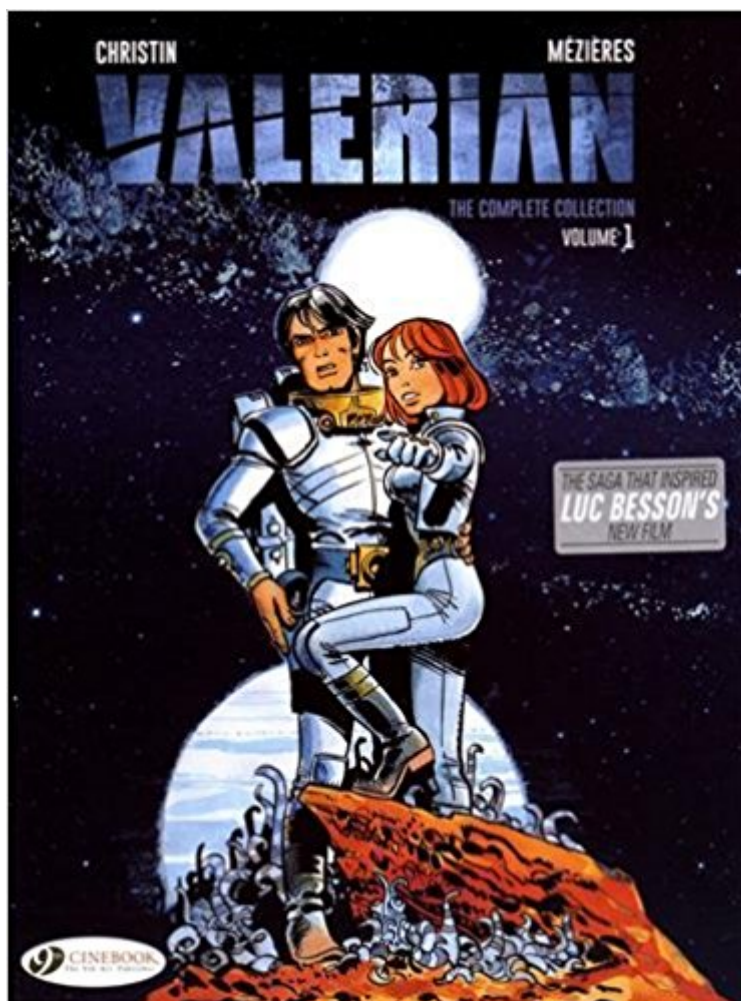


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Valerian: The Complete Collection , Volume 1 (Valerian & Laureline)



Book Information

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Customer Reviews

and Pierre Christin created Valerian in 1967 after working in the USA together, one as a cowboy, the other a teacher. While Valerian is Mézières' only comic series, he has worked as an illustrator in many other areas, including designs and sets for The Fifth Element, and he was awarded the Grand Prix du festival d'Angoulême in 1984. Christin also works in collaboration with other artists such as Tardi and Bilal and writes novels and film scripts.

Valerian (also referred to as Valerian and Laureline) is a space opera comic book created by the writer and artist team of Pierre Christin and Jean-Claude Mézières. The inaugural episode was serialized starting in the November, 1967 issue of the French magazine Pilote and went on to become one of the best-known, and most influential, Eurocomics of the last 50 years. The series appeared in 20 or so successive album de bande dessinée, or Franco-Belgian comics, until 2010. Only recently have more than a handful of these comics been translated into English, so for much of the period from the 70s through the 2000s, only a comparatively few Anglophone readers were aware of the Valerian franchise. These Anglophone readers would occasionally borrow Valerian visual concepts from Mézières, who had mixed emotions on seeing Star Wars and realized that more than

a few of its designs were copied from his own artwork... Timed to accompany the release of the feature film *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets* on July 21 here in the USA, 'Valerian: The Complete Collection Volume 1' compiles English language translations of the four initial episodes of Valerian serialized in *Pilote*: *Bad Dreams* (1967), *The City of Shifting Waters* and *Earth in Flames* (both 1970), and *The Empire of a Thousand Planets* (1971). *Pilote* was intended for what in the USA is called a 'tweener' or 'Young Adult' audience, so these initial episodes of Valerian should be read with an awareness of that audience in mind. This does not mean that Valerian, like many of the comics published in *Pilote*, cannot be enjoyed by adults; many of the strips that appeared in the magazine have since become comic book classics, like *Asterix*, *Lone Sloane*, and *Blueberry*. The premise of Valerian is straightforward space opera: in the year 2720, Valerian is an operative for the Terran Galactic Empire. Teleportation allows people to instantaneously travel immense distances in time and space. On a mission to Earth's past, Valerian befriends a peasant girl named Laureline, who soon becomes an operative herself. Together, they are sent all over the galaxy on troubleshooting missions. This volume of *The Complete Collection* is a nicely produced book, with crisp color reproductions done on high-grade paper. There is an extensive Introduction section designed to acquaint an American readership with the Valerian canon, as well as pointing out how influential the series has been on sf and pop culture worldwide. As for the comics themselves, I found them entertaining despite being aimed at a Young Adult readership. Although Christin's scripts apparently were designed to provide a satiric treatment of the political stances of French president Charles de Gaulle (?!), for all practical purposes, Christin's narratives move along at a satisfying pace. In these initial issues, artist Mezieres was plainly finding his way; his depictions of the human characters have a decidedly 'cartoony' look. But his rendering of landscapes and technological artifacts is good, and makes clear that as the series progressed, Mezieres would refine his techniques and produce some memorable imagery. Given the comic's Gallic origins, there inevitably are going to be those moments that will draw a 'huh?' exclamation from any American reader.....for example, the *Earth in Flames* episode sees a reincarnation of Jerry Lewis from *The Nutty Professor* (?!) The verdict? If you're a fan of those early days of *Heavy Metal*, and Eurocomics like *Barbarella*, then you may want to invest in a copy of 'Valerian: The Complete Collection Volume 1'. If you're someone who is less familiar with the Eurocomics scene, someone more at ease with US and UK sci-fi comics like *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, or *2000 AD*, or more modern

series like *Black Science*™ or *Saga*™, then Valerian may or may not be your cup of tea.....looking at a digital comic or two may be a good way to gauge whether you'll find Valerian rewarding, and whether you should spring for *The Complete Collection*™.

Outstanding Science Fiction Adventure Stories!

Awesome

The book starts out a bit silly and naive, but it is fun. The drawings are conceptually quite sophisticated.

Great presentation and edition, I'm so satisfied with this purchase, won't spoil a thing, read it.

This board-book "graphic novel" collection gives us the early development of a classic science fiction series. Completists will want it, but unless you are interested in the evolution of artists I'd skip it in favor of the next couple collections, and only buy it if you're really in love with the characters. "Bad Dreams," the first ever Valerian story, introduces our square-jawed hero, a special agent of the distant future, who polices time/space for Galaxy, humanity's government of the distant future. A mad scientist has gone back to the Middle Ages, and Valerian is soon in hot pursuit. He meets a pretty peasant girl named Laureline and discovers the scientist's mad plan - to bring magic back to the future to control the world. Mezieres' artwork is stiff but inventive; the story is a lot of wild nonsense. "The City of Shifting Waters" comes next in the series (but is the first full-length by European standards.) Valerian is once again pursuing the mad scientist into the past - but this time it's the mid-'80s (the story was published in 1970), a mysterious time for Galaxy as it was a dark age following an unknown catastrophe. Valerian and the now full-fledged agent Laureline find themselves in a post-apocalyptic New York and meet the inventor of the time machine: a certain Dr Schroeder, who bears a strong resemblance to Jerry Lewis! Mezieres' artwork is still crude but with an increasing sophistication of composition. Christin's story is still pretty silly but has some over-the-top energy. "Empire of 1000 Planets," is a more matured adventure with Valerian and Laureline investigating a mysterious star system controlled by a priesthood with an antipathy to humans. Meziere's artwork has fully matured, but Christin's plotting is still a little hokey, and the final twist seems underplotted. It's better than the preceding stories, though. I'd recommend

almost any of the other Valerian stories over this, but particularly "Heroes of the Equinox," "Ambassador of the Shadows," and "Welcome to Alflolol," as Christin's sociopolitical interests make the stories more clever and interesting. The printing is excellent with crisp reproduction, and the translation is mostly pretty good with a few awkward constructions. Note that there are a total of 22 stories in the full series.

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