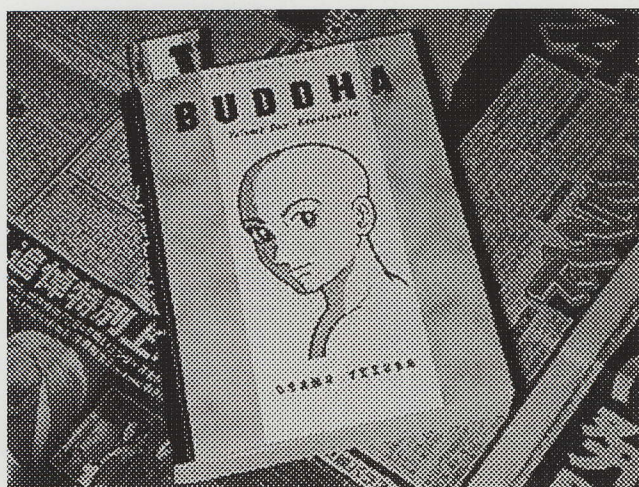
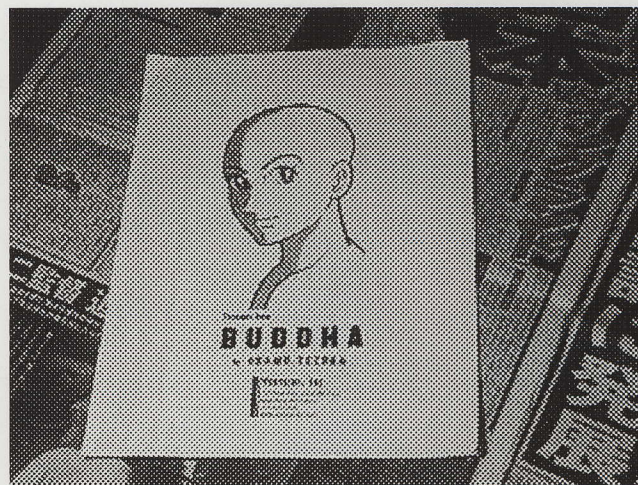


Anime News Service—Review: Osamu Tezuka's Buddha

By: Jonah Morgan

Vertical Inc.'s highly anticipated market debut manga release of Osamu Tezuka's Buddha Vol. 1: Kapilavatsu is expected to arrive at retail sometime in October across North America. Leading up to that, ANS has snagged a very advance peek of some of some publisher selected excerpts from the first book and relayed our opinions on the release below.

The existing manga market in North America is populated on the whole by very contemporary works out of the Japanese market. Take a look at best sellers compilations for titles sold here and most of the hottest properties originated out of Japan in the last 5–10 years. Most of these books were undoubtedly picked up for release in conjunction with associated media releases such as anime series etc., be it an in-house extracompany release. And thusly the hopes for profitability of said titles pinned on the proven performance or expectations of the other media's march. Such is the existing paradigm / "proven" business model of the import manga industry, I'm certain it's not a phenomena isolated to America.



Enter Vertical Inc. who approaches the market from a very different perspective. An outside player to the usual mechanisms of the industry, they have dusted off a classic work of the undisputed father of manga and breathed into it a new life with a very contemporary flavor. Before the days of where the hype was bigger than the property attached to it there was just a man with an unmatched talent of telling a wonderful story via compelling dialogues / themes and vivid artistry, that's what I seen in this title. This work, dating from 1987 is especially compelling when one considers it was one of Tezuka's last great works published before his death in 1989.

The first volume due in a few weeks contains 12 chapters, Siddharta (The Buddha) is not born until the 7th chapter. "Kapilavatsu" is the historical captial of the Shakya Kingdom where Siddharta was born as a prince. The hero of the first volume is Chapra, who attempts to escape slave status, the historical background of ancient india is magisterially laid out throught the first story.

The story is a classic yes, however, the translation and translitteration work that has gone into this release of Buddha is some of the best I've seen in both the academic and contemporary senses. Discover why Tezuaka is called a master of the art in October with the release of Buddha Vol. 1.

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