

TOM OF FINLAND XXL

A collection from Finland's cock of the illustration walk

BY DIAN HANSON



Taschen; £120

TOM OF FINLAND

– known to his mum as Touko Laaksonen – was a Scandinavian illustrator who worked for mags and catalogues in the 1950s-90s. Like many artists, Tom had an obsession. Unlike Turner and his seascapes or Coop and his

devil girls, Tom's passion was for beefy gay men with big erect spunking cocks having sex like Turbonegro fans. These are ultra-men, in sailor uniforms and leather chaps, blueprints for the 1970s gay clone look. In an age when homosexuality equalled effeminacy, Tom's boys swung their huge cocks across the face of the Establishment.

During Tom's lifetime his work was condemned by art critics as inexpressive

and vulgar, but has since been reappropriated and exploited, reinforcing his place in gay culture. His work was even used by Vivienne Westwood for iconic T-shirts worn by the Sex Pistols.

This gigantic book (almost too heavy and big to carry, or even open) does Tom's over-sized heroes proud. It's stuffed with essays from Tom fans such as director John Waters and *Tales Of The City* author Armistead Maupin, as well as preliminary sketches, and luscious big pictures. It's a world free of women, inhibitions and straight sensibilities and absolutely full of huge dicks. **Kate Hodges**

