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Complete Chester Gould's Dick Tracy Volume 1



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Synopsis

Presenting a deluxe hardcover collection of Chester Gould’s timeless comic strip, Dick Tracy. The first volume of this multi-year project will include the five sample strips that Gould used to sell his groundbreaking strip, as well as nearly 500 comic strips encompassing the series’ beginning, from October 1931-May 1933. Among these strips are the first appearance of many long-time Dick Tracy characters, such as Tess Truehart, Junior and Chief Brandon. This special first volume features an overview and introduction from Consulting Editor and writer Max Allan Collins, as well as a never-before-published interview between Collins and creator Chester Gould. Each volume will feature book design from award-winning designer/artist Ashley Wood. -The Library of American Comics is the world’s #1 publisher of classic newspaper comic strips, with 14 Eisner Award nominations and three wins for best book.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dick Tracy’s pop-cultural profile has receded since Warren Beatty’s flop movie adaptation. Whereas 700 newspapers once carried the strip, it now appears in only about 50. But here the venerable comic-strip detective receives the kind of handsomely mounted representation in chronology that Peanuts, Dennis the Menace, and Gasoline Alley currently enjoy. The inaugural volume in this effort to completely reprint creator Gould’s 46-year run contains the first strips published from October 1931 to May 1933. The artwork is initially crude even by the standards of the day, and the plotlines are mundane. Tracy comes up against petty mobsters--the main villain here is Big Boy, an Al

Capone takeoff--rather than the evil grotesques that would become the strip’s staple. The stories have the unassuming verve and period charm of precode gangster movies, and within six months, Gould’s art evolves into a prototype of his signature style. Gordon FlaggCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved

LOAC has become "the gold standard for archival comic strip reprintsÃ¢â ¬Â¦The research and articles provide insight and context, and most importantly the glorious reproduction of the material has preserved these strips for those who knew them and offers a new gateway to adventure for those discovering them for the first time." - Scoop

I can’t say enough about how enjoyable this book is. I got it because I love historic strips, and, really, I was being something of a completist. My interest in Dick Tracy was mild, but not overwhelming. But now, I cannot stop reading it.The art is, as I expected, somewhat primitive. But I was not expecting it to be bursting with power and originality. There’s not a strip that I’ve read yet that hasn’t given me a start, with some bold use of blacks, or a character in an unexpectedly natural and expressive posture, or a striking background or some intricate line work or cross-hatching. For a cartoonist who is not renowned for his artistic skills, Chester Gould has been very seriously underrated.And the dialog! This is some of the most hard-boiled dialog I’ve ever read, and I’m a serious fan of James M. Cain, Dashiell Hammett, and Raymond Chandler. Here’s an example, where gun moll Texie Garcia is offering Tracy a bribe to get her out of jail:Texie: "Oh - you’re such a sweet kid - I think I could do wonders for you - That is, if you’d let me - Think what you could do with a thousand dollars."Tracy: "Yeah? I could roll it up in a wad and cram it right down your slippery throat."Wow! Does this hit right between the eyes! And the book is packed with dialog like that!As if this wasn’t enough, the book itself is a sheer joy to look at and to hold; it’s the highest quality comic reprint I’ve ever seen. The paper has a great look and feel, and the printing is so crisp, it looks like the strips were drawn yesterday. IFG has set new standards for comic strip reprints.If you like hard-boiled, hard-hitting crime fiction, you will be thrilled with this book. I already can’t wait for the subsequent volumes.

These early strips in Volume 1 are great, but printed very small, as in vol. 2-6 as well. Most of the strips in Volume 1 are reprinted in a much larger size in the book, "Dick Tracy the 30’s Tommy Guns and Hard Times."

It is becoming clear that our society has entered a golden era of comic strip reprints. Along with this handsome volume of early Tracy from IDW Publishing, fans can enjoy beautiful, hardcover editions of Gasoline Alley (from Drawn and Quarterly Press) and complete reprints of Krazy Kat, Peanuts, Dennis the Menace, and Popeye (all from Fantagraphics Books); as well as a complete collection of Little Nemo in Slumberland 1904-1914 (Evergreen Press). Some of these titles, like the aforementioned Gasoline Alley (being reprinted as Walter and Skeezix) and Dick Tracy are multi-volume, multi-year projects. In the case of the gorgeous and important Gasoline Alley reprints from Drawn and Quarterly, the complete collection will run over 20 volumes. I have a feeling that we have only seen the beginning of these prestigious, complete hardcover treatments for comic reprints. Many equally deserving strips linger now in incomplete soft cover editions and await this regal reassessment; most notably Little Orphan Annie, Terry and the Pirates, and the Katzenjammer Kids.But about the Complete Dick Tracy 1931-1933:What makes these years of Dick Tracy so compelling is that Chester Gould was one of the first comic strip artists to bring both a sense of realism and violence to the comic page - with the emphasis on violence. Men and women where shot dead on the panels of Dick Tracy, portrayed in Gould's brutal black and white at the moment of terminal impact. In one story arc, a mob boss ties Tracy to a chair, removes his shoes and socks, and goes to work on his bare feet with a blowtorch. Yes, this certainly wasn't Polly and her Friends or Harold Teen (and it is noteworthy that Tracy cracked under this torture, adding another layer of realism). While these early pages are not Gould's finest work as an artist, his superb pacing, storytelling, and marvelous sense of pathos and drama were there from day one.And the art of these strips was never as crude as some have noted. The line of the work was simply much thinner than the beautiful and dramatic brushwork Gould would develop as the strip progressed, so that the difference in style is a bit jarring at first.Reading through these strips, it is easy to see why Dick Tracy has become an icon. There is no contemporary mainstream strip that hits as hard as these vintage pages of Dick Tracy do (not even the current Dick Tracy). But then, few strips ever have. I guarantee it will keep you turning pages. I recommend it highly. - Mykal Banta

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