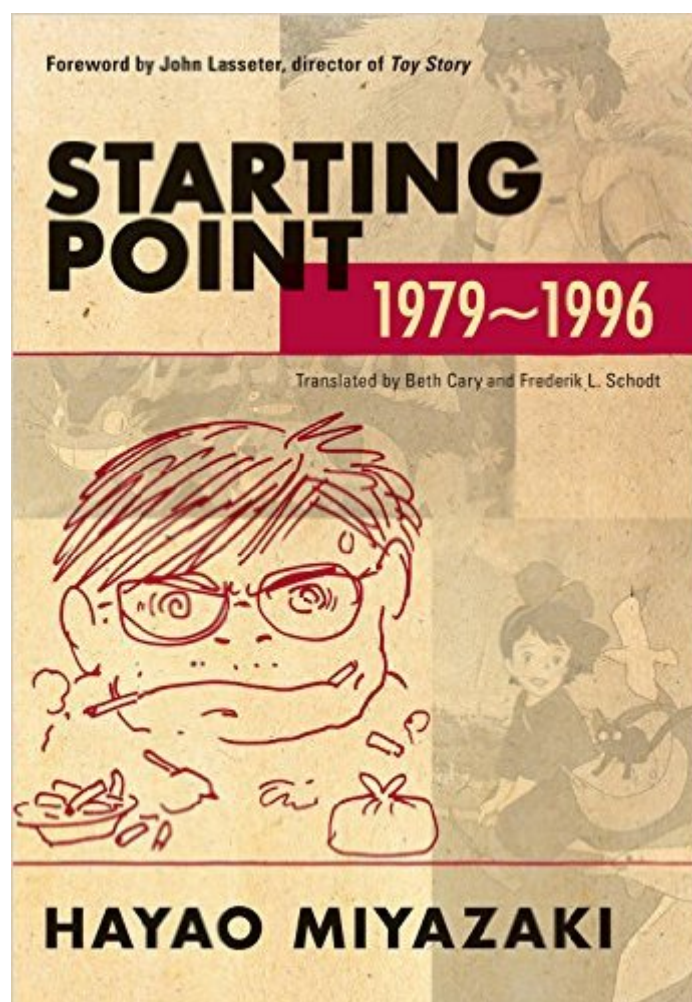


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# Starting Point, 1979-1996



## Synopsis

The first of a pair of memoirs in collection form, featuring essays, interviews, and even a brief comic on the history of airline food, from the master animator. In the first two decades of his career, filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki laid the groundwork for his legendary movies. *Starting Point* is a collection of essays, interviews, and memoirs that go back to the roots of Miyazaki's childhood, the formulation of his theories of animation, and the founding of Studio Ghibli. Before directing such acclaimed films as *Spirited Away*, Miyazaki was just another salaried animator, but with a vision of his own. Follow him as he takes his first steps on the road to success, experience his frustrations with the manga and animation industries that often suffocate creativity, and realize the importance of bringing the childhood dreams of the world to life. *Starting Point: 1979-1996* is not just a chronicle of the life of a man whose own dreams have come true, it is a tribute to the power of the moving image.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I bought *Starting Point* at the beginning of this year as material for a research paper I was writing on three of Hayao Miyazaki's films. Since then, I have read the entire thing and reread multiple portions of this extraordinary book. It became an invaluable resource for me as I wrote my paper, but it was also a very enjoyable and personal book. Over the course of the weeks it took me to finish it, I felt like I actually got to know Hayao Miyazaki. As I told several people, *Starting Point* is definitely the best book I have purchased in a very long time, and so far it is the best thing I have read this year.

With all the wonderful essays, interviews, directorial memos, and even drawings it contains, I'm surprised there hasn't been more hype about it. It is an absolute must-read for any Miyazaki fan. I can't believe we had to wait more than fifteen years for this book to be translated and published in the United States (it was first published in Japan in 1996). The book, which is nearly 500 pages long, has been divided into several parts and includes a foreword by John Lasseter (director of Toy Story) and an afterword by Isao Takahata (director of Grave of the Fireflies). The first part, entitled "On Creating Animation" is perhaps the most technical part of the book. Even though many of Miyazaki's thoughts on animation and film techniques were a bit over my head, I still enjoyed reading those chapters and thinking about them. Miyazaki's writing style is simple enough that I didn't feel swept away by too much jargon or overly-technical terms. For filmmakers and those interested in how animation works, this part of the book will be fascinating.

Starting Point 1979-1996 is a book by Hayao Miyazaki that was translated by Beth Cary and Frederik L. Schodt. The translation was first published by Viz Media in August 2009, and it had a second printing in January 2010. The book opens with a Foreword by John Lasseter from Pixar Animation. Then, the main contents of the book are essays and pieces written by Miyazaki and interviews done with Miyazaki. These are divided into six sections: "On Creating Animation," "On the Periphery of the Work," "People," "My Favorite Things," "Planning Notes; Directorial Memoranda," and "Works." In the middle of the book there is a section called "A Story in Color," which is a piece that Miyazaki illustrated and wrote for the June 1994 edition of Japan Airlines' in-flight magazine. The book closes with a biographical chronology and an Afterword written by Isao Takahata. The first section of the book is "On Creating Animation." It includes twelve pieces Miyazaki wrote that talk about his thoughts on what animation is, how animation is created, how to draw movements, his thoughts on scenarios, and his thoughts on the workplace for animators. Next is "On the Periphery of the Work," which includes seventeen different pieces. Here, Miyazaki talks about his thoughts on Dave Fleischer, his thoughts on Fantastic Planet, his thoughts on two student shorts that he viewed, his thoughts on period dramas, his thoughts on The Man Who Planted Trees, his thoughts on the first war in Iraq, the type of film he'd like to create, his theories on the popularity of manga, and his thoughts on environmental issues. The next section is "People," in which Miyazaki shares anecdotes and thoughts about people he has known both in his personal life and in his professional life.

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