The Three Stooges are admittedly an acquired taste. To fully appreciate them, as with NASCAR racing, practical jokes, and Steely Dan, it helps to be a guy. But there’s no denying the durability of the Stooges fearless physical performances. Every eye poke, noggin crack, face slap, and nyuk-nyuk-nyuk feels as edgy today as it did in their earliest two-reelers, and it’s safe to say that their routines, for better or worse, helped pave the way for the Farrelly brothers, the Zucker brothers, Adam Sandler, and Jim Carrey. Michael Fleming, a columnist for Daily Variety, has diligently compiled the history of the Stooges, from their vaudeville days through the height of their fame in the 30s to the 50s and beyond. What An Illustrated History lacks in clear organization it more than makes up for in attention to detail, about the lives of Moe Howard, Larry Fine, and Curly Howard (plus the
other third Stooges, Shemp Howard, Joe Besser, and Curly Joe DeRita); the genesis of their routines; and the heavy-handed business deals that left them, the most successful comedians of their day, with virtually no residual income. The books best segment dissects each two-reeler and film (including Men in Black, the only Stooge short to be nominated for an Oscar), with a wealth of publicity photos and a tally of slaps, eye pokes, and head conks. Might Fleming make even non-Stooge fans appreciate their humor? Why, soitenly. --Anne Hurley

**Personal Review: The Three Stooges: An Illustrated History, from Amalgamated Morons to American Icons by Michael Fleming**

But when you think STOOGES...only THREE will come to mind.

I can't see ANY of these guys doing Hamlet...(would probably be called OMELET, knowing them), and yet their works have endured over time, and endeared them to us, generation after generation.

Mr. Fleming does an outstanding job of capturing the essence of being a "stooge" in the heyday of talkies following vaudeville. The photos are numerous AND hilarious. The quality of paper used in the printing is of note as well.

One major selling point is the compilation of ALL their works from the first short to the last appearance...it's all there!

Having read the Moe Howard book as well, it was nice to see another person's perspective on one of (if not the best) comedy teams of all time.

I grew up with the stooges shorts being shown on local TV (in Philly), and in all that time, we never lost an eye at our school...lol!

So if you need a good, concise tome on these knuckleheads...look no further. This is a very good book, and will surely conjure up a lot of memories.

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