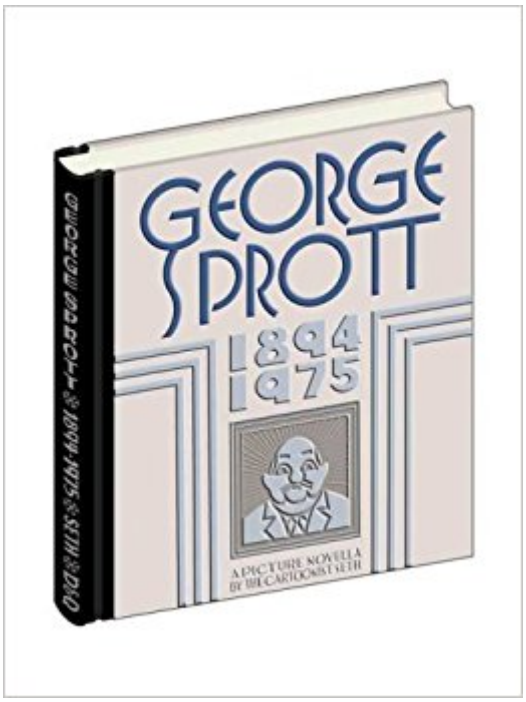
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George Sprott: (1894-1975)



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Synopsis

First serialized in The New York Times Magazine "Funny Pages"The celebrated cartoonist and New Yorker illustrator Seth weaves the fictional tale of George Sprott, the host of a long-running television program. The events forming the patchwork of George's life are pieced together from the tenuous memories of several informants, who often have contradictory impressions. His estranged daughter describes the man as an unforgivable lout, whereas his niece remembers him fondly. His former assistant recalls a trip to the Arctic during which George abandoned him for two months, while George himself remembers that trip as the time he began writing letters to a former love, from whom he never received replies.Invoking a sense of both memory and its loss, George Sprott is heavy with the charming, melancholic nostalgia that distinguishes Seth's work. Characters lamenting societal progression in general share the pages with images of antiquated objectsÃ¢â ¬â ¢proof of events and individuals rarely documented and barely remembered. Likewise, George's own opinions are embedded with regret and a sense of the injustice of aging in this bleak reminder of the inevitable slipping away of lives, along with the fading culture of their days.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. First serialized in the New York Times Magazine, this exquisite extended version of the life of fictional Canadian TV personality George Sprott only adds to Seth's place as one of the form's masters. In the hours and moments before Sprott's death in 1975, the omniscientÃ¢â ¬â •and namelessÃ¢â ¬â •narrator flashes both backward to key moments in the

TV man’s life and forward to interviews conducted after Sprott’s passing. After spending four years in seminary school, Sprott sets out to be, as he dubs himself, a gentleman adventurer, taking numerous trips to the Canadian Arctic and filming his exploits. After he lands his own television program, Northern Hi-Lights, in the ’50s, Sprott spends the next 20-plus years (1,132 episodes) telling and retelling stories of his adventures with the Inuits. Along the way, we meet his long-suffering wife, Helen; employees of the Radio Hotel (where Sprott lived for the last 10 years of his life); and members of the Coronet Club (where he delivered regular and increasingly boring lectures). Musings by the man himselfÃ¢â ¬â •on everything from modern life to food to lonelinessÃ¢â ¬â •help to round out this portrait of a man who never seemed truly satisfied but somehow made do. Seth (Palookaville) manages to make what is essentially the story of one man’s slow death into an often humorous rumination on the power of media, memory and loss. (May) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Ã¢â ¬Å“[Seth] is exceptionally gifted at evoking the passing of time and the stasis of space.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢The Washington Post on Seth

Here is the story of 20th century Canada, in living rooms and bedrooms, in woods and frame houses and imagined igloos and under curtains of colored lights. It is a philosophy of a lived life, real and tangible human relationships, the sagging-to-sleep of old age, the humbugging and pride and groping of the day-to-day, and then the sweeping away of memories and the extinguishment of life like turning off a television set and the light fading to a point and vanishing. And the turning on of a life, the spotlights illumine a stage where the settings and prompts are predetermined, where we as actors and actresses strut and go. George Sprott is not merely the story of a man in a place and time (although it is fully that), it is the story of Everyman, every one. This is high art. This is comics at their ultimate peak, where the media and the message merge to go as deeply as you wish, where the tundra is as wide and broad as under any Earthly sky, but where limits are predefined and inescapable. A book that reminds us why we love and need books.

You pass people like George Sprott on the street every day, and you probably never give them a second look. He’s a small-town TV star, well past his prime and soon to be relegated to the dustbin of history. He is ordinary, and his mark on the world would appear to be small. But no man is really ordinary, and each of us has a story to tell. George’s story is not a hopeful one; in fact, it carries a load of regret and remorse. Some of the tale is told through the eyes of his colleagues and

associates -- it’s hard to call them friends -- and their words paint a fairly pathetic picture. But you will be touched and moved by it, I guarantee you. It’s a quick read, marvelously illustrated in dark monochromatics. You’ll treasure this and want to share it with anyone who has a conscience, anyone who has ever wondered about the value of a single, solitary life.

I would think almost everyone knows the classic story of George Bailey in "It’s a Wonderful Life". George Bailey is rescued from committing suicide on Christmas Eve by Clarence the wingless angel. Mr. Bailey thought that the world would be a better place without him. With the help of the narrators Franklin and Joseph along with our wingless angel, we all see the real merit of George Bailey’s life. Seth’s narrative graphic depiction of George Sprott’s life can be the antithesis of "It’s a Wonderful Life". Utilizing all the major events of George Sprott’s life we see a graphic narrative which emanates sadness, lost opportunities, narcissism, and loneliness and yes fame. Yes George Sprott gains a rather local limited fame and makes many acquaintances but are they true friends? Seth goes back and forth in his multi-narratives in which we learn of what people saw and thought of George Sprott. Unlike "It’s a Wonderful Life", Seth does not do his story in chronological order. Rather Seth jumps to a disparity of years, not in order, to convey certain philosophies and points of order. You will see a man struggling for a life of meaning and unlike George Bailey, George Sprott does not have an angel to guide him. In as much as Sprott does not lead the "hometown hero" life of Mr. Bailey, Seth offers the fact that all life, even less than fulfilling ones are worth living. Seth’s use of graphics in showing a small Canadian town are, how can I say it, "Sethesque". His story line again in the narrative and graphic depictions are what Edward Hopper conveyed in his art. I don’t have enough Stars!! Great graphic novella from Seth’s hand!!!

This is a quality book top to bottom. The binding and overall feel of this book is top-notch and last for generations as it should because the artwork within is excellent and painstakingly executed. I am happy to have added this to my Seth Collection.

This book is an obvious attempt to make some quick cash by rubbishing the reputation of one of the best-loved figures of Canadian television. My father knew Sprott well and told me that he was actually far more clever than people made him out to be. That deal about sleeping on the set, for example. It was a GAG! Self-deprecatory humor. Sprott knew what he was about. But this "Seth" guy can’t even get his facts straight. Look, if you want good information about Sprott, might I recommend the classic "Minute Biographies of Canadian Television Personalities" which covers

Sprott’s life with less detail much more accuracy.

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