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The Dark Horse Book Of Hauntings



Synopsis

Dark Horse's horror line launches its new prestige format with this hardcover book filled with original short stories by some of the most respected names in comics. The longest story in The Dark Horse Book of Hauntings is also Mike Mignola's only new Hellboy adventure in 2003! Come along as Hellboy investigates a haunted house and discovers his own unexpected connection to the spirits within. P. Craig Russell (Sandman, Murder Mysteries) adapts Dark Horse publisher Mike Richardson's story about a child who leads friends and family into an abandoned house, and Paul Chadwick and his longtime Concrete editor Randy Stradley team up for a creepy short about a haunted suit. In the strangest entry in the book, Jill Thompson (Scary Godmother) and Evan Dorkin (Hectic Planet) recount the legend of a haunted doghouse. With a Victorian ghost story illustrated by Gary Gianni, and an interview with real-life séance medium L.L. Dreier, plus a new Devil's Footprints story and outstanding contributions from international artists Uli Oesterle (Germany) and Lucas Maragnon (Mexico), this is the ultimate book for horror-comics enthusiasts and fans of fantastic artwork.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

You've got to love a book that's dedicated to "Hans Holzer, Edward Gorey, and the Fox Sisters"! This was a very enjoyable collection, overall. It was the lovely skeletal figure on the cover of this book that caught my eye, and when I found that "Thurnley Abbey" is one of the stories included, I

had to pick it up. It turns out that "Thurnley Abbey," an old favorite of mine, is presented here in text form with a few handsome illustrations, while the rest of the stories are original works by several different graphic novelists, including a "Hellboy" adventure by Mike Mignola. The illustrated stories range from "exceedingly creepy" to "subtly disturbing" to "heart-warming" (not necessarily in that order). These are all ghost stories in the classic mold - very little gore or explicit gruesomeness, but lots of shadows and shudders. I've read stronger tales (and would have given a 4.5 rating if I could), but these were quite enjoyable, and the old classic "Thurnley Abbey" is just as chilling as I remember. This book would make a handsome addition to anyone's ghost-story collection.

The Dark Horse Book of Hauntings is dedicated to Hans Holzer, Edward Gorey, and the Fox sisters, which tells you everything you need to know about its sensibilities. Only 92 pages, the volume contains nine separate entries - eight stories, and one interview with a real-life medium - of varying styles and quality. Most are graphic stories, but not all: my favorite (the traditional English-gothic "Thurnley Abbey") and least favorite (the interview with L.L. Dreller, which bored me enough that it took me a couple of weeks to bother to finish it) pieces were both text-only. The most famous contributor here is Mike Mignola, who gets top-billing for a Hellboy story that's prettier than it is interesting. I was more drawn to Oesterle's short and brutal haunted tattoo tale, "Forever," and to Dorkin and Thompson's "Stray," which tweaks the genre by envisioning the haunted house as a haunted doghouse. Fans of hauntings will appreciate the breadth of the offerings here, though some of them may seem a bit slight - one of the reasons Landon's "Abbey" tops my list is that the relative lack of illustrations meant that they had enough room for text to spin a full story rather than just offer a snapshot. So consider it more a sampler, a horror aperitif if you will, than something to make a meal of, and enjoy accordingly.

The book is an anthology of short comics based on the theme of haunted houses. It's quite short at 92 pages especially given that most of the work included is comics and as such are quick to read. It's also just ok to read with about half the strips being interesting, the other half just dull, and a prose story that's sub par although Gary Gianni's artwork is amazing. There's also a 10 page interview with a psychic and if you're like me then you'll roll your eyes at that one. Anyone who claims to have powers of any kind and be in contact with the dead are scum in my book so I just skipped that section entirely. The good stuff: Mike Richardson and P Craig Russell's "Gone" about an isolated, abandoned house that swallows up anyone who decides to break into it. Great story, even better artwork, a great start. Mike Mignola writes and draws his contribution "Dr Carp's

Experiment", a Hellboy adventure. As usual Mignola knocks it out of the park and as a big fan of Hellboy I was very pleased to see it's inclusion here. Great short comic. "The House on the Corner" by Milton Freewater Jnr and Lucas Marangon is a nice spooky little real life story based on a haunted house in the southern states of America, it reminded me of the kind of half baked ghost books I read when I was a kid. Uli Oesterle's "Forever" is excellent, it's about a man who gets a tattoo but runs off when it's done without paying the bill, running over the tattooist when he tries to stop him. The tattoo then begins to grow... Fantastic horror that doesn't fit into the haunted house theme but is awesome anyway. It's a great little collection but goes by very quickly. Worth a look but only if you find it real cheap or at the library, I wouldn't pay £9 or so for it.

Like the other reviewer, I picked this one up for "Thurnley Abbey" which is one of the scariest ghost tales going. While I was disappointed (at first) that it was the straight story with a few illustrations, I will say the illustrations were well done and I am glad to have the story permanently in my collection. The other stories varied wildly. My favorite was "Gone" which is subtly creepy: no gore, no blood and NO EXPLANATION. You are left to your own devices as to what happened and the story is the more bone chilling for it. On the other hand, that story in which a man tells a young boy a story about a haunted house was ho-hum while the Tattoo story was disturbing. (And, in a perverse way, quite amusing.) I'm not a fan of all the styles of artwork here--some of it was too dark and hard to look at. On the overall, though, if you like ghosts and the creepies, you'll want this in your collection.

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