

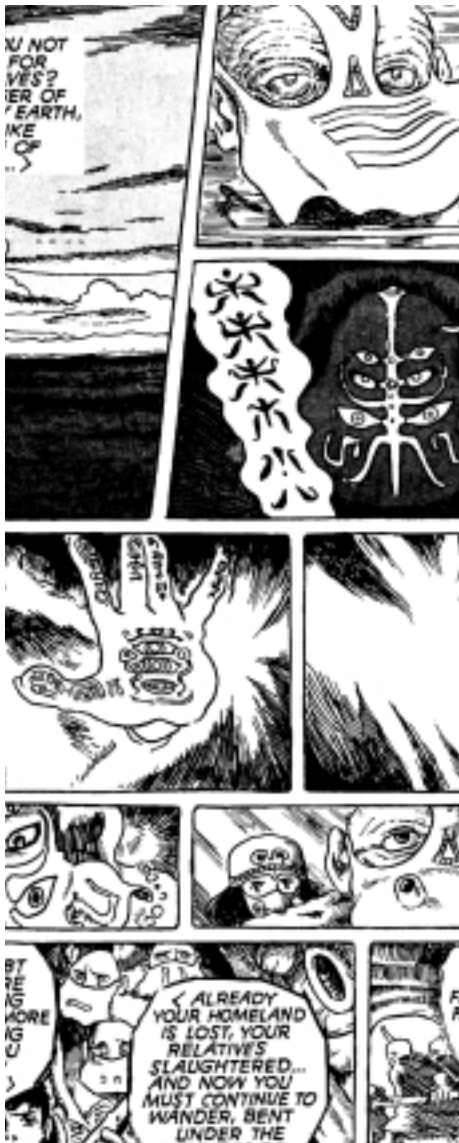
Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind

Maniacal comix fans consider this one of the best graphic novels ever written. It's a heroic four-volume work by a single artist, the legendary animator Hayao Miyazaki, usually known for his films such as Princess Mononoke. The story in this 1,000-page manga tells how a planet corrupted by pollution is made whole again. The heroine is a young girl, but unlike many manga, this comix is appropriate for a young girl to read. As in all great sagas, the joy is in the details. Obsessive details, minutely described, finely inked details of a wholly rendered Other World. As an epic environmental fantasy, Nausicaä is in a class of its own.

—KK

Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind

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Wacom Tablet

I don't use pen and ink anymore. I use a Wacom tablet and stylus to draw directly into Photoshop, Illustrator, etc. It's really the only way to draw with computers. I met a cartoonist who was drawing using a mouse; I have no idea how he did it. He was like a mountain man. I use the smallest of Wacom's Intuos tablets (about 4 x 5 inches) to plug into my laptop so I can lean it against the tray tables on airplanes.

—Scott McCloud

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Small is beautiful.