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The Sandman: Overture Deluxe Edition



#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER Winner of the 2016 **Hugo Award for Best Graphic Story** Twenty-five years since **THE SANDMAN** first changed the landscape of modern comics, Neil Gaiman's legendary series is back in a deluxe edition! **THE SANDMAN: OVERTURE** heralds New York Times best-selling writer Neil Gaiman's return to the art form that made him famous, ably abetted by artistic luminary JH Williams III (**BATWOMAN**, **PROMETHEA**), whose lush, widescreen images provide an epic scope to The Sandman's origin story. From the birth of a galaxy to the moment that Morpheus is captured, **THE SANDMAN: OVERTURE** will feature cameo appearances by fan-favorite characters such as The Corinthian, Merv Pumpkinhead and, of course, the Dream King's siblings: Death, Desire, Despair, Delirium, Destruction and Destiny.

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Book Review: Author Q&A

Graphic Novel Friday: Q&A with Neil Gaiman

A great story takes time, and Neil Gaiman's Sandman fans have been waiting a long time to find out the answer to one of the biggest questions in this universe: what led to the imprisonment of Dream? Now, almost 27 years after Sandman #1 published in 1988, Neil Gaiman and artist J.H. Williams III answer the question in The Sandman: Overture and spectacularly so. The very busy Mr. Gaiman had time for three key questions from us regarding the writing process in Overture and his collaboration with the artist. (Bonus! J.H. Williams III shares an exclusive image from his sketchbook below.)

Book Review: The events that occur in Overture lead directly into

Dreams first story, Preludes and Nocturnes. Did you always know what was going to happen in Overture's events or once you began writing it, did anything change from your initial plan? Neil Gaiman: Well I always knew exactly how it was going to end. I knew the last page, and I was pretty sure of all the pages before then. Other than that, I had an idea of the high points. It was the equivalent of going, okay, if you're driving from New York to Los Angeles, you kind of have an idea of the places you're going to visit on the way, but you don't know what's going to happen on the journey, and you don't know the diversions. So, you know, I always knew, for example, that we were going to have that amazing gathering of dreams at the end of issue one. I knew we were going to be meeting the parents. I knew that we were going to be understanding things that happened a long time ago and were referred to in Sandman but were never actually explained, so things like the original dream vortex. Those kinds of things would be explained, would become real, would become solid, and I knew that he would survive everything I threw at him. That stuff I knew. But what was going to happen page to page, I had absolutely no idea and it was a delight to find it out. ABR: How different an experience is it for you as a writer to know the ending, and to know the reader knows the ending? NG: It made it really interesting. People ask me how Sandman Overture fits into Sandman. Should they read it before or should they read it afterwards? And I say it fits like a weird little Mobius strip that actually attaches the back of Sandman to the front of Sandman again, because you should absolutely read it having read all of Sandman. Then, having read it from beginning to end, you should read all of Sandman again, because things are going to be different. There will be scenes that will mean different things, there will be moments where you go, "Oh my God I know what they're talking about." There are things that happen in Overture that resonate into Preludes and Nocturnes, solidly into The Doll's House, and show up again in places like Brief Lives. It's like, if we were going to give it a number, I don't know if this is the eleventh book of Sandman or if you just want an infinity symbol on its side indicating that you could just keep going with this one. It's Sandman #0 and Sandman Infinite. It was very strange because when I finished writing the very last issue of Sandman Overture, and then I sat down and re-read, trying to pretend I've never read them before, you actually now understand the condition he was in, the shape he was in, what happened to him in Sandman #1 and also how completely trashed he is at the beginning of Sandman #2 ABR: Where did your script end and J.H. Williams' work begin in terms of overall design, page layouts and effects work? NG: I would write the script, and

then he would go down the rabbit hole. And sometimes he would be doing things I had asked him to do, and a lot of the time, he would have decided that he would create a page bordered with teeth, that kind of thing, but then there was also a weird feeling of ping pong, table tennis, because I would write something that I would think, "He's never going to be able to pull this off, but let's see what he does." Then he would do something that took that beyond what I had asked. I would start going, "What else can we do?" For example, the thing where you have to actually turn the page over to read it in the middle of Sandman #4, that was actually me, but that was based on seeing the kinds of glorious things J.H. was doing anyway and knowing that he would enjoy it. Also, there's a certain amount of mischief in the idea of saying, "Okay let's look at some of the things you can do in paper comics that are going to be a lot less fun digitally." I kept thinking, the whole idea is that you can't turn over an iPhone, you have to put it on a table and walk around it. There's a little bit of that, too. I would ask him to do the impossible and he would always do something weirder than I'd asked for. The Sandman: Overture releases November 10th, and Gaiman's complete Sandman works can be found here. Our thanks to Mr. Gaiman, DC Comics, and Vertigo for this opportunity.

"Expansive and atmospheric, jammed with brainy, contemplative moments and dry humor." Gaiman's vivid, wild imagination is grounded in Williams' and Stewart's beautiful, captivating artwork. Sandman fans will surely be elated not only by the return to the story but also by the stunning, gorgeous artwork, which outshines the original. "Booklist (starred review)" "Dream is a long way from his realm, but for me reading this comic feels exactly like coming home." "The Guardian" "From the first page to the last, The Sandman: Overture #1 is an eruption of hallucinogenic artwork and unreal storytelling." "VICE MAGAZINE / MOTHERBOARD" "Sandman: Overture may go down as one of the best-drawn chapters in Sandman's already legendary run." "Newsarama" "Entering a Neil Gaiman story world is like stepping into a dream, where reality unravels and gives way to an eye-popping blend of the mythical, the fantastic, and the plain old strange. His magnum opus, of course, is a story about dreams--and despite breaking every rule in the book, it's one of the greatest graphic novels ever published." "TOR

Creator of THE SANDMAN and one of comics' most accomplished writers, Neil Gaiman is also the

New York Times best-selling author of the novels *Anansi Boys*, *American Gods*, *Stardust* and *Coraline*, as well as the short story collections *M Is for Magic* and *Smoke and Mirrors* and the multimedia creation *Neverwhere*. He also co-wrote the Jim Henson Productions film *MirrorMask* with longtime collaborator Dave McKean, illustrator of the Gaiman-written graphic novels *MR. PUNCH*, *Violent Cases* and *BLACK ORCHID*. Among his many awards are the Hugo, the Nebula, the Eisner, the Harvey, the Bram Stoker and the World Fantasy Award. Originally from England, Gaiman now lives in the United States.

So it's been YEARS since I've last read *Sandman*, but it's still one of my favorite comics of all time, and I was a little worried that this would be --well, sort of like *Endless Nights*, which was a good read, but not anything that I felt compelled to reread. But this surprisingly lived up to my expectations. First of all, the art is gorgeous. In particular, the coloring is absolutely stunning. The story has a ton of little nuggets and nods to the original series, plus a delightful twist that I genuinely did not see coming. And while it's a prelude, it's also continues after the end of *The Wake*. I know that doesn't make sense but it works, ok? Plus Daniel makes an appearance, and I love Daniel. I read this in one sitting this afternoon and already want to re-read it just to better absorb it all. I'm thinking that what I will end up doing is re reading all of *Sandman*, and then this again. Lovely book. Also, for this I suggest if you are on the fence about getting the physical version vs a digital copy, get the physical version. There are double spread pages in the physical copy, which has a very cool effect when opening. Plus, there's one page where the words fall like a circle, and end up upside down. Holding the physical copy, I was easily able to turn it upside down, but I think that would be harder to do with a tablet or mobile device that reorients itself.

This review originally published in [...]. Rated 4.25 of 5 Over the course of the last two, or even three decades, I can think of only two comic book series that people would comment on or reflect upon. One of those was *Watchmen*, the other, *Sandman*. In many ways, I believe *Sandman* helped propel creator/author Neil Gaiman to some prominence (though his talent is such that if it weren't for *Sandman*, he still would have gone on to fame [and hopefully fortune]). *Sandman: Overture*, is in part a prelude to the entire series, but it is more than just a book to fill in some blanks or to answer some questions that arose during the comics publication. It is a prelude, an ending, and eternity. Which is a massive scope, of course. But the story is also very personal and tight, with Morpheus (one of the seven "Endless"), Dream (as cat), and a young girl waxing reflective. It is not easy to tell a story that is epic and eternal but also small and intimate, but Neil Gaiman is one of the few writers

alive who can tell a story this way and do it so well. Gaiman weaves a story that is complex and beautiful. It takes some attention to read this - this is not a straightforward superhero story. This is the land of dreams and nightmares and as such, it is as fantastical as our own dreams. As a straightforward, written story, this would be fascinating. But this is much more than that. JH Williams III contributes to this story immensely with art that is tremendously fantastical and fantastic. This book is a real treasure for the eyes and is as complex to see as Gaiman's writing is to read. You must be prepared to swivel and turn this book in order to fully appreciate the eye-gasm here. And contributing to this visual are both the lettering and the coloring (Todd Klein and Dave Stewart, respectively) which are also wildly complex. This edition includes a series of interviews with the creative artists as they explain their processes. Klein's work, not only here but throughout the Sandman series, has been full of invention and innovation. I may be as impressed with the fact that he created over 50 different character and caption styles for the books as with the story itself. Stewart's work is no less impressive. One need only look at the cover, as pictured above, to see the amount of detail and work that has gone into the artwork, including the coloring of this. And while too often in comics the cover is truly representative of the art inside, in this case it is very much in line with what we see. You can judge this book by its cover. Whether you're new to this series, or a long-time fan, there is much to love here. If you're new, this will make you want to go on and binge read the whole series. If you're already a fan, this is a glorious gift from Gaiman and company. Looking for a good book? The Sandman: Overture is a graphic novel unlike any other, with story and art that are sublime. I received a digital copy of this book from the publisher, through Netgalley and Edelweiss, in exchange for an honest review.

The artwork in Overture really grabbed me. The dreamlike feel of the story sequences was magical. This is not (in my humble opinion) the best of the Sandman comics, but it is an important addition. I really liked how Gaiman brought everything full circle. The "Noah's Ark" of beings that must forge a new universe is touching too. I think I longed for a tale or two along the way, hapless mortals caught up in the struggle. We get one such figure in Hope, but she wasn't as clearly defined as I would have liked. This is the story of the Endless and of Dream's capture and its portent and it does not deviate from its central goal of revelation. I like that existence and the Endless who rule it are defined as the product of the union between Time and Night. Dream's dad seems genuinely cool. His mom sort of scares me though.

This volume marks the long-awaited return of Neil Gaiman to his beloved Sandman series. I was

quite excited to see that Gaiman had put this out as I loved his Sandman series. This was simply was one of the best, strangest, most *innovative* comic book series I ever read. I've also become a fan of most of Gaiman's books so seeing this was out was a natural. I must say I *liked* it, though not as much as I'd hoped. The story tells the tale of a mistake Sandman made long ago in not killing a star (this is normal for these books, go with it) that (because he didn't kill it) goes mad and begins the end of the universe (that kind of thing happens in these books, if you haven't read them before). Over the course of the book he discovers what he did wrong and then proceeds to see if he can fix it.....along the way he falls into a black hole, meets both his parents, and we more or less meet nearly all of the other Endless. I was surprised I didn't like the book more -- honestly I think the problem is the way the artwork and story flow. They felt a bit disjointed at times, and there are a couple of chapters that felt "included" to make the book bigger rather than substantive parts of the story arc. It DID wrap up -- kinda -- though I felt the ending was sloppier than those I remember from the Sandman comic series. The artwork however is superb and there are several "trick" pages in the book that fold out and such to give the artist a bigger canvas. It WAS a good book, but not quite as good as I'd THOUGHT it would be. Recommended for fans of the original, though it's not quite in the same 'vein' -- you could be disappointed. If you haven't read Sandman at all this is NOT the book I'd start with -- too much is assumed you already know.

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