



Nancy Is Happy: Complete Dailies 1943-1945 (Vol. 1) (Ernie Bushmiller's Nancy)

Ernie Bushmiller

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The latest addition to Fantagraphics' award- winning classic comic strip reprint series.

A funny thing happened on the way to comic-strip immortality. For many years, Ernie Bushmiller's *Nancy*, with its odd-looking, squat heroine, nearly abstract art, and often super-corny gags, was perceived as the stodgiest, squarest comic strip in the world. Popular with newspaper readers, true ? but definitely not a strip embraced by comic-strip connoisseurs, like *Krazy Kat*, *Dick Tracy* or *Terry and the Pirates*.

But then those connoisseurs took a closer look, and began to realize that Bushmiller's art approached its own kind of cartoon perfection, and those corny gags often achieved a striking zen quality. In its own way, it turned out Nancy was in fact the most iconic comic strip of all. (*The American Heritage Dictionary* actually uses a Nancy strip to illustrate its entry on "comic strip.")

Charter members of the Nancy revival include Art Spiegelman, who published Mark Newgarden's famous "Love's Savage Fury" (featuring Nancy and Bazooka Joe) in an early issue of RAW; Fletcher Hanks anthologist Paul Karasik; *Zippy the Pinhead* creator Bill Griffith; underground publisher Denis Kitchen, who released several volumes of *Nancy* collections in the 1980s; *Understanding Comics*' Scott McCloud, who created the "Five-Card Nancy" card game; Joe Brainard, who produced an entire *Nancy* book of paintings in 2008; and Andy Warhol, who produced a painting based on Nancy.

Beginning in the Winter of 2011, fans will be dancing with joy as Fantagraphics unveils an ongoing Nancy reprint project. Each volume contain a whopping full four years of daily *Nancy* strips (a Sunday *Nancy* project looms in the future), collected in a fat, square (what else, for the "squarest" strip in the world?) package designed by Jacob (*Popeye*, *Beasts!*, *Willie and Joe*) Covey.

This first volume will collect every daily strip from 1943 to 1946. (Fantagraphics will eventually release *Nancy*'s first five years, 1938-1942, but given the scarcity of archival material for these years we are giving ourselves some extra time to collate it all.)

This first *Nancy* volume will feature an introduction by another stellar Bushmiller fan, Daniel Clowes (from whose collection most of the strips in this volume were scanned), a biography of the artist, and much more. 432 pages of black and white comics

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