



Three Fingers

Rich Koslowski

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Through a series of never-before-seen interviews and rare photos, documentary-maker Rich Koslowski reveals the horrifying true story behind the Cartoon industry and our most celebrated cartoon actors - the story that Hollywood doesn't want you to see.. Told in the style of a Ken Burns documentary, with interviews of 'toon stars today as well as historical "file footage" of the "early years," you will forever rethink those beloved characters in the white gloves.

Three Fingers Details

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Author : Rich Koslowski

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From Reader Review Three Fingers for online ebook

Dave Riley says

Great idea of course: what's behind the three fingers of animated cartoon characters? The story is bent to a historical chronology and mirrors the work of Walt Disney and Mickey Mouse. But ultimately, it's all a bit shallow, although the delivery -- the layout, format, pitch -- is superb. It was one helluva surprize when the book ended... It ran out of puff and just stopped.

So I'm disappointed.

Topher says

One of the weirdest books I've ever read, and I've read *The Sugar Frosted Nutsack*. Definitely worth reading. It's the best graphic novel mockumentary send-up of a *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*-style parallel universe Hollywood history/Disney Warner Bros. spoof/Cronenberg-style body horror novel I've ever read.

Amal El-Mohtar says

Amazingly well done. I kind of wish the text boxes hadn't overlapped with the images as much as they did -- it seemed like a deliberate stylistic choice I couldn't figure out a reason for -- but otherwise it was just brilliant. Such intelligent slow-creeping horror spun out of childhood cartoons.

Olga says

This comic book makes you wonder why and if all cartoon characters you love have three fingers? Written and drawn as a documentary this comic book introduces something new to the genre. This specific way of telling a story as short interviews, fragments of newspaper articles and 'real' pictures makes it really interesting and gives it a feel of a story based on true events.

It is a parody of animation and cartoon industry - even though all the names and titles are changed you can easily guess which production studio, film, producer, director or character the author has in mind.

All in all its a comic book worth reading and especially by all cartoon fans.

J. says

It takes a particularly perverse writer to do a graphic novel documentary about the dark side of old cartoon characters. It has a nice, creepy feel and I really enjoyed it. But I don't think I would recommend it to many people.

Sam Quixote says

Rich Koslowski's *Three Fingers* is an alternate history of movie toons – characters like Mickey Mouse, Porky Pig, etc. all with their names changed of course – from the Golden Age of Hollywood presented as a documentary/talking heads-style comic. And it suuuuuuuuuuuuucks!

This is the book: familiar toon character – say, Foghorn Leghorn or Bugs Bunny – looks very aged and is usually hooked up to an iron lung or has a handler nearby because they're so frail. They talk about how shitty the movie business is. Repeat for nearly 150 pages!

The alternate history goes that Dizzy Walters (Walt Disney) “met” Rickey Rat (Mickey Mouse) and the two made hit movies together. Other toons followed and tried to make it in the movie business with varying success. Stupidly believing the secret to Rickey's success was his three fingers(!), toons underwent a surgical procedure “the Ritual” to cut off any extra fingers they had.

It's such a garbage comic. Spotting the famous cartoon parody gets old real quick and the book has nothing to offer beyond that – even the concept of toons as real actors/people isn't original, it's just a rip-off of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*? And what's the point Koslowski's making – that Hollywood is a fake, depressing place where people change their names, appearances and values to make it? Who's this news to??

Three Fingers is a one-note story with the bare bones of some bad ideas tossed into it. The overall effect is unpleasant for unpleasantness' sake. Horribly boring, give *Three Fingers* the finger.

Chris says

As I have said before, I'm not one to do graphic novels here mainly because it feels like cheating. I can put one of those away in an afternoon, so it's a good way of padding the list. For that reason, I'll only mention them here if they're something I really think y'all should read.

This is definitely one that you should all read.

We all grew up watching cartoons - Mickey, Donald, Bugs and all them - and we all loved them. Some cartoons made it big, and some did not. But they all had one thing in common, whether you realized it or not.

Question: why did they all have three fingers?

Question: why did so many of them wear gloves?

Koslowski has explored these questions - and more - in a dark fashion. Moody black and white sketches that echo the real world. Of course, the names are changed to protect people from lawyers, but they're all there.

The book reads like a kind of "Behind the Movies" documentary, with historical narration over clips of "interviews" with the friends and foes of famed Toon filmmaker Dizzy Walters and his star actor, Ricky Rat. They talk about his rise to fame, and the horrors that came with it. The desperation, the sacrifices.... The Ritual.

Definitely give this one a look.

Keith Davis says

I absolutely loved this funny and smart graphic novel. Koslowski's takes on the aging Warner Bros characters are excellent, particularly Bugs and Foghorn Leghorn. Finally we understand why all cartoon characters have only three fingers on each hand.

George Marshall says

The central premise - that the characters in cartoon films are real (and exist in our own world in an oppressed underclass called 'Toons') is so clearly derived from "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" that I find it hard to credit Koslowski for the three fingered theme which is genuinely original. It's a shame because it is beautifully drawn and could be a great comic. Oh well...

Aaron Ishmael says

The cover and overall plotline hooked me... "Did you ever wonder why cartoon stars only had 3 fingers?" Definitely enjoyed Rich Koslowski's dark & twisted 'Hollywood Story to Success' parody. Pretty cool. Many people would get the Toons he's bringing the life, but carefully not infringing on copyrighted material...like 'Ricky Rat', 'Buggy Bunny', 'Dapper Duck'. Especially like how we intertwined the story with actual historical events / coverups like JFK, Martin Luther King Jr, Marilyn Monroe, and just in general how the Hollywood scene is a crazy, pressured environment. Quick read. You can finish it in an hour or two.

Ciara says

If you're fairly new to the world of graphic novels, and your knowledge of comics begins and ends with Batman, Superman, and Spider-Man; then Three Fingers will surprise and delight you.

If, on the other hand, you're an avid comic book reader, and you know that graphic novels can span a broad range of subject matter and artistic styles... Three Fingers will likely still surprise and delight you.

Rich Koslowski brings his considerable skill as an artist and writer to this quirky tale of 'Toon-dom. Written like a docu-(or mocku-)mentary, the story follows the meteoric rise of Dizzy Walters and Rickey the Rat, the first director and actor to break into the controversial world of cartoons. What makes Rickey and Dizzy so successful in their quest? Is it raw talent, pure charisma? Or is it something much darker?

Darkly humorous and totally unique, this tale puts a twist on the cartoon characters we grew up loving- from Mickey and Minnie Mouse to Porky Pig, Bugs Bunny, and more. It's a story almost any adult can enjoy- unless, of course, you managed to make it through childhood without ever tuning into Saturday morning cartoons.

Three Fingers is worth picking up whether you're new to graphic novels or a longtime fan. The medium compliments the subject matter nicely, and the plot will hook even those who are totally unfamiliar with comics.

Overall, a quick, fun (and funny) read!

Matt Eldridge says

A darkly humored alternate-history mockumentary dramedy of the "golden age" of Hollywood and its cartoon stars, this was a really good read.

The closest thing the book has to a main character would be Rickey Rat and Dizzy Walters due to having the most impact on the events of the book. Rickey is the most sympathetic character for what the book holds in its later pages.

The conspiracy, described in the book as Walter's rival studios, was to "replicate" the lightning-in-the-bottle success of Rickey which is pretty horrifying reveal. The bigger reveal though would be the what evidence leads to Dizzy and his studio being in on the ground floor of the conspiracy in a chilling manner. The deaths of historical/postmortem conspiracy figures such as MLK, JFK and Marilyn Monroe and how they figure into the conspiracy was a great nod, as was the famous camera footage of Bigfoot from 1967, nicely repurposed here too.

The cameos of ersatz Looney Tunes characters were interesting as they're the ones who are shown to have suffered the most in the story and along with the Hollywood system and the people in with the conspiracy, the ersatz Bug Bunny character who profited the most out of the corrupt system to the detriment of his fellow co-stars (the treatment of this world's Daffy Duck can give one shudders). Another WB character gets a cameo in the final page of the book with a harsh reminder that the world keeps on spinning and that the efforts to curb the conspiracy went unsuccessful.

The only negative criticisms I can give is that artwork, while beautiful in its photorealism and grittiness, can be often copy-pasted in most of its interviews and that the story could've been a bit longer with its sights set on the other eras of animation but overall its a really great story.

Chad Jordahl says

The art is technically very good (although straight-forward and repetitive). The dialog is well done, each character has a distinctive style (although derivative of the figures they're modeled on). The story is quite thin, the entire book could have been cut by a third or more. It was amusing.

Darren Cormier says

Perfect send-up of both the formulaic documentary-style structure of "True Hollywood Stories" type shows and the family-oriented image of Walt Disney. The manufactured conspiracies and drama of these shows is unveiled through its use of "eyewitness photographs", usually nothing more than a blurry image with a vague reflection of the subject they are trying to cover.

I can't imagine this book would have been published in the 80s, when the Disney monolith was at its family-image zenith, and they went to all extremes to portray that image. Corporations seem to have embraced our ironic culture's focus on negative publicity, that a little self-humor and acceptance of negative criticism can go a long way; Disney itself seems to have promoted the image that it's not just the family friendly atmosphere of Mickey Mouse but is about "diversifying its interests". In fact, Mickey Mouse is almost nowhere to be seen anymore when talking about Disney. Now, with a new corporate ethos where any publicity is good publicity, this book is allowed to be published, although it certainly didn't thrive. Still, we do need great satire, and Rick Koslowski delivers great satire in this form.

The cover art and title can be taken two ways as well, from the standpoint of the fourth digit that most cartoons seem to lack, to the possibility that it stands for three fingers of scotch, when two fingers is usually what is ordered.

Anyway, thank you Rick Koslowski. I will now seek out more of your work, not just for the content, but for your impeccable artistry and illustrations as well, in particular the illustrations of Carhorn Armwhistle. Thank you.

Christian Lipski says

A 'real' documentary of the rise of movies starring 'Toons'. Rickey Rat goes from being a piano player in the Toon part of town to a famous movie star, but dark rumors haunt him and the Dizzy Walters studio. It's well done, and really affecting.
