

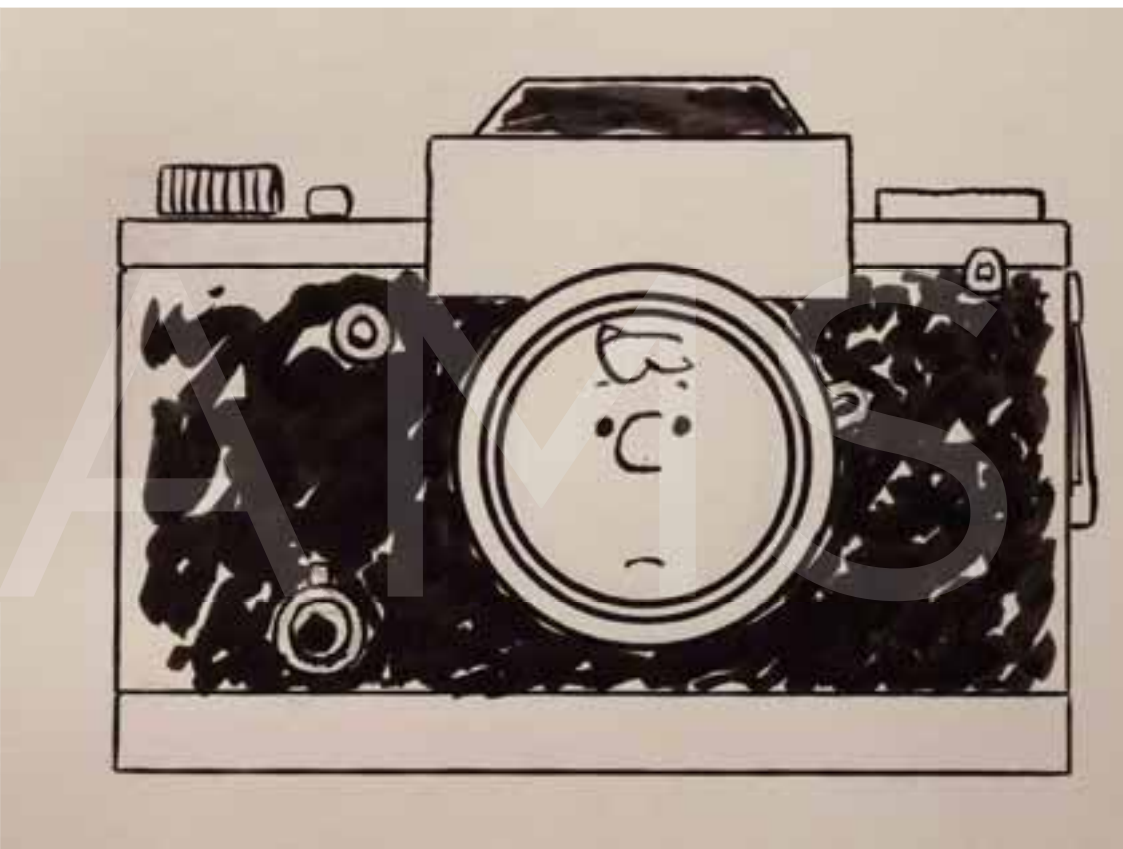


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**PEANUTS**  
*by SCHULZ*  
WATCH







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“Good cartooning is basically good design. A cartoon character who looks good to you is a cartoon character who has been designed properly. You have to place things within your four panels so that you can break up the areas into nice shapes. I have discovered that, because of the type of humor in Charlie Brown, the drawings must remain simple—very simple. And I rarely do any backgrounds. Keeping it all very simple is the key here.”

—Charles M. Schulz



3 COL.

*SMALL KIDDING IN A BIG WAY . . .*

# PEANUTS

— A DELIGHTFULLY - DIFFERENT  
COMIC STRIP TO APPEAR

*in the*

[NAME OF PAPER]

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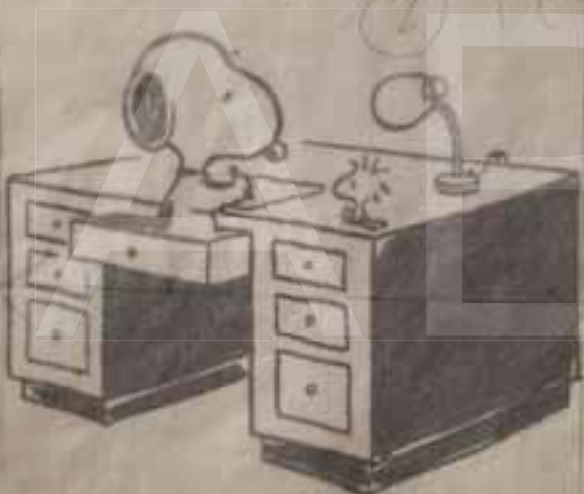


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INTRODUCTION BY JEFF KINNEY  
ADDITIONAL TEXT BY JEAN SCHULZ, KAREN JOHNSON, AND PAIGE BRADDOCK  
IMAGES COURTESY OF THE CHARLES M. SCHULZ MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTER



ONLY WHAT'S NECESSARY  
CHARLES M. SCHULZ AND THE ART OF PEANUTS  
TEXT, ART DIRECTION, AND DESIGN BY CHIP KIDD  
ABRAMS COMICARTS • NEW YORK

COVER Detail, Charles M. Schulz stationery, 1960s.  
 ENDPAPER verso Detail, Sunday comic strip, May 16, 1954.  
 ENDPAPER verso Detail, "Peanuts by Schulz" announcement flyer,  
 distributed by United Features for subscriber promotion, fall 1950.  
 PAGE 1 Detail, Sunday comic strip, March 20, 1977.  
 PAGES 2-3 *Peanuts* paperback reprint collections published by  
 Fawcett Crest, 1954-86.  
 PAGE 4 Detail, unfinished art for daily comic strip, undated.  
 PAGE 5 Detail, "Peanuts by Schulz" announcement flyer, distributed  
 by United Features for subscriber promotion, fall 1950.  
 TITLE PAGES Unpublished *Li'l Folks* panels, spring 1950.



ABOVE Original art with tissue overlay. Advertisement for Aviva Enterprises Inc., 1981.  
 OPPOSITE Unpublished charcoal sketch on newsprint drawn for a cameraman who worked for  
 CBS Channel 5 in San Francisco, undated. The station featured Schulz in a live TV interview.

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FOR JEANNIE AND PAIGE





## INTRODUCTION BY JEFF KINNEY

It was the clean lines.

Or maybe it was the white space. Whatever it was, something about *Peanuts* pulled me in every morning for all the mornings that I read the comics growing up.

Some things are self-evident, even to a kid. On the comics pages, there is *Peanuts*, and then there is everything else.

Charles Schulz couldn't have known that by agreeing to his syndicate's request to shrink the size of his comic strips down to a layout-friendly "space saver" format, he would reinvent the art form.

Less space meant making every line count. Every word of dialogue. Every gesture.

By using only what was necessary in his own strip, Schulz transformed people's understanding of what comics could be. In a time when the comics page was crowded with densely drawn, dialogue-heavy creations, Schulz's work was a beacon of simplicity and economy.

There's an oft-told story about a cartoonist who worked in the late 1800s who was once asked by his editor to produce more-detailed drawings like the work of his contemporaries. But the cartoonist's instincts were to *simplify* his drawings rather than embellish them. In fact, he said he should be paid more for using half the lines, given the skill it required. That man understood the essence of cartooning, which is efficiency. And

nobody got more out of fewer lines than Charles Schulz did with *Peanuts*.

Schulz economized in other ways, too. It was typical of the day to have multiple creators working on a single comic. A writer, a penciler, an inker, and a letterer. But by insisting on doing it all himself, Schulz created a singular work with a singular voice. A work that ran continuously for fifty years.

In creating Macbeth, William Shakespeare embodied a single character with a full and often contradictory range of human traits—ambition, weakness, gullibility, bravery, fearfulness, tyranny, kindness. A character as complex as Macbeth could only be created by someone with a complete

understanding of what it means to be a human being, and suggests that Shakespeare himself shared many traits with his most famous literary character.

In the same way, the characters in *Peanuts* reflect the multiple dimensions of their creator. Interviewers asked Schulz if he was really Charlie Brown, expecting, perhaps, an uncomplicated confirmation. But Schulz was *all* the characters in *Peanuts*—Charlie Brown, Lucy, Linus, Schroeder, Pig-Pen, Franklin, Peppermint Patty, Marcie, even Snoopy. Each character represented a different aspect of Schulz, making *Peanuts* perhaps the most richly layered autobiography of all time.

As a work, *Peanuts* outgrew the confines of

the comics page to permeate seemingly every imaginable facet of popular culture. From a touring musical to multiple bestselling books, a multitude of Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade balloons, a truly unfathomable array of merchandise, and Emmy-winning animated television specials, the characters of *Peanuts* are perhaps the most recognizable and beloved in the world.

I recently had the chance to speak at a charity event with three other cartoonists who have had success in various literary formats. As the speeches unfolded, we discovered that each one of us had been inspired to become cartoonists by Charles Schulz. And each one of us, in turn, has made a pilgrimage to the Charles M. Schulz

Museum and Research Center in Santa Rosa, California, to stand in awe of the artwork of a man we so admire.

There's *Peanuts*, and there's everything that came after it. Virtually every successful comic strip feature that has followed *Peanuts* owes a huge debt of gratitude to Schulz for getting to the very essence of what makes comics a powerful medium.

Schulz understood how to make every line count. Nothing extraneous, no waste.

Only what's necessary.

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THIS PAGE Original art for program, Redwood Empire Ice Arena (REIA) in Santa Rosa, California, c. 1960s.

OPPOSITE Ink on colored construction paper with die-cut hole, undated.

JEFF KINNEY IS THE AUTHOR OF THE DIARY OF A WIMPY KID SERIES.



CHARLIE BROWN  
LOVES THE  
WHOLE WIDE  
WORLD!



Above Detail, daily comic strip, October 4, 1951.

Opposite Ink on colored construction paper with die-cut hole, undated.

## FOREWORD BY JEAN SCHULZ

Chip Kidd, in his preface, speaks of the honor he feels in being allowed to work with the archives of the Charles M. Schulz Museum in the preparation of this book. Indeed, even before the museum opened its doors, our family cooperated with Chip and with photographer Geoff Spear to produce the 2001 book *Peanuts: The Art of Charles M. Schulz*. It was Chip's sincerity and dedication to letting the art speak for itself that impressed us, and we felt the resulting book rewarded our trust in his team.

Since its opening in 2002, the museum's collection has grown to include thousands of pieces of artwork and historically important items related to the life and work of my husband, Sparky, and his comic strip, *Peanuts*. I hope that the selections from the museum's collection showcased in this book will bring a taste of the museum into the homes of readers across the globe.

The title *Only What's Necessary* refers to Sparky's spare comics panels, which tell a story with a minimal number of pen lines. It wasn't necessary to draw every little detail because each reader's imagination automatically fills in what's needed. The result made *Peanuts* stand out on the comics page because, as Harry Gilbert of United Feature Syndicate once remarked, "it looks good between two busier strips."

One area where Sparky never spared the details, though, was in depicting rain. Paige Braddock, creative director of our Creative Associates Studio, remembers the day Sparky walked out of his studio and exclaimed, "Do you know how many pen lines it takes to make rain?" The question surprised Paige, and her retelling of the conversation made me curious. Well, I counted

the rain in one of the strips, and there were over one hundred pen strokes in just one panel of that four-panel comic. I marvel at the concentration it must have taken to draw just that one panel, but I know for Sparky it was a thrilling exercise.

While cartooning has always been about the combination of words and pictures, for Sparky the drawing was central. He said each panel must be pleasant to look at, and I take that to mean in composition, balance, and structure. It's the architecture of each sequence and each panel that creates good design.

Here is Sparky's voice from a 1999 interview in Dr. Marshall B. Stearn's book *Portraits of Passion*:

Even though I might be drawing something that may have some social comment or content, it is still the drawing itself—the creation of the actual cartoon, the pen lines that make up the cartoon, the quality of the pen lines, the craftsmanship that is involved, the composition of the cartoon—that is the real accomplishment. We have to forget about what the words are saying or things like that. Let's try to just talk about it as pictures, as drawings in the sand or drawings on the chalkboard. The quality of the drawing itself is so important to me. This is what I think real cartoonists admire. Not so much what the characters have said and things like that, but good cartoonists admire other cartoonists simply for the quality of the pen lines and the drawing itself. This doesn't mean literal draftsmanship always, but there is a certain warmth, there is the craftsmanship involved there beyond illustrative quality.

Sparky often spoke of admiring the work of J. R. Williams, who drew a daily syndicated panel, *Out Our Way*, which Sparky would have seen in his early years. Sparky recognized a dynamic quality in Williams's pen line. It conveyed an energy, even while the figures were still. With Sparky's drawing, too, nothing in the background is static; everything is squiggles and motion.

Paige Braddock, in a presentation to the animators at Blue Sky Studios, described the quality of Sparky's line as "organic." Interestingly, Sparky actually drew with his pen, rather than inking over a pencil sketch as many cartoonists and illustrators do. The ones you see in this book are the rare exceptions.

Drawing is magic.

It's like putting your negative into the developing solution and seeing the image—which you know is there—emerge. I imagine that is what Sparky felt as he saw what was in his head appear on the paper in front of him.

Paige also described the 3-D quality you can see in his originals. Sparky used three-ply hot press Strathmore Bristol board. This slick-surfaced paper allows the ink to sit on the surface rather than sink into the paper. Because the ink took a while to dry, Sparky worked on several strips at once. He would draw one panel and then set that strip aside to dry while he finished a panel on a different strip. The 3-D effect of the ink is lost when the art is printed in books or in





the newspaper. To truly see what Paige describes, you need to see the original strips on display at the museum. The photographs in this book come close, but no reproduction can evoke the feeling you get from looking at original art.

Another simple but interesting insight Sparky told Paige and that she related to the animators was about fingers, which should not all be the same. “No, no, no,” Sparky said. “All the fingers have to be different—our fingers are unique.” I love what the Australian cartoonist Jos Valdman wrote to me on this same subject:

His drawing of hands, for example: They are so very refined and carry a truth of form that resonates in the same way his wonderful characters do, and to me, that is his essence. Sparky’s work speaks from the heart and, of course, to it.

Sparky had a unique sense of humor. If you have read about him, you probably know that he followed the comics from an early age. He and his father looked forward to reading the comic pages of four different newspapers every Sunday. It is important to remember that comics were the television equivalent of the day and, as he and his father discussed what they found funny or exciting, Sparky would have observed a lot about comedic effects and timing.

Again, in Sparky’s own words from Dr. Stearn’s book:

The trait of a cartoonist is to be able to see the humor in the tragedies man has to face. People say, how do you think of those funny ideas. I say, I’m very clever. I’m reasonably witty. I was astounded

about three or four months ago, I received a letter from a very close friend. We were in the same platoon and we spent a lot of time together and he said that he just thought it was about time that he wrote to me and just tell me how much he appreciated the friendship that he and I had during those years together. He said, you made me laugh. Well, it never occurred to me that I had made anybody laugh. I certainly was not the life of the party... What he said made me feel good. It was something that never occurred to me.

So Sparky felt that he was clever and reasonably witty but, by his own admission, never the life of the party. That was not Sparky’s humor. By “witty,” I think Sparky is describing his ability to quickly see an incongruity in a situation or conversation and to make a humorous riposte. When Sparky uses a play on words, it comes directly from his experience and isn’t a trite, recycled joke. A good example in this book is the strip with the punch line “emotional shocks,” when Linus is talking about electrical shocks.

And by “clever,” I don’t think he meant clever-smart, but that he was attuned to the everyday absurdity in many ordinary situations.

I’ve often described Sparky’s humor as a combination of the laughter and irreverence of Tom and Ray Magliozzi (the *Car Talk* guys) and the self-deprecating humor of Garrison Keillor (*A Prairie Home Companion*). But in addition to the wit, Sparky adds a visual punch line: a smug, chagrined, or sometimes deflated expression.

But other times the humor of the comic strip comes from things that Sparky thought were just

fun to draw, and he used them early and often, as they used to say about voting. The animated feeling of the jump-rope strips obviously tickled Sparky, and one example in this book resulted in Charlie Brown’s very cartoony eyes. The theme of kids jumping rope is used again and again, always with a different take on it, and always with funny, sequential drawings that give the feeling of motion.

Sparky also found snowmen fun to draw, and coming from Minnesota, with its cold, snowy winters, he naturally brought them into the comic strip every winter. In a 1953 Sunday strip, Charlie Brown, when he is still in his “top of the world” phase, creates a snowman menagerie, and he continues proudly building snowmen until, in 1955, Linus creates a full-size Daniel Boone snowman, which takes the wind from Charlie Brown’s sails. From then on, we think of Linus as the snowman builder. In reality, all the characters get into the act. In this case, and in the entire *Peanuts* oeuvre, the art drives the characters, and the characters, in turn, drive the art; and so the circle goes on, round and round.

Sparky’s cast of distinct characters provided him with comic ideas. They could be counted on year after year (fortunately). Sometimes the characters are straight men, feeding the lines; sometimes they are gag men. But always they fit together, hand in glove, weaving a pattern that draws in readers day after day, year after year. But always, Sparky insisted, it was the art that made it work.

**JEAN SCHULZ** IS THE WIDOW OF CHARLES M. SCHULZ AND THE FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CHARLES M. SCHULZ MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTER IN SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA. READ HER BLOG AT [SCHULZMUSEUM.ORG/JEANSCHULZ](http://SCHULZMUSEUM.ORG/JEANSCHULZ).

OPPOSITE Detail, unfinished sketch for daily comic strip, undated.



RIGHT Mural by artist Yoshiteru Otani composed of 3,588 *Peanuts* comic strip images printed on 8 x 2-inch ceramic tiles. Installation in the Great Hall of the Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center. Photograph by DJ Ashton.

OPPOSITE Detail of Otani's mural.



## BEHIND THE DOOR

BY KAREN JOHNSON

To me, a childhood visit to any museum became more enchanting and mysterious when I found myself standing in front of a locked door with a sign saying STAFF ONLY. This sign left me pondering, "What's behind that door? Is this where all the art is, or the rest of the dinosaurs? Are there rooms full of statues, bugs, rocks, and books?" My mind just wondered about all the possibilities beyond that door.

Well, this book is the equivalent to having the highest staff clearance, or the master key, allowing you, the reader, access to the most protected artifacts and art pieces in the vaults of the Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center. As you turn each page, it is as if you have found the combination to the safe and are opening the drawers and culling through the archival files. Charles Schulz—the boy, the soldier, the husband, the father, the friend, the athlete, and the cartoonist—will come to life for you. Sparky, as his friends and family called him, will emerge. Collectively, this book gives you the most comprehensive overview of our collection to date.

In the 1990s, when the subject of a museum was first broached to Schulz, he showed little enthusiasm. After all, he was working on his daily comic strip and did not think of himself as a museum piece. Fortunately, this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the cartoonist's wife Jean, cartoon historian Mark Cohen, and Schulz's longtime friend and attorney Edwin Anderson. They had a collective dream of establishing a place where people could view Schulz's work and be immersed in his unique vision of the world. As Jean Schulz

has said, "I just wanted people to see his comic strips at their original size and not reduced to fit a newspaper's limited space. It is in the originals where you can really see his emotion through the strokes of his pen line and his master craftsmanship." As time progressed, Charles Schulz warmed to the idea of a museum whose main focus was to display his work.

In June 2000, just four months after Schulz's passing, friends, family, and local officials gathered for the groundbreaking of the museum in Santa Rosa, California. For the last thirty years of his life, Schulz's world centered on this property between his art studio and his beloved ice arena, where he started each day at the Warm Puppy Café with a simple breakfast of an English muffin, coffee, and the newspaper.

The Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center opened on August 15, 2002, with the mission to preserve, display, and interpret the art of Charles M. Schulz. In the past thirteen years, hundreds of thousands of visitors have walked through our galleries, reconnecting with their own life experiences of Snoopy, Charlie Brown, and the rest of the *Peanuts* gang. As I watch our guests roam through the galleries, their reflective and smiling faces tell me that they are lost in a world of their own personal delight and wonder. I have often thought, "How did one man, through one medium, universally connect with the world?" The truth about Schulz and his art—which is more

complex than it seems—is that he found inspiration in life's daily occurrences that so many of us often take for granted. He was forever collecting bits of information that intrigued him, eventually finding a way to not only present them in his strip, but to make them relevant to his audience as well. Jean Schulz has remarked that Schulz's genius came from his simple and direct creative process; his ideas came from his head through his heart and were transferred by pen and ink onto paper.

Charles Schulz said, "If you read the strip, you would know me. Everything I am goes into the strip." As you turn the last page of this book, our wish for you, the reader, is that you have developed a deeper appreciation and understanding of the breadth of Schulz's artistic talent and have begun to see how his life experiences became the driving force for *Peanuts*.

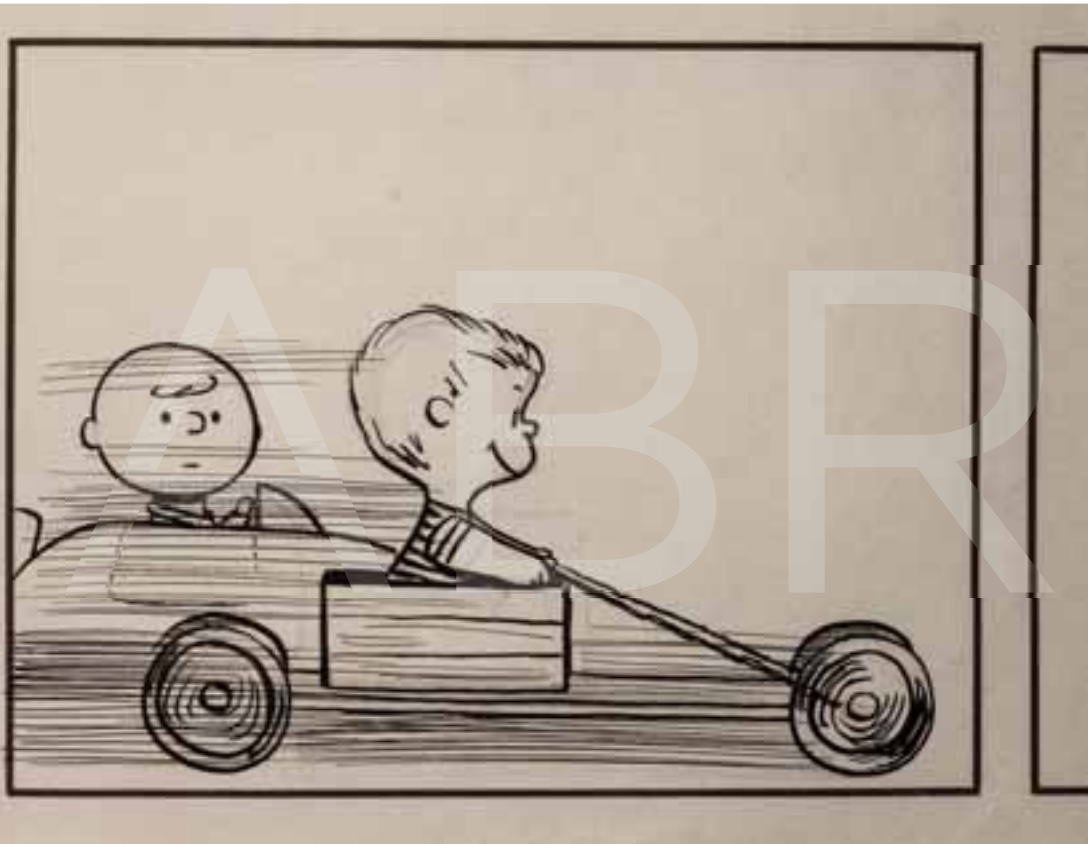
It is appropriate that this book comes out on the sixty-fifth anniversary of *Peanuts*, a year filled with celebration, reflection, scholarship, and, ultimately, confirmation that *Peanuts* is truly art. A prominent museum director once told me he felt museums were in the "forever" business. I have never forgotten that, as it completely summarizes the essence of our day-to-day work. May the Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center forever be in the business of sharing Charles Schulz's life and the art of *Peanuts*—a universal gift for all humanity.

See you in the galleries.

**KAREN JOHNSON** IS THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR AT THE CHARLES M. SCHULZ MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTER IN SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA. VISIT THE MUSEUM ONLINE AT [SCHULZMUSEUM.ORG](http://SCHULZMUSEUM.ORG).







P R E F A C E  
**ONLY WHAT'S NECESSARY**

If bringing joy to other people is proof of a meaningful existence, then Charles M. Schulz led one of the most meaningful lives of the twentieth century. I have few regrets in my own life, but not making an effort to meet Mr. Schulz, and thank him for his achievement while I might have had the chance, is definitely one of them. So I am trying to acknowledge his singular achievements here in this book.

To say I am a *Peanuts* nerd is putting it mildly, and I declare it with pride. But what separates me from the millions of other *Peanuts* nerds in the world is that I somehow became one who was granted access. On numerous occasions now, starting with my research for *Peanuts: The Art of Charles M. Schulz* in 2000, I have pored over his sketches, his original finished art, and the hidden treasures of his archive. And not only have I had access, but I was given the means to reproduce it. This is thanks to Jeannie Schulz, Paige Braddock, and the staff of the Charles M. Schulz Museum in Santa Rosa, California. I still can't quite believe that they gave me the opportunity to do it, but with this book I have tried my best to reward their trust.

Yes, there is much work here that Mr. Schulz never intended for the public to see, or to remember. And if he is somewhere in the great beyond shaking his fist at me, then I guess you could call me the Red Baron who worships him. Or maybe that's the wrong analogy. Maybe I am the little red-haired girl who always wanted to meet him and couldn't muster up the courage. Regardless, I don't have much in the way of analytic theories about what his career "meant," or how his creative process worked, or where he got his ideas. And I don't pretend to know. All I have is a deep appreciation for his work and the desire to share it.

Many books devoted to Mr. Schulz's oeuvre have come before this, and many more will follow, as well they should. But what we are attempting to do here is acknowledge Schulz the artist by examining his original art and ephemera as uniquely and eloquently as we can, for a life so well lived. A life of pathos, wit, humor, and passion; the joy and sorrow of love. A brilliant talent and the incredibly hard work he produced for more than fifty years.

How could we *not* thank him for that?

After all, it is only what's necessary.

—Chip Kidd  
 New York City  
 January 2015

OPPOSITE Detail, unfinished sketch for daily comic strip, undated.

RIGHT Detail, daily comic strip, March 24, 1966.





In an act that has long since become comics legend, fourteen-year-old Charles Monroe "Sparky" Schulz—the only son of Minneapolis barber Carl F. Schulz and his wife, Dena (pictured)—submitted a cartoon drawing of the family dog to the *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* feature. It was the winter of 1936. To the young Schulz's delight, the cartoon ran on February 22, 1937. The pooch, Spike, went unnamed, but it was a start for the young man who had only ever wanted to be a cartoonist.

The Ripley comic strip feature first appeared in 1918, compiling strange and unusual news events and facts that seemed too bizarre to be true. At the peak of its popularity in the 1930s, *Believe It or Not!* had a daily readership of eighty million. In comparison, *Peanuts*, at its peak, ran in over 2,600 newspapers, with a readership of 355 million in seventy-five countries, translated into twenty-one languages—believe it or not!

LEFT Original art for *Ripley's Believe It or Not!*, February 22, 1937.

BELOW A teenage Charles Schulz poses for a family portrait with his parents, Carl and Dena, and their dog, Spike, c. 1937.

OPPOSITE Detail, *Ripley's Believe It or Not!*





**Charles Schulz...**

Born in Minneapolis 27 years ago. Art Instruction correspondence course and night sketching classes at Minneapolis School of Art. Saw action as light-machine-gun squad leader in France and Germany during World War II. After war, became successful Saturday Evening Post contributor, instructor at Art Instruction, Inc., and cartoonist for St. Paul Pioneer Press, where Peanuts was created. His Post cartoons have been reprinted in the U. S. and many foreign countries.

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