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Kirby: King Of Comics



Synopsis

Jack Kirby created or co-created some of comic books' most popular characters including Captain America, The X-Men, The Hulk, The Fantastic Four, The Mighty Thor, Darkseid, and The New Gods. More significantly, he created much of the visual language for fantasy and adventure comics. There were comics before Kirby, but for the most part their page layout, graphics, and visual dynamic aped what was being done in syndicated newspaper strips. Almost everything that was different about comic books began in the forties on the drawing table of Jack Kirby. This is his story by one who knew him well; the authorized celebration of the one and only King of Comics • and his groundbreaking work. I don't think it's any accident that . . . the entire Marvel universe and the entire DC universe are all pinned or rooted on Kirby's concepts. • Michael Chabon

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Customer Reviews

After reading some of the negative comments in a few of the reviews, even in the so-called "positive" reviews - I just had to add my 2-cents: THEY'RE WRONG! This is nothing short of GREAT. I'm not just speaking as a Kirby Devotee (which I am), or even a comic collector (also true). My exposure to Jack Kirby's groundbreaking 60s work at Marvel inspired me to become an artist and graphic designer. He was kind enough to respond personally to me when I was 14 and sent him a sample of my own comic work. I was lucky enough to meet Jack and Roz personally many years later in the mid-70s and spend part of an afternoon with him one-on-one. So I'm speaking from a

deep familiarity with his work and some personal experience, as well as my professional background. First, let's dispel the notion that *KIRBY: KING OF COMICS* is a biography. It isn't. There is no place in the book that calls it a "biography". It also isn't an art book with too much copy. This is a compendium, a celebration of Kirby's life and accomplishments, an overview with additional depth, an inside look from the people who knew him, worked with him, lived with him and loved him, with an attempt at balance and historical perspective that is often lacking in other biographical works about Kirby. It's true that much of this material has been covered before, both in the shorter biographical works that have appeared and in the very excellent "Jack Kirby Collector". However, Mr. Evanier has done an excellent job of both organizing the information in an exciting and dynamic way, and adding details and perspective not available to other writers. Just the fact that he has had access to Roz Kirby and the Kirby offspring adds insight not previously seen. Not only that, but the "voice" Mr.

Were a slightly more precise rating system available to me, I'd give this coffee-table Jack Kirby biography 3.5 stars instead of four, but I tend to err on the side of mercy when my favorite artist is involved, thus SO BE IT. And, while, no, I don't regret my purchase, I can't say that I wasn't mildly disappointed at what I perceive to be a lack of separation between this book and others of its ilk -- specifically Ronin Ro's much smaller ((and cheaper)) paperback biography, "Tales To Astonish." As this book was written by one-time Kirby assistant Mark Evanier, I really expected it to be THE Kirby biography -- the definitive, most detailed, most fanboy-obsessed account of the "King" and his Kreations there ever was or could be. As it stands, the text reads almost identically -- in depth, tone, breadth, detail, progression, etc. -- as "Tales To Astonish," except "Kirby: King Of Comics" mentions that Jack was losing sight in one eye during his career and once threatened to punch out the head of Marvelmania, and "Tales To Astonish" mentions that Jack got his friend's brains splattered on a drawing he was making in a foxhole and once threatened to punch out the guy from the towel service. I guess I just expected this book to take it one more level deeper than that -- one level of nerdiness beyond mere boilerplate. I mean, this is JACK KIRBY we're talking about here! Let's see some obsession! Let's have some nerdiness! Let's have some damn KRACKLE already! Furthermore, every book about comics I seem to have read in my life ((that wasn't written by Jules Feiffer, Scott McCloud, or Stan Lee)) seems to be written in the same generic non-voice that Jim Steranko used in his History Of Comics publications.

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