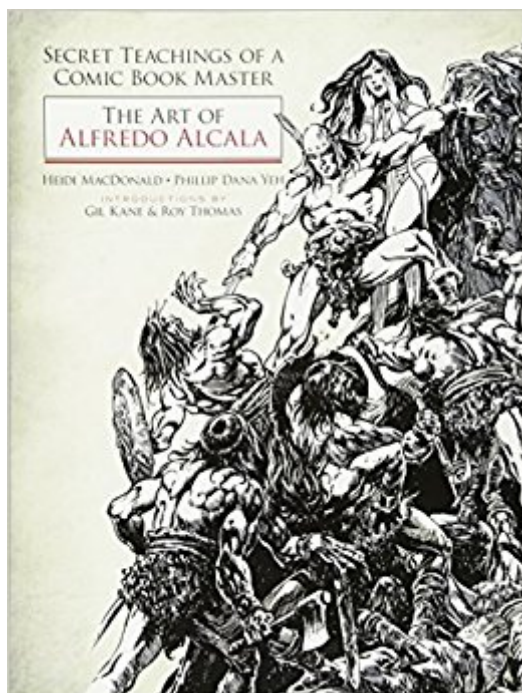


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# Secret Teachings Of A Comic Book Master: The Art Of Alfredo Alcala



## Synopsis

"Alfredo Alcala is one of the most disciplined and perceptive artists inking in comics. The years of distinguished work have earned Alfredo a special place in comics history." — Gil Kane. In the late 1960s, an extremely talented group of Filipino illustrators took the American comic book industry by storm — and the late Alfredo Alcala led the way, working for both Marvel and DC on such popular characters as Conan the Barbarian and Batman. This unique work is loaded with amazing art and pointers on observational methods, composition, and other techniques. In addition to insightful interviews with Alcala, the book features pages from his groundbreaking masterwork, *Voltar*, which was hailed as a new concept in comic book form, an epic in narrative art, and a milestone in sequential art illustration. Students, professionals, teachers, and fans will treasure this inspiring volume and its insider's look at comic book artistry. "A wonderful look at the thought process of one of the best artist/inkers in comic book history and should be read, not just by comic book fans, but by anyone who appreciates great art." — "Looking for a Good Book" "A wonderful look at the thought process of one of the best artist/inkers in comic book history and should be read, not just by comic book fans, but by anyone who appreciates great art." — Rushford Public Library

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Born in Talisay, Negros Occidental in the Philippines, Alfredo P. Alcala (1925–2000) was a legendary comic book artist. His sword-and-sorcery hero *Voltar*, created in 1963, gained him international acclaim, particularly in the United States. For Marvel and DC comics, the award winner worked on such popular characters as Conan the Barbarian, Howard the Duck, and Swamp

Thing. Heidi MacDonald is an American comic book writer and editor based in New York City. Phillip Dana Yeh is an American writer and illustrator of comic books based in California.

A straightforward look at how one of the masters approaches the layout and pacing of a comic book page. A must for anyone who wants to work in the industry (even if you're a writer) and a strong recommendation for those who are simply interested in the process.

This is a book for artists. It is straight forward and short. It doesn't get too complicated, but falls more on the lines of "gems of wisdom". The art is inspiring of course, but I think this book isn't just for the comics geek. This is about the life and attitude of being an artist. I'm sure Alfredo Alcala will inspire you. If you spend all your time in front of paper or canvas honing your craft this book is suited towards you and I'm sure you'll like it.

This is a fascinating and unique volume. A must have for any Alcala fan--if you're not yet, you should become a fan of his art....a great artist and one of the greatest comic book inkers of all time!

A really excellent combination of inspiring biographical detail & art planning & execution strategies  
awesome!

Unimpressed, was hoping for better. Great linesman never the less. Very cool woodcut illustration style.

This review originally published in [www.lookingforagoodbook.com](http://www.lookingforagoodbook.com). Rated 4.5 of 5 I remember in the 1970's being eager each month for the latest issue of The Savage Sword of Conan to be on bookseller's shelf. The black and white art in this over-sized comic book typically was much more impressive than that in the smaller color comics, and a big part of the reason for that was because of Alfredo Alcala. And so, when I saw this book was available (again), I couldn't resist getting my hands on it. First...this is not a portfolio. This is not just drawing after drawing to ogle over, though there is plenty of art inside, it's not being reproduced on a frame-able quality. Second...this book is only eighty pages long and more than a quarter of it is taken up with introductions (by Gil Kane and Roy Thomas, at least). Third..."Secrets Teachings" is a bit of a misnomer - there really aren't any secrets here, but we do get some insight into Alcala and his technique and his thought process as

he develops a comic book. And this is what makes the book worth-while. Before his work on Conan, Alcala created and illustrated a series called Voltar (a clear predecessor to Conan), and this book selects one issue of Voltar and Alcala walks the reader through the entire issue, explaining his thought process to the layout of the page and for each panel and even why some things are light, some dark, etc. It was really fascinating to read how much thought goes into this from the artist's point of view. Because, when I think of Alcala's work, I think of his incredibly detailed work, I would have liked to have more insight into his actual process of inking. I did appreciate his mentioning how artists need to be able to draw (not just 'finish'), and how learning about the human body and how it reacts in different poses is important (and he gives an example of when it doesn't work). Alcala mentions using both pen and brush as tools in his art, and here again I would like to know more. I had always assumed his work (look at the drawing on the cover as pictured above) was purely pen and ink. Where and when would he use a brush? Though I still have questions about his work, I really enjoyed this book, both for the art and for what I learned. I recommend this book very highly for anyone interested in art, not just comic books. Looking for a good book? *Secret Teachings of a Comic Book Master: The Art of Alfredo Alcala* is a wonderful look at the thought process of one of the best artist/inkers in comic book history and should be read, not just by comic book fans but by anyone who appreciates great art. I received a digital copy of this book from the publisher, through Netgalley, in exchange for an honest review.

'*Secret Teachings of a Comic Book Master: The Art of Alfredo Alcala*' is like sitting over coffee with an amazing artist and having him tell you all his secrets. The introductions alone should make you take notice. There are intros by Gil Kane and Roy Thomas, who are comics legends, and they express their deep respect of Alfredo. There is a more personal introduction by Phil Yeh that talks about travelling with Alfredo. The bulk of the book is called, *The Art of Observation*, and Alfredo's tips to young artists are to draw everything and pay attention to everything around you. The book finishes with a kind of artist's commentary to an unpublished Voltar story. Throughout the book are examples of Alfredo's work here in the States and from his early years in the Philippines. He was an influential artist on Conan the Barbarian and his own book Voltar. His style is bold and action-oriented. His figures have muscular anatomy and are finely detailed. I really appreciated learning more about this artist and getting to understand how much work he puts into every panel. I received a review copy of this ebook from Dover Publications and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. Thank you for allowing me to review this graphic novel.

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