



LOST GAZES, DETACHED MINDS: STRATEGIES OF DISENGAGEMENT IN THE WORK OF ADRIAN TOMINE

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses some of the main concepts and strategies for understanding the feelings of melancholy and desolation awakened by the work of Adrian Tomine. The aims here are threefold. The first part will be devoted to examining how the subject of affective detachment is raised by a discourse of honesty and self-proclamation of shame, with special attention to the process of identification with the imagined reader. The second part will be dedicated to discussing the emphasis on a linear discrete reading over a tabular reading. And finally, the third part investigates a special use of suspense as a narrative strategy that enables a sense of vagueness in the reader, by way of a theoretical framework taken from contemporary narratology. Tomine's peculiar dynamic of visual storytelling will be examined in works of different extension – from single images (covers from magazines like *The New Yorker*), to short stories (published in *Optic Nerve*), to his first graphic novel (*Shortcomings*).