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## Henri Galeron: France â€¦ Illustrator

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# HENRI GALERON

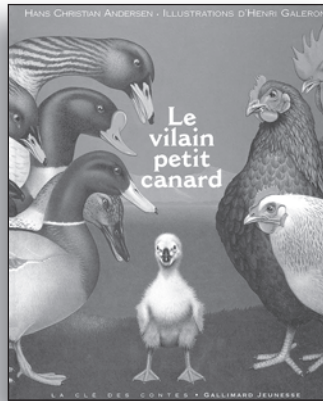
## France ★ Illustrator

Born in Provence, in the South of France in 1939, Henri Galeron graduated from the School of Fine Arts of Marseille in 1961. He began to work as a freelance illustrator in 1974 when he published his most famous illustrated work for children, *Le kidnapping de la cafetière* [The Kidnapping of the Coffee Pot]. In 1979, he provided striking surrealist images to a poem *La pêche à la Baleine* [Whaling] by the famous French poet, Jacques Prévert, using acrylics for the first time, and in 1981 to a text by the Czech writer Franz Kafka, *Le pont* [The Bridge]. Both the latter books belong to the French publisher Gallimard's series, "Enfantimages." The idea behind the series is to enable children to approach famous poets and universally well-known authors. Galeron has also illustrated works by Roald Dahl, Jules Renard, and Lewis Carroll. He illustrated *Voyage au pays des arbres* [Journey in the Land of the Trees], a story by Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio, winner of the 2008 Nobel Prize in Literature.

Galeron's graphic style is extremely versatile as he alternates between detailed acrylic paints or colored inks, and finely hatched black and white pen and ink illustrations, and employs a wide variety of drawing techniques. However, he prefers to use lively shades of acrylic to paint the world in simple images which reflect the way

young children perceive their world. These images are often influenced by surrealism as in *Chacun son tour* [Each in turn].

In Galeron's world, readers will find hybrid creatures born from the crossbreeding of human characters, animals, and manufactured objects. These illustrations are often characterized by a discreet and controlled satire which questions some of the values we may take for granted.



Nevertheless, one of Galeron's most important and appreciated characteristics as illustrator is his ability to put himself entirely at the service of the text. Despite the complexity of his images, he never overpowers or distracts the reading child's attention away from the narrative of the words.

Galeron's production of over 100 illustrated books is comprised of many different genres including fairy tales, novels, poetry, and counting books. He prefers to illustrate poems containing word puns, counting rhymes or rhymes that use vocabulary in a surrealist way, because these types of text allow him the freedom to produce his most imaginative illustrations. In addition to illustrating children's books, Galeron has also produced illustrations for several newspapers (*L'Expansion*, *Le Monde*) and graphic arts magazines (*B.A.T.*, *Étapes Graphiques*).

*Melissa Garavini*

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- *Le doigt magique* [The Magic Finger]. Text Roald Dahl. Paris: Gallimard-Jeunesse, 1983. Print.
- *Mes poules parlent* [My Hens are Speaking]. Text Michel Besnier. Landemer: Motus, 2004. Print.
- *Tom et son ombre* [Tom and his Shadow]. Text Zoé Galeron. Paris: Gallimard-Jeunesse, 2006. Print.
- *Le vilain petit canard* [The Ugly Duckling]. Text Hans Christian Andersen. Paris: Gallimard-Jeunesse, 2006. Print.
- *Chacun son tour* [Each in Turn!]. Text Gilbert Laffaille. Paris: Patrick Couratin – Les Grandes Personnes, 2010. Print.