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From Emmy Award-winning-producer Paul Dini and acclaimed designer Chip Kidd comes *Batman Animated*, the behind-the-scenes story of the hit show that revolutionized television animation and brought a stunning new look to the legendary Caped Crusader. Since its premiere in September 1992, *Batman: The Animated Series* has been acclaimed by enthusiastic viewers and longtime fans of the Batman character as the defining image of the Dark Knight onscreen. Now readers are offered an inside look into the creation of the series. Granted unprecedented access to the archives of the Warner Bros. Animation Studio, Chip Kidd has combined breathtaking photographs by Award-winning photographer Geoff Spear and fashioned an imaginative layout of never-before-published preproduction and finished artwork that echoes the boldness of producer-designer Bruce Timm's powerful TV show.

Paul Dini's text offers entertaining and informative commentary on the series history, development, and continuing production. It includes glimpses into the making of the Batman animated features *Mask of the Phantasm* and *SubZero*, and a sneak peek into the future projects.

Featuring a detailed episode guide, comments from the series creators and voice actors, and an introduction by Bruce Timm, *Batman Animated* is a must-have for Batman fans young and old.

Batman Animated Details

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From Reader Review Batman Animated for online ebook

Emilou says

This is my favorite art book ever. I've probably read it half a dozen times. I love hearing about how the Batman Animated series was made by in the 90s. It was such a fantastic show, and it is amazing how much time and effort went into the show, and how different it was than other cartoons.

Dave Sippel says

This was one of my favorite TV shows as a young teen. Everything about the cartoon was amazing from the art, to the voices to the writing.

I moved away from Batman and DC Comics as I got older but seeing this on the bookstore shelves was like coming home for me. It gave a behind the scenes look at the creative process that went into making the cartoon. Storyboards were laid out, as was sketches of character designs.

Fans of the 1990s FOX cartoon will love this book.

Printable Tire says

The fall of 1992 saw the premiere of a Saturday morning cartoon show unlike any other on at the time. *Batman: The Animated Series* raised the bar in terms of the quality one could expect from children's programming. Here was a show with a unified style, intricate plots and a well-crafted atmosphere. The show soon earned the admiration of its target audience of children, but its craftsmanship did not go unnoticed by critics. That it was a show taken seriously by critics is no more evident than in the fact that, among other merchandise associated with children programming (coloring books, sticker sets, action figures), *Batman: The Animated Series* also deserved the creation of an art book.

Batman Animated is immediately pleasing to the eye: designed in coffee-book format, the cover boasts a detailed sketch of Batman's visage, his jaw cartoonishly square and angular. The unfinished quality of the sketch shows it to be a work in progress: it is art in the process of being animated. The inside covers display the towering buildings of Gotham City, Batman's home, including one building whose facade seems to have the anthropomorphic expression of an angry face. Already a style is evident, one that trumps expressiveness over realism.

Throughout the book there are fold-out pages that further exemplify the style in the form of the tone of the series. For example, a close-up of the anguished face of Bruce Wayne (Batman's alter ego), striped in shadow, half covered in beads of sweat, folds open to reveal the title cards for various episodes of the show, as if the show itself were the workings of a mad mind, or a fever-dream. Another fold-out reveals a terrific explosion in storyboard form, complete with a "BOOOM!!" sound effect caption, acknowledging *Batman: The Comic Book's* influence on *Batman: The Cartoon Show*.

Spread out across the book's pages are selections of scripts, storyboards, character sketches, and background

designs that demonstrate the deliberate craft that went into the series. Yet the book is never pretentious: four pages are reserved for some of the most outlandish merchandise produced as tie-ins (Bat-Soap, Bat-Gum, Bat-Slippers), a sly recognition of the crass commercialism at the heart of children's television.

The book's authors, Paul Dini and Chip Kidd, were the driving forces behind *Batman: The Animated Series*, and arguably the chief architects of its aesthetic design. As such, they lack an objective view on the series, but offer plenty of insider knowledge of the production, as well as the controversies that went on behind the scenes. They are frank in admitting they would often cut scripts and dialogue for the sake of atmosphere: *Batman* is a show interested in mood and silent spaces, as well as action, and this required sparse scripts.

Also brought to light are various network decisions regarding content: two pages present various network censor decisions, with an emphasis on their absurdity ("The Third Thug Must Be Caucasian"). It is this section that illustrates the most obvious ways in which *Batman* broke away from children's programming: *Batman*'s world is a dark, formidable place, and a dark, formidable place requires a certain amount of violence as yet unseen in a Saturday morning cartoon show at that time. But what is more interesting is how the show had to work around the network censors by creating an expression of violence rather than showing violence itself, and by doing so create a style. For example, when showing the implicit death-by-falling of a trapeze artist was vetoed by the network, the show's creators instead expressed the death by framing the fall in a silhouette of a circus spotlight. A shadow falls away, a severed rope swings, and the audience infers the death without it being shown.

Yet by far the most elucidating parts of the book detail the deliberate development of the show's style. *Batman* was conceived as a hero in conflict with his inner self, someone who "exorcises his ghosts by becoming *Batman*." Bruce Wayne is a mask *Batman* wears: *Batman*'s real face is the mask of *Batman*. *Batman*'s costume then is less a disguise than an expression of his inner self. Likewise, the villains he encounters are physical expressions of their inner qualities, "poetically ironic caricatures of their baser natures." This is no more apparent than in the villain Two-Face. Half monster, half handsome, Two-Face's very appearance suggests the "duality in a man's soul."

Of course, style is most apparent in atmosphere, and the inspirations for *Batman*'s are quite evident. Labeling the style "dark deco," *Batman*'s creators describe the show's atmosphere as a blend of art deco and expressionistic devices: shadows with no apparent light source, buildings so excessively ornamented they border on caricature. Expressionist films *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Metropolis* are mentioned as direct influences. The atmosphere of Gotham City is unquestionably one of "brooding and menace... a city limned day and night by shadow."

These expressionist tendencies would be developed even further in the second season of the show, when the character designs were given a complete overhaul. The villains of Gotham became even more severe extensions of their inner qualities; no longer even human looking, they became their emotional states. Thus gaunt fear-monger Scarecrow became a haunted mask; Catwoman became more cat than woman, with the silhouette of a feline; the Joker's defining feature became his face like a grinning skull. Even *Batman* was given a makeover, which stripped all color from his costume, making it finally a complete extension of the darkness within his soul.

Batman Animated is not without its weaknesses: the writing affects a casual manner and uses many colloquiums, as if the authors themselves were cautious of taking a children's show too seriously. There are two pages with quotes from various people commenting on their approval of the show, but no context is given to who these people are or why they are speaking as authorities on the subject. A lack of page numbers makes referencing a cumbersome chore. The authors themselves remain in disguise, and it is difficult to

decipher which one of them is writing.

There was never a “kinodebatte” about children’s shows, never a discussion of whether they are capable of artistic expression, even though children continue to be the largest consumer group in the United States. Batman Animated, by presenting the aesthetics of a cartoon show in a thoughtful fashion, suggests, perhaps, there should be.

D.M. says

It's only taken me something like 20 years of Batman: The Animated Series fandom to get around to getting myself a copy of this book and unfortunately it hasn't really been worth the wait. While this is a beautifully-designed book (thanks to Chip Kidd), it doesn't really add up to much more than a glorified magazine. Dini's text is cursory while occasionally providing more character information than anyone likely to be reading this book is likely to want, skimping on more in-depth exploration of the ins and outs of the show.

Perhaps a large part of the problem here was context: the book was published at a time when the show (or at least an incarnation thereof) was still on the air, and its eventual influence on animated television was yet to be seen. Since that time, the impact this single show had on 'children's' animated programs has been overwhelming, in everything from content to style to how seriously (or not) the audience's actual interests/wants are considered.

There is a hefty bunch of art here, including storyboards, conceptual drawings and unadulterated backgrounds. But Kidd's penchant for graphic impact over actual content is seen a bit too often in oversized, lovingly-photographed toys and collectibles where more art (or indeed text) might have done better. Also included is an episode guide including at-the-time unproduced eps, and a voice-cast listing with notable appearances.

Though this is not a bad book as a loving tribute to a classic, influential program (a la Visions from the Twilight Zone), a more thoroughly written, comprehensive, but still lavishly produced book would certainly be a better authoritative volume.

Eric says

"this...is a tribute to the best/greatest cartoon in the world"

a great coffee table book, but an even better/interesting read on all things batman tas. any fanatic of the animated series (like me) will definitely appreciate it. still weird to think of luke skywalker as joker, hehe. after reading through this, you feel inclined to rewatch the series and you will be able to appreciate it even more than before, knowing what kind of work went into this cartoon classic.

Mike Jensen says

Animated television shows that are truly great in every way, concept, design, story, dialog, and the quality of the animation, are non-existent, but the BATMAN: THE ANIMATED SERIES came closer than any before, marred only by some lesser stories and episodes in which the animation was farmed out to a Japanese company. This book tells the story behind the series. It includes the history and development of the idea, character and other design, the people who put it together, and was written by two of those people, insuring a

high degree of accuracy and access. The book is heavily illustrated, as it must be, and in color, as it should be.

This book does not cover the subsequent Batman TV cartoons and is probably for fans of the series only, but those fans should love it.

Anthony says

These guys changed animation, took it to a new level, a better level. This is a great book and look at the art that used dark shadowy corners and alley ways to tell there story with a sea of characters some classic villains, and some new ones keeping it fresh.

Jen says

Words cannot express the awesomeness that is the production crew and the cast of this fantastic animated series. The awesomeness that is Bruce Timm, Paul Dini and finally Chip Kidd is just too much for me to handle. A must have for the definitive Batman book collection.

Andy says

Bruce Timm's rendering of Batman for his cartoon show was one of the best interpretations of the character ever, maybe the best. If you agree then you need this book. There are story boards to the cartoon show, character studies, production notes, and tons of brilliant Bruce Timm art. There's even an amazing memo from Broadcast Standards & Practices notifying the producers what they can't show on a superhero cartoon. ("The third thug must be Caucasian", "It's okay to have Catwoman raking Batman's face, just don't show any blood".)

Christopher Jennings says

Everything I wanted this book to be it is. (Except sturdy. It's come apart over time.)

Ben Flay says

BRILLIANT what is there to say that has not been said ? ground breaking definitive cartoon the original and best stunning take and look for the dark knight maybe more so originally than later in the reboot
Must have for any Bat fan cartoon fan or comic fan or artist this is definitive look at a definitive ground breaking emmy award winning cartoon that redefined the word
Dini started out on the iconic He man cartoon series and his pedigree shows

Enzo Nicolini says

Excelente compendio de anécdotas y diseños detrás de una de las mejores series animadas de televisión de todos los tiempos.

Mike Gloady says

Paul Dini and Chip Kidd (uncredited here, but credited on the publication itself) wrote this guide to the 1990s animated series while Dini, and artists Bruce Timm and Eric Radomski were finishing up their work on the last few episodes. Indeed, its final pages offer hints of an evolution - the series that would come to be known as Batman Beyond.

While there's text a plenty to give almost as much insight as any fan could want into the development and making of such a seminal work, the text isn't the star. Not even the behind the scenes photographs of voice actors are the star (although they're nice). Unsurprisingly the development art, design roughs, storyboards, backgrounds, title cards and screenshots of the final animation are the only reason anyone was buying this book during its brief release.

Out of print for years (it's very much a thing of its time), those who are interested will have to look for it on the second hand market. It's not impossible to find and neither is it prohibitively expensive. Great fun for fans of Batman, animation and Dini and his collaborators. More general fans might struggle to stay onboard throughout.

Nash Bork says

This is a really cool book if you're a fan of the Batman animated series formally on WB. It follows the series from its inception to its end when it embrace an anime-ish style. There is tons of behind scene information, including interviews with the creators and actors. There are also great pre-production sketches. For the fan who can't get enough of the animated series.

Scott Williams says

This is a must-read for true Batfans. It features some wonderful looks at rare production art from the animated series. This book mostly just whets my appetite for more! I would love to see an expanded edition with a full episode guide that includes full scripts or story treatments, model sheets and more detail on the licensing and action figures.
