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The Complete Peanuts 1963-1964



Synopsis

2008 Harvey Award Winner: Best Domestic Reprint Project! With over 150 previously-unreprinted strips, this is a trove of undiscovered treasures even for avid collectors. Introduction by Bill Melendez, animator of all the Peanuts TV specials starting with A Charlie Brown Christmas! "My name is 555 95472 but everyone calls me 5 for short... I have two sisters named 3 and 4." With those words, Charles Schulz introduced one (in fact, three) of the quirkiest characters to the Peanuts universe, the numerically-monikered 95472 siblings. They didn't stay around very long but offered some choice bits of satirical nonsense while they did. As it happens, this volume is particularly rich in never-before-reprinted strips: Over 150 (more than one fifth of the book!) have never seen the light of day since their original appearance over 40 years ago, so this will be a trove of undiscovered treasures even for avid Peanuts collectors. These "lost" strips include Linus making a near-successful run for class president that is ultimately derailed by his religious beliefs (two words: "great" and "pumpkin"), and Snoopy getting involved with a group of politically fanatical birds. Also in this volume: Lucy's attempts at improving her friends branches out from her increasingly well-visited nickel psychiatry booth to an educational slideshow of Charlie Brown's faults (it's so long there's an intermission!). Also, Snoopy's doghouse begins its conceptual expansion, as Schulz reveals that the dog owns a Van Gogh, and that the ceiling is so huge that Linus can paint a vast (and as it turns out unappreciated) "history of civilization" mural on it. Introduction by Bill Melendez, animator of all the Peanuts TV specials starting all the way back with A Charlie Brown Christmas! Designed by the award-winning cartoonist Seth. 730 black-and-white comic strips

Book Information

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Age Range: 11 - 15 years

Grade Level: 6 - 10

Customer Reviews

A good addition to this series. The only let-down is that we're seeing more and more strips that have already been collected in other Peanuts books. It was bound to happen though, so I'm not knocking off a star for this. There are two real gems to this book. One is the story where Linus (my absolute favorite Peanuts character) runs for class president. I'm betting Schultz had a lot of fun with this. He lampoons the entire election process. This includes the speeches and promises, the press coverage, the polling, and everything else. The other gem is even more important to me. This is where the title of my review comes into play. They had the great Bill Melendez write the foreword for this book. Mister Melendez was an animator who wound up directing every single Peanuts movie and special ever made. In addition to this, he also did the voices of Snoopy and Woodstock on most of them (the exceptions being those few specials where Snoopy actually talked). Considering his close association with Schultz and his creation, he really should have been the one to write the foreword back in book 1 when this series started. Instead, throughout this series, we'd get nothing but celebrity endorsement after celebrity endorsement. I was actually afraid that they'd do this entire series without so much as mentioning the man. Thankfully, these fears came to naught with the release of this book. Like I said, "they finally got it right". The foreword itself is only 3 pages, but the quality makes up for it.

On February 27th, 1963 Linus Van Pelt told Charlie Brown "No problem is so big or so complicated that it can't be run away from." Luckily, Fantagraphics did not heed this advice when taking on the Herculaen project of compiling one of the longest running comics in history. Charles Schulz's "Peanuts," one of the most influential newspaper comic strips ever produced, spanned a generation. It began small, a mere blip, in 1950 and grew to a literal empire that encompassed television, musical theater, books, movies, and advertising. While many derided its rampant commercialism and "cheesy feel good" aura, many others embraced it as an artistic masterpiece that spelunked the human psyche in unique ways. The strip didn't end until 2000 when Schulz retired from his lifelong passion. That leaves some fifty years of daily and Sunday strips to compile. Approximately three hundred and sixty-five strips a year for fifty years multiplies out to one dang big number. If ever a problem to run away from existed, it's this one. Undeterred, Fantagraphics has taken on this twelve and a half year twenty-five volume behemoth. The series so far has spanned fourteen years and

seven volumes. In that time "Peanuts" went through considerable changes. "The Complete Peanuts" allows those who weren't there to experience the development and evolution of this masterwork. When the strip began it focused on Charlie Brown. The artwork was less sophisticated and the characters' personalities were subject to fluctuation. Overall, it more resembled the single-panel strip Schulz drew for the St. Paul Pioneer Press from 1947 to 1950, called "Lil' Folks," than the strip we know today. Schulz returned to single panel cartooning between 1957 and 1959 with "It's Only a Game."

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