Jack Kirby created or co-created some of comic books’ most popular characters including Captain America, The X-Men, The Hulk, The Fantastic Four, The Mighty Thor, Darkseid, and The New Gods. More significantly, he created much of the visual language for fantasy and adventure comics. There were comics before Kirby, but for the most part their page layout, graphics, and visual dynamic aped what was being done in syndicated newspaper strips. Almost everything that was different about comic books began in the forties on the drawing table of Jack Kirby. This is his story by one who knew him well—the authorized celebration of the one and only “King of Comics” and his groundbreaking work.

“I don’t think it’s any accident that . . . the entire Marvel universe and the entire DC universe are all pinned or rooted on Kirby’s concepts.” —Michael Chabon

My Personal Review:
This book is a tremendous homage to the work of Jack Kirby. You will be hard pressed to find many more gorgeous books about a major comic artist, with a wide array of illustrations from every period of Kirbys long and illustrious career. Evanier has outdone himself in selection drawings that put Kirby at his best on display. There are also some wonderful rarities, such as the great and very late Street Code, based upon his youthful experiences in a local gang. There are a bevy of raw drawings beside the way they eventually appeared in published form. But my favorite has to be a multiple page spread from Kirbys NEW GODS, showing the same drawing first from Kirbys hand, then after the colorer and letterer have their turn, and finally in a version by the great Alex Ross.

The illustrations more of less carry the book. As a documentary it lacks depth. I didn’t come away from the book really feeling like I knew Jack
Kirby as a person. Many of the major incidents in his creative life feel more gestured at than delved into. And the whole messy relationship and collaboration between Kirby and Stan Lee is not very satisfactory. Indeed, at the end of the book I didn't get a strong sense of what Lee and Kirby had done with one another. Too much of their relationship devolved into a he said-he said affair.

Still, by the end of the book you have a good overall idea of Kirby as an artist and an outline of his career. It would be nice if someday we got a full length, detailed biography, especially one that untangled the intricacies of his work with Stan Lee. While Evanier rightfully stresses Kirby's longer collaboration with Joe Simon, he will always be best remembered for his work at Marvel. In the meantime, this book gives some glimpse into Kirby's life and a much broader peek into his work as an artist.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Kirby: King of Comics by Mark Evanier - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!