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Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art



Synopsis

Praised throughout the cartoon industry by such luminaries as Art Spiegelman, Matt Groening, and Will Eisner, this innovative comic book provides a detailed look at the history, meaning, and art of comics and cartooning.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I like to take things apart and figure out how they work, except instead of doing internal combustion engines or pocket watches I like to play with books, movies and television shows. In "Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art," Scott McCloud not only takes apart comic books, he puts them back together again. Certainly comics are a neglected art form. Put Superman, Batman, Spawn and Spider-Man on the big screen and there will be some cursory comments about the actual all-in-color-for-a-dime, and names like Stan Lee and Frank Miller will get kicked around, but nobody really talks about how comics work (the exception that proves the rule would be the Hughes brothers talking about adapting the "From Hell" graphic novels). Part of the problem is conceptual vocabulary: we can explain in excruciating detail how the shower scene in "Psycho" works in terms of shot composition, montage, scoring, etc. That sort of conceptual vocabulary really does not exist and McCloud takes it upon himself to pretty much create it from scratch. That, of course, is an impressive achievement, especially since he deals with functions as well as forms. To that we add McCloud's knowledge of art history, which allows him to go back in time and find the origins of comics in pre-Columbian picture manuscripts, Egyptian hieroglyphics and the Bayeux Tapestry. Topping all of this off is McCloud's grand and rather obvious conceit, that his book about the art of

comic books is done AS a comic book. This might seem an obvious approach, but that does not take away from the fact that the result is a perfect marriage of substance and form.

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