



Hellboy: The First 20 Years

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Mignola has expanded *Hellboy* into the most exciting group of books since the early Marvel universe, and his style has influenced art and illustration far beyond the world of comics. Selected finished pieces are shown alongside sketches and raw scans from the last twenty years.

* Never-before-seen art!

* Mignola's best pieces from the last twenty years!

"Nothing is better than having Mignola himself rendering Hellboy's world."—IGN

"I envy the sheer variety and invention Mignola brings to Hellboy's world. [He] consistently manages to depict even the most grotesque monstrosity and make it somehow beautiful."—Peter de Sève, award-winning New Yorker cover artist and character designer for Ice Age film series, from his introduction

Hellboy: The First 20 Years Details

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Author : Mike Mignola , Scott Allie (Editor)

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From Reader Review Hellboy: The First 20 Years for online ebook

Rob Slaven says

As usual this book came to me for free in exchange for a review. This time, and increasingly so lately, it was via NetGalley. Despite that kind consideration I give my scrupulously honest opinion below.

Firstly, it must be noted that my previous experience with Hellboy has been confined to furtive glimpses of the character when referenced by other authors. I've always been somewhat intrigued but this is my first substantive experience with the character.

On the positive side, the book covers the whole history of the milieu of Hellboy quite nicely though there does seem to be a lot of emphasis on 2002 and beyond despite the start of the character in 1994. The art is detailed, evocative and makes me more and more want to start over with Hellboy from the beginning and 'see what all the fuss is about.'

The only negative I would point out is that the 130 pages are almost entirely devoid of any text so as an interested outsider I can't really say I know any more than I did before about the series. It's still intriguing but it's just as much a question mark as it ever was. This is not in any way a proper introduction to this two decades of work by the author.

In summary, this is a great conversation starter as a coffee table book. For those who have spent the last two decades as fans this will be a great retrospective and a masterful collection. If, however, you're just starting out this isn't the place to go for an overview. I'm sure to the vast majority of readers that is patently obvious but it seemed a worthwhile thing to point out since that's exactly the position I find myself in.

Bogdan says

Only covers of past issues here. The artwork is great. Don't get me wrong, i love Mignola's style, but if you want some stories this is clearly not for you.

Recommended to all collectors interested by the graphic novels with the famous Hellboy.

James says

In the early nineties I read the odd comic or two (as the heavy boxes in my flat will attest) and around 1994 the great John Byrne helped script a new comic called *Hellboy: Seed of Destruction*. Looking back through my collection, I realise I had more of Mignola's Hellboy than I realised – not just the initial story with Byrne, but a further four story-arcs from the next two years. Twenty years later, Dark Horse Books (the new name of Dark Horse Comics I assume) releases this – *Hellboy: The First 20 Years* – as a retrospective review of the development of the Hellboy character as Mignola's confidence increases and he becomes more sure of his own style and direction.

And that's pretty much exactly what this book is. I had been expecting a collection of stories from throughout

the first twenty years; some I assumed I'd have read before, others would be a pleasant surprise. Instead there are no stories. None at all. The nearest thing to a story in here are the two introductions and a selection of pages from *The Goon #7* (the cover, and pages 1–3 and 26 only). But, if the art is your bag and you want to see the journey that the depiction of Hellboy, and the other characters from the B.P.R.D., has been on in the last twenty years then this is that. And, if you don't mind the almost complete absence of commentary as you work through the book, there's plenty to like here – Mignola's spiky, angular, drawing style has clearly developed over the years as he's simplified and stylized his drawings. Worrying less about realism, and instead just enjoying drawing cool.

As a retrospective collection, it delivers exactly what it intended. The mix of covers, panel pages, character sketches, humorous one-off pictures and even some beautiful full-page paintings, provide the perfect selection across the character's history. However, it's really only going to be of interest to completists and existing Mignola/Hellboy fans. I really can't see much here for anybody coming to the Hellboy character afresh.

Ed Correa says

Prácticamente un libro gráfico, poco texto. Aunque me parece imprescindible también entre coleccionistas del personaje.

Dani Shuping says

Hellboy. The demon that forged his own path to be more than a prophecy, more than what light or dark chose for him to be...to be his own man. It's hard to believe but Hellboy has been with us since March of 1994. In the twenty years he's been around, Mike Mignola, has told us Hellboy's story and expanded the universe to include other characters and groups. Both Hellboy and Mignola have influenced the larger world of comics, with the thick blocky line illustration and characters that stand on the edge of a knife, constantly battling their darker nature in the fight to save the world that hates them.

In this oversized volume, Mignola presents his favorite covers and illustrations of the Hellboy Universe. Key pieces are presented alongside sketches and studies to allow us an insider's look into the thought process that created this vivid world. The one disappointment that I have with the book, is that there is not any commentary with the illustrations. It's just strictly the illustrations, which is nice as it gives us a look into the thought process, but it would have been even better to see Mignola's words with the art.

If you're an avid Hellboy/BPRD fan then this is definitely the book for you. Or if you're a fan of Mignola's artwork and storytelling, then you'll enjoy this insiders look into the creative process. Either way you'll enjoy the book. I give it 4 out of 5 stars.

Mark says

I was fortunate enough to read a preview of this book online. Being a digital preview, I was obviously limited to viewing each page at the size my monitor allowed. However, I own copies of all the Hellboy library

editions and *The Art of Hellboy*, so it wasn't hard to image what the full-sized book would be like, and how much better it would be.

The book is an art book. Other than the introduction and foreword, there is no text even to say what a picture is or where it is from (although there is an index in the back for this purpose). This is a journey through Mignola's artwork in the twenty years he has built the Hellboy universe.

I should say, as Mignola himself does in his foreword, this is not *The Art of Hellboy - Volume 2*. This book isn't so much about the process, but rather a journey through finished pieces (for the most part), a visual progression of the universe itself. There is very little sketchbook material in here, and virtually no story pages.

This book assumes the reader is already familiar with Hellboy, and with no descriptive text, the artwork is left to speak for itself without any sort of commentary.

I utterly loved this book and I simply cannot wait to hold a physical copy in my hands so I can see it at the scale it was meant to be seen at.

Ευθυμ?α Δεσποτ?κη says

Αγαπ?!

Callum Shephard says

The unfortunate problem with this Hellboy collection is that the title is oddly misleading. It's not a collection of events from his many stories printed in Dark Horse Comics or even recording his path to becoming the paranormal detective of the BPRD. It's actually an art book, collecting together the best works of Mike Mignola featuring the supernatural world he created. That's really about it. There's no story or much in the way of text to speak of, just a great many art pieces produced by a master of his craft. That's likely going to switch off a few people already, but at the same time it's not a book you should instantly discard. It does have qualities of its own.

Foremost among these is, most obviously, Mignola's talent as an artist. Offering a wide variety of takes on his work from basic sketches to full covers and scenes, the collective gives a very clear indication of his approaches to work and styles. Without the drive of the story and it's much easier to appreciate the often minimalistic and heavily shaded visuals he crafts for scenes. While often known for his toned down, dark subdued visuals, there is a clear method and frequent examples are given of how he crafts the full range of shades, lightings and the distinct differences between the more sombre and action packed moments. Admittedly that is more a credit to the work of award winning colourist and collaborator on these comics, Dave Stewart, but it's important to see how well the two work together and the surprising range it can offer.

Furthermore, in a way the book does still tell of the character's history. As the art is collected in chronological order and displays many covers, you do see the character and story develop over time. The events which led him to find new allies, depictions of the early BPRD and other events are all there to see, and those who know of the basic history will witness a kind of evolution within the comic.

More importantly is the actual covers themselves in a way as it shows just how effective Mignola is at constructing them. A common criticism of both Marvel and DC Comics is often that their covers are lacklustre or rarely convey what is actually within the comic even in an abstract manner. By comparison, the covers to Hellboy shown here are far more like film posters. As much as they might seem like oddly constructed visuals of characters and events, you are given a full picture of what is within. Rarely do they resort to single events or simply with Hellboy flying at the reader, instead evoking the pulp science fiction core of the book. While they habitually lapse into repeating certain poses and motifs, it's easy to appreciate how striking or informative the covers can sometimes be.

Beyond the covers themselves, or even the sketches for that matter, there are also the brief moments of story or text. Along with a brief humorous "team up" with The Goon which lasts a handful of pages, and moments where speech bubbles are used, there is an introduction and forward. One by famed illustrator Peter De Sève which speaks of the work involved, character designs and offers professional outsider's thoughts on Mignola's works. The other by Mignola himself, who gives a foreward speaking of how the book serves as more a celebration of Hellboy's evolution and twentieth anniversary than simply a collection of his artworks. Both are interesting, insightful pieces which make the book worth truly buying and reading through. It's an honest shame there are not more like them as having every few years milestone by a page of text covering a creator's thoughts would be a fantastic addition to the work.

If there is one weakness to truly single out about this work, it's the lack of truly detailed sketches covering the thought processes behind characters and certain works. Collectors of the trade paperbacks of Hellboy, BPRD and similar works are familiar with the sketches at the back. While hardly unique to the comics from this universe, they are frequently far more in-depth and show some of the greatly detailed thought processes behind minute aspects of characters, monsters, weapons, equipment and even small humorous bits. It serves to greatly impress the level of effort put into these works and it's truly a shame that there's nothing to really compare with them to be found here.

At the end of the day though, it's definitely a book for fans and completionists. You won't get much in the way of lore, story or written work, but it gives a vastly better idea of the creative process behind the comic. Plus, it wouldn't be the first book to be bought largely for its imagery and designs as many owners of The Horus Heresy: Collected Visions can likely attest. Give it a look if you're familiar with the character or interested in the art, but otherwise give this one a miss.

Gavin says

I have to be honest, I only briefly looked at this, but it's a gorgeous hardcover collection of Hellboy artwork, covers, variants, and other things in Mignola's distinctive and, for me, spectacular style.

I didn't read the intro or forward, but wow. The colour palette is the usual black red grey and Browns, but enjoyable as ever.

If you love great artwork,,check this out. If u love Hellboy, do it. If not, then don't bother.

Conan Tigard says

Hellboy: The First 20 Years is a wonderful collection of cover art, a couple of paintings, sketches, and both colored and non-colored drawings over the last twenty years illustrated by Mike Mignola, the creator of Hellboy. The introduction by Peter de Sève, a fellow illustrator for the last three decades, is very entertaining, and the Foreword by Mike Mignola gives the reader insight as to why this book was created.

At the end of the book is an Index giving the reader information about each drawing; the date it originally appeared (if it ever did) and in which comic book. Also if a drawing was never used in a comic book, then what it was used for. There is also a full list of all Hellboy series and other works by Mike Mignola in the back of the book. In other words, this book is crammed with a ton of information about Hellboy.

Overall, Hellboy: The First 20 Years is a terrific collection of Hellboy art that is not to be found anywhere else except on these pages. You can witness the evolution of Mignola's artwork during this period of time and note how he now does more with less. For any fan of Hellboy, this book is a must.

Wayne McCoy says

'Hellboy: The First 20 Years' is an anniversary special celebrating the series that started in March 1994. With a great introduction by artist Peter de Seve, and a self-deprecating one from Mike Mignola. Although there was an Art of Hellboy book about 10 years back, this book aims to just show the characters evolution over the years.

With the original drawings of Hellboy where he appears almost furry, to sketches, full paintings, and comic con artwork, we can see the creative process at work. Mike Mignola's style is all his own and it's a great one. With his sloped shoulders and one hand larger than the other, Hellboy is not anatomically perfect. The art is shot through with angles and imperfect looking characters. This isn't to say the art is imperfect. It gives the work an iconic and identifiable style.

Peter de Seve talks about Mike Mignola's influences. There are shades of Bernie Wrightson and Frank Frazetta. Jack Kirby is listed as a possible. His work with shapes is certainly evident in the style. It's great art in the series and good to see here on its own.

I was given a review copy of this graphic novel by Diamond Book Distributors and Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. Thank you for allowing me to review this graphic novel.

Pinkerton says

Un elegante volume sui primi vent'anni, commemorativo "per immagini"; dopo due o tre pagine di prefazione infatti bando alle ciance, ed ecco una ricca galleria di copertine, sketch e quant'altro che ci aiutano a riportare alla mente le avventure vissute assieme al rosso ed i membri del B.P.R.D.. Opera celebrativa di questi quattro lustri, le cui storie dell'insolito ci hanno tenuto piacevolmente compagnia nella lettura. Un omaggio ad uno dei fumetti (e tutte le collane ad esso collegate) più belli di sempre.

Pop Bop says

For the Fan, the Completist, or the Casual Browser

If you're a fan you may be drawn to this book by its complete Hellboyness. Starting with the first drawing of Hellboy, artist Mike Mignola takes you through twenty years of Hellboy memories. There is no story arc, indeed there are no captions or explanations apart from an introduction and a foreward. But there is Hellboy from every angle and in various media.

But say you're a more casual fan, but still admire the illustrator's craft. Well, this book may prove even more rewarding. Mignola's point here was to display the evolution of Hellboy and consciously and intentionally, to also track the evolution of his own artistic approach to Hellboy. Mignola notes his move from excessive detail to an almost minimalist interpretation. In the Introduction, Peter de Seve observes that as Mignola has cast aside detail his drawings have taken on "a craggy volume, as if all the elements, including Hellboy's pitted face, are carved in stone." The work has a "sculptural quality".

That observation is so right and so appropriate to the creation and presentation of Hellboy. It also suggests what it is you can discover by perusing this volume.

So, happy Hellboy fan, or just an art admirer, it seems to me that this book is worth a close look.

Please note that I received a free advance ecopy of this book in exchange for a candid review. Apart from that I have no connection at all to either the author or the publisher of this book.

Maciej says

PL

Czyta, a dok?adniej - ogl?da si? ten artbook bardzo przyjemnie, ka?da plansza jest przygotowana z du?? dba?o?ci? o szczegó?y, a koncepcyjne rysunki pozwalaj? na spojrzenie z innej perspektywy na postacie z ostatnich 20 lat Hellboy'a. Sprawia?o mi to du?o frajdy i inspiracji do swoich rysunków no i wiem w jaki sposób narysowa? czo?owe stwory z tej komiksowej serii.

EN

Reads, and more accurately - you can watch this artbook very nicely, each board is prepared with great attention to detail, and conceptual drawings allow you to look from a different perspective on characters from the last 20 years of Hellboy. It gave me a lot of fun and inspiration to my drawings and I know how to draw the main creatures from this comic series.

LectoraEstherica says

* ___* I have to say I looove Hellboy.

I never liked comics when i was younger, but since Hellboy appeared in my life in film form i was completely sold by this red giant.

I haven't read any Hellboy comic before, even when i wanted so bad, and i think this book is a good start for

people like me, because this book talks about the beginnings of the character, his story, his development.

This is not a comic, it is a book about the comic.

Great, i enjoyed so much, this kind of drawing, so dark, but funny, and almost steampunk, aaagh,I LOVE IT!

I will review it in more depth in my blog, in Spanish.
