

Surrealism for the masses

Cowboy Henk

HERR SEELE & KAMAGURKA

Blond quiff, jutting chin, self-confident grin and completely ignorant of any taboos – that’s him, the one and only Cowboy Henk! With their most popular hero, the illustrator Herr Seele and his writer Kamagurka have created a mixture of Mr Clean, Adonis and a hillbilly, entirely in the tradition of the Belgian Surrealists. Cowboy Henk is at times naive, sometimes cunning, often obscene and frequently quite unintentionally violent.

A monument of humour!

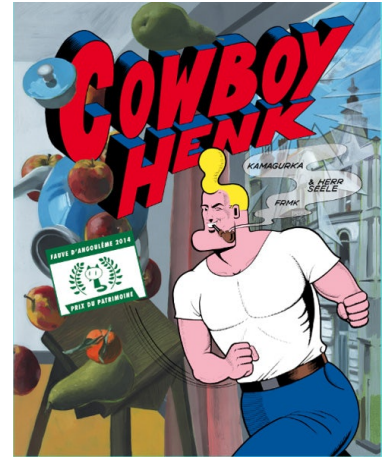
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‘Cowboy Henk’ was published for the first time on 24 September 1981 and has featured in publications including the newspaper De Morgen and the comic magazines Echo des Savannes and Raw Magazine. Since the beginning, the character has also appeared on a weekly basis in Humo, and Kamagurka and Herr Seele still have stories to tell about him. As lovers of nonsense, they have made Cowboy Henk a direct descendant of Belgian Surrealism, with as many references to Dadaism as to the classic American comics.

In 2013, the Belgian French-language publishing house FRMK launched the first of two compilations of ‘Cowboy Henk’, in which the original pictures were recoloured and a new font was used. This collection finally brought Kamagurka and Herr Seele the recognition they deserve, with the Prix du Patrimoine in Angoulême and an entire series of translations.

Cowboy Henk, that’s Tintin upside down

BEAUX ARTS MAGAZINE



AUTHORS



As a child, **Herr Seele** (b. 1959) created comic strips, paintings, musical instruments and more. When he was sixteen, he went to study at the art academy in Ghent, but he later found employment as a piano tuner. In 1981, with **Kamagurka** as the writer, he began the absurd, surrealist comic strip Cowboy Henk, which is now a legendary cult series. Kamagurka is also famous for his cartoons, which have been published in newspapers all over the world, from Charlie Hebdo to Playboy and The New Yorker. *Photos © Filip Meutermans and Chad Gevaert*

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