realistic attention to detail and expressive cartooning.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Santiago uses black and white and some yellow-orange fill-ins, but really that’s all he needs. His style is clean, ranging in depiction of Clemente throughout the years to religious leaders to baseball action scenes ... Santiago does Clemente proud with 21.” - David A. Kirschenbaum, Boog City
“More than anything, ...21 is a book of huge ambition and formal daring. The storytelling is kaleidoscopic| But for all his overt displays of (admittedly dazzling) technique, Santiago never loses track of his story. [...] 21: The Story of Roberto Clemente is a mammoth achievement...” - Jack Feerick, Kirkus Reviews
“Santiago| creates a well-balanced, yet striking, portrait of the man and his times. This is a book to be enjoyed by teens and adults, baseball fans, and anyone who wants to read an epic story.” - Largehearted

Boy

“The world around [Clemente] is alive, and Santiago’s expressive (and occasionally, bracingly expressionistic) approach to portraying Clemente’s wild athletic genius ensures that it remains thrillingly present.... [A] fitting and vital tribute.” - David Roth, Los Angeles Review of Books

“Lusciously realised in sumptuous earth-tones and powerfully redolent of the spirit of Unjust Times A-Changin’, this is a fabulous book for every fan of the medium and not simply lads and sports-fans.” - Win Wiacek, Now Read This!

“It’s an artistic tour de force and shows that bio comics do not have to be the stolid, one step at a time narrative that we often see. ...21 is an excellent book... Clemente is every bit the important figure in baseball history that Robinson was, and more people need to know his story. 21 is an excellent place to start, either for you or the baseball fan in your life.” - Rob McMonigal, Panel Patter

“Wilfred Santiago captures the physical grace of baseball and creates a story of visceral and emotional force... Santiago has produced a rich and surprising work. The compositions and framing are intricate and varied. Santiago captures Clemente’s relentless vitality as a player, frames the story around the historical and religious traditions of Puerto Rico, and handles Clemente’s tragic death with restraint, all with a gimlet eye and the sensitivity of a true artist. It is a classic story given new life in this fresh, innovative telling.” - Alex Belth, Sports Illustrated

“Starred Review. Nearly every page brings a new compositional marvel. The in-game sequences are show-stoppers. [F]or a book that matches the pure athleticism, unshakable compassion, and towering legacy of its subject, look no further.” - Booklist

“Wilfred Santiago’s 21 is brilliant and beautiful, challenging and lyrical ... which seems exactly right, as Roberto Clemente was all those things and more.” - Rob Neyer, ESPN.com

“What Santiago has done is to create a sketch of Clemente’s life as he actually led it, not as the legend he became. Even more impressive is the way Santiago tells this story. His gorgeous illustrations... perfectly capture the period. This is a book to be pored over, not read straight through.” - Mark Flowers, School Library Journal

“The comic book biography is alive and well in 21: The Story of Roberto Clemente... 21 captures what made Clemente unique. However, Santiago uses the medium of the comic book in a unique way to tell the story of man who represents the best of us. [Grade] A.” - Leroy Douresseaux, I Reads You

“[A]s those of you who are familiar with the great baseball player and humanitarian that Roberto Clemente was already know, it would be hard to tell his story in any media and for that story not to be powerful. ...21 ... is a handsome production... [and] an... EXCELLENT graphic novel.” - Ralph Mathieu, Ich Liebe Comics!

“Exuberantly expressive... Santiago imbues his biography of famed Puerto Rican baseballer Roberto Clemente

with the furious energy of a Clemente triple. – Noel Murray, The A.V. Club – “The graphic novel is a beautifully wrought Clemente collage. While there were several poignant dramatic through lines, the book’s strength lies in its brilliant visuals, which far outweigh its strictly biographical content. The oral tradition of myth-making is put into visual form here. – Ted Walker, Pitchers & Poets – “Santiago makes the sport exciting for even the most die-hard anti-baseball lout, but more importantly reminds us of the man behind one of the most inspirational figures in sports. – Garrett Martin, Paste – “It’s a rocket. It’s a plane. It’s a bird. No, it’s Roberto Clemente! ...It is an attractive book for all ages. – Pedro Zayas, ESPN Deportes (translated) – “...Santiago has managed to capture both aspects of Clemente -- the legend and the human being.... – Michael Machosky, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review – “An astoundingly beautiful book. As great as a graphic novel can be. – Mark Chiarello, author of Heroes of the Negro Leagues – “[A] reverent, yet sometimes playful look at the man and what he had to go through to get where he did.... Santiago’s art is cartoonish, yet expressionistic and appealingly loose. [...] He really captures the action of the game very well. It’s really some daredevil storytelling at times. – Johnny Bacardi, Popdose – “A must read for anyone awed by the beauty of the sport. | This graphic novel seeks to give a proper sense of wonder and the fantastic to a player whose tragic ending is often a stark reminder of our own mortality. At that it succeeds terrifically. – Andy Smith, Bugs & Cranks – “The simple joy conveyed in this book is universally appealing... Baseball is a game that is full of life and story, and every year the game blooms in the spring with the trees and flowers of the season. 21: The Story of Roberto Clemente celebrates life, and new life, as much as it does baseball. – Andy Frisk, Comic Book Bin – “Santiago avoids the traditional traps of being too staid, didactic or reverential, creating a book that shows us what made the Pittsburgh Pirates member so special without feeling like a history lesson. It’s a book that’s both fun as well as informative. – Chris Mautner, Robot 6

Wilfred Santiago was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico. He now lives in Chicago.

As an only very occasional reader of graphic novels, or graphic non-fiction, I have no real basis, nor any desire, to try to view this terrific little book in relation to other graphic works. All I can tell you is that I thoroughly enjoyed it. Not really a biography in any literal sense of the term, it does paint an interesting portrait of the life and times of this fascinating and admirable man. I also have never read

a standard biography of Clemente (though I am more motivated now than I was before I read this), so I cannot say precisely how much liberty Santiago may or may not have taken. What I can say is that this is a lovely, lively and very idiosyncratic look at Clemente, his childhood, his growing up and his adult life as one of baseball's all-time greats and greatest symbols of its once status of more-than-a-game. Santiago's style is fluid, muscular and light at the same time. His pictures dance and breathe and bleed from one frame, one page, to the next with grace and style. The book is a joy to look at. It's pretty good to read, too. My only real complaint is that, maybe by design, Clemente never quite emerges as a three dimensional person (no pun intended). For all the breath-taking artistry on display, this remains an essay, a sort of prose poem to Clemente. I admit this may be my problem, not the book's - it in no way claims, or seems to intend, to be documentary. But I still wanted just a little more flesh. The only thing that kept me from clicking five stars instead of four.

Wilfred Santiago's beautiful graphic novel of Roberto Clemente is not just another biopic of one of our country's most important heroes. Anyone familiar with Clemente knows his life story from the countless biographies, documentaries and tributes that have been created over the years. Yet, Santiago is able to capture the grace and movement of Clemente as a human being and as a hero unlike any previous book. If you love baseball, you will be amazed at the power and energy of the baseball scenes. If you love heroes, you will be inspired all over again at Clemente's sense of justice and honesty. If you are a fan of graphic novels and comics, you will spend hours marveling at the beauty of the illustrations. If you are American and/or Puerto Rican, you will be so proud of Santiago's tribute and of Clemente's unparalleled life. This is a book to treasure and return to again and again. My only regret, we need a Spanish version. There are hundreds of thousands of fans of baseball and Clemente in Latin America and the Caribbean, not to mention hispanoparlantes here in the United States who would *apreciarlo mucho*!

The art for Clemente is fantastic. Santiago does a beautiful job illustrating the characters of the stories and the images of baseball in action. The landscapes of Puerto Rico are wonderful and the page layout is modern and interesting. As a piece of art, this book easily deserves 5 stars and I would absolutely recommend it to any baseball fan, artist, or graphic novel enthusiast. My only complaint is that the story is overly fractured, and skips over pivotal moments in Clemente's baseball and philanthropic careers. Overall, a nice little book that would make an excellent addition to any graphic novel or baseball library.

Very original ideas for a biography. However, I read it with my 11 year old son, and it was impossible for him to keep up. The story jumped around so much (another reviewer used the perfect word "fractured",) that my son, and often I, couldn't tell where or when we were. The story has Roberto as a kid, then a page later on a pro team but near retirement age, then a page later in puerto rico but much older , then in the U.S, then who knows where, and who knows what age. It was more "the art show of" than "the story of" Clemente. Seems like the author had a cool graphic in mind, and forced it into the book, even though the flow of the story line didn't allow it. 5 stars for the artwork, and 1 star for the way it was arranged gives this book 3 stars.

People sometimes complain that graphic novels are labelled "comic books," but they too often look like comic books and nothing more. "21," instead, brilliantly exploits the illustrations in the telling of the tale. Santiago makes the visuals as exciting as his story. And the story of Roberto Clemente--personal and professional--is remarkable. It's the combination of narrative and art that makes "21" the kind of book that repays repeated readings.

A really creative adaptation of Clemente's story. Perfect for relating middle school and high school students to a remarkable man.

Very entertaining and full of Clemente history lessons. A must-read for any Pirate fan. I met the author at a book-signing and it was clear that he cares very much about this topic.

This book is a beautiful, engaging, and moving account of Clemente's remarkable life. I'm not normally a graphic novel fan but it was recommended to me and I was blown away. Santiago's narrative is fantastic and his artwork is incredible. A must for baseball fans!

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