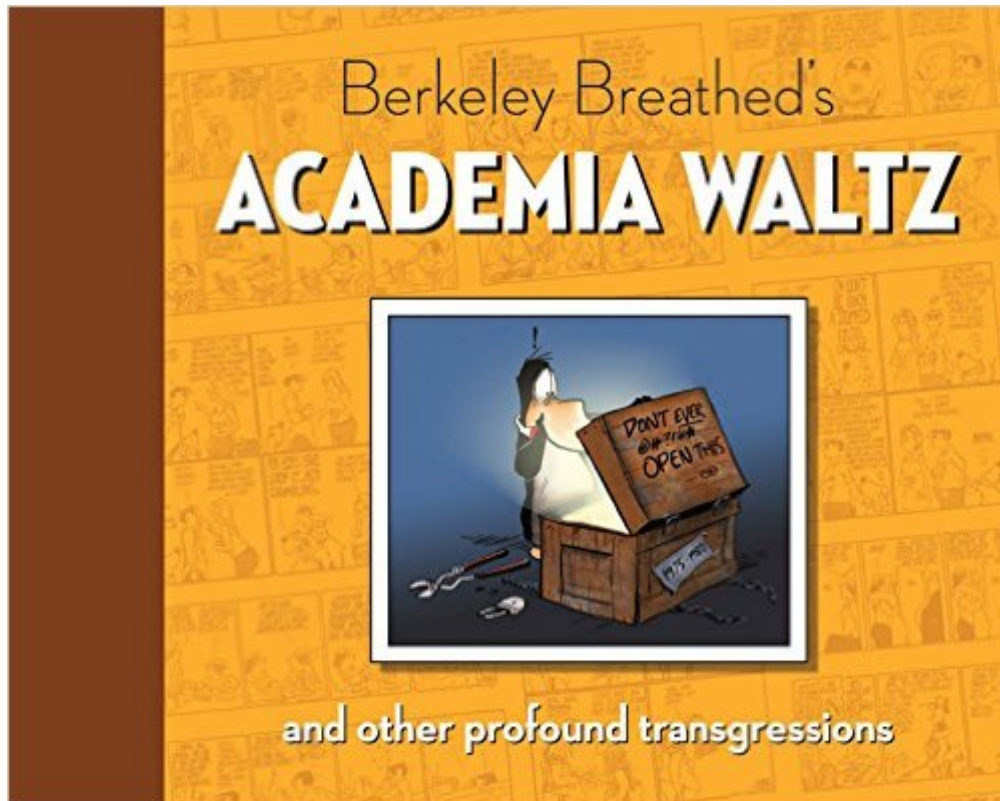


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Berkeley Breathed's Academia Waltz And Other Profound Transgressions



Synopsis

Berkeley Breathed is known as the creator of the wildly popular and influential comic strip Bloom County, and, in particular, for his most iconic character Opus. Over the course of a little more than eight years Bloom County was one of the best selling comic strips ever, winning Berkeley a coveted Pulitzer Prize. The artist went on to do two more Sunday-only strips, Outland and Opus, as well as producing best-selling children's books and screenplays. But before Breathed began his storied career he was a (not so) humble college student at the University of Texas and a contributor to the Daily Texan newspaper where he wrote and drew political cartoons as well as... The Academia Waltz. Berkeley would go on to finance his college studies by self-publishing two paperback collections of AW, selling over 10,000 copies. The strip drew the attention of the Washington Post Syndicate which eventually began publishing a new creation by Berkeley... Bloom County. Many of the characters in the new strip originally appeared in Academia Waltz, most notably Steve Dallas. Now, for the first time "from the rarely seen archives of Berkeley Breathed" comes the nearly (we think) complete Academia Waltz!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I love all of Berkeley Breathed's work, and have the 7 full deluxe collected editions of his full body of Bloom County, Outland, Opus, The Sunday strips etc. Everything up to current. So I was delighted to find a similarly packaged volume of his college scribbles Academia Waltz. It's both weird and wonderful to see the early career of the artist. To see earlier versions of jokes and gags we would later see in much more polished form in Bloom County. Be warned these were cartoons from a

college paper. So they can be a bit racier than standard Bloom County. Of course these were from Carter and early Reagan era College Campuses. So by today's standards not that racy. Sadly I have to take 1 point off for the physical book itself. The pictures make it seem to be bound and packaged the same as the earlier collected volumes. In truth the binding and materials are a major downgrade and this one does not blend with the others. It replaces fine gold lettered cloth with painted shiny plastic. Little touches such as the ribbon book mark are missing from this volume. In short great comic strips. A step down in presenting them.

Before Opus, Outland and Bloom County, there was the Academia Waltz. The Academia Waltz was a comic strip by a young Berkeley Breathed during his time at the University of Texas, where he would submit his strips and political cartoons to his school newspaper, the Daily Texan. Before IDW Publishing's collection of Breathed's work, the Academia Waltz could only be found through rare out-of-print collections in the forms of The Academia Waltz and The Academia Waltz: Bowing Out, both self published by Breathed to pay for his college tuition. Now we readers have the chance to finally see Breathed's earlier works without having pay an arm and a leg. Academia Waltz and Other Profound Transgressions is in the same hardcover format as Breathed's other IDW Publishing's collections, but without the velvet-like spine or the ribbon book marker. This collection contains no annotations from either the editor or Breathed himself (with the exception of the book's intro). The Academia Waltz sections of the book contain restored, high quality reprints of the comic strips, superior even to the reprints from the early Bloom County collections, while the remaining part contain a gallery from Breathed's personal archive in its original, aged, unaltered format. It was pleasing to finally see Breathed's earlier work that would eventually evolve into Bloom County. Fans of Breathed's comic strips will see characters in Academia Waltz that will transfer over to Bloom County such as Steve Dallas, Saigon John (Cutter John) and Rabies. A lot of Breathed's work is definitely raunchy, politically dated (it was the late 70's after all), but nevertheless an entertaining read despite the author's critical remarks of it. Academia Waltz and Other Profound Transgressions is a must-have for any Bloom County fan, to finally see Breathed's budding steps in the world of comic strips with unpublished works that makes this more than just an Academia Waltz collection.

The author was clearly a demented college student at an early age, blossoming into a demented editorial cartoonist and then stripper later in life. This compendium appears complete, tasteless, politically incorrect (for these times and many others) and those things I don't get I'll laugh at, just so my mates think I wasn't a daft bugger for buying this weighty tome. Above all the work is destined for

the Library of Congress, a more suitable institution hasn't been born - completely nuts. Overall I do find it hilarious, and much to my surprise insightful. Also, easy to digest in its large format and very high in fibre. Would buy again +++

This book IS so politically incorrect - it's SO freaking funny & that's even before you get to the Bloom County stuff. It's amazing to see the early stuff & get glimpses for the character development for Bloom County characters - Mr. Breathed is SO incredibly talented - Thank you thank you thank you Lord for blessing Berkeley Breathed with the talent & humor you've gifted him with - you just can't make this stuff up ...

A brilliant peek into the mind of one of cartooning's great names, back before he refined his craft. If you have all the Bloom County books but still want more, this will show you where BC came from. It's a rough-edged anthology of dubious taste, questionable refinement, and way too many seriously topical jokes that don't carry well today (I had to go find out myself what that "Jester Breakfast" is that Breathed keeps criticizing; turns out it's one dorm hall's cafeteria's breakfast platter, and it's famously awful around there). One can tell exactly when Breathed was out of ideas or was rushing to finish something in time--but there's an incredible charm to it all. Finishing it, I could tell exactly why his self-published anthologies had paid his way through college. These early strips have a manic energy to it that's impossible to resist; the seeds of genius are here.

This collection is the best way Berkeley Breathed could have capped off the release of all of his other material in this hardback format. It's a wonderful collection that really gives you some insight into the pre-embryonic "Bloom County." Breathed is really trying out a lot of different ideas here, much of which would NEVER have flown in early 80's nationally-syndicated comic pages. We have gay football players, nudity, the f-bomb, sex jokes galore, the f-bomb, and more nudity. The only real holdover that would make his way into "Bloom County" is Steve Dallas. But he's more or less exactly the same character that we all remember. There's also a Cutter John prototype, as well as an animal companion -- this time a hound dog -- who I see as the forerunner to Opus. Some of these strips (clearly the ones Breathed was more fond of) would make their way into "Bloom County" a year or two later, almost completely unchanged. Obviously, a young Breathed wasn't averse to recycling his better ideas. A lot is made of the resemblance to "Doonesbury" -- and Breathed even pokes fun at himself for this in one memorable strip contained in this volume -- but I see a much greater resemblance to Jules Pfeiffer's work here. Most of the strips have a very

sketch-like quality to them, but there are some great examples of how detailed Breathed's work could be on some the single-panel cartoons contained here. Additionally, about half of this book is photo-scans of Breathed's original artwork, complete with margin notes, with alternate punch lines. Really great stuff! All in all, if you are into early "Bloom County" or want to get an idea of where many of the ideas for that strip were born, you can't go wrong here. Despite his disclaimer in the intro of this book, there is definitely quality work here.

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