



Two-Dimensional Man

Paul Sahre, Inc.

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In *Two-Dimensional Man*, Paul Sahre shares deeply revealing stories that serve as the unlikely inspiration behind his extraordinary thirty-year design career. Sahre explores his mostly vain attempts to escape his "suburban Addams Family" upbringing and the death of his elephant-trainer brother. He also wrestles with the cosmic implications involved in operating a scanner, explains the disappearance of ice machines, analyzes a disastrous meeting with Steely Dan, and laments the typos, sunsets, and poor color choices that have shaped his work and point of view. *Two-Dimensional Man* portrays the designer's life as one of constant questioning, inventing, failing, dreaming, and ultimately making.

Two-Dimensional Man Details

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Author : Paul Sahre, Inc.

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From Reader Review Two-Dimensional Man for online ebook

Carson K. Smith says

A unique, illustrated memoir, based around his work as a graphic designer. So good. Met Paul in Portland, where he presented his self, talked about the work. Hell of a nice guy.

Vuk Trifkovic says

Go get it in hardback, because this will be a classic for sure.

Impressive how this "thing" works so well on so many levels. A beautiful, but not overdesigned object. Heartfelt family story and a fascinating glimpse into a graphic design trade. It really is a glimpse, but incisive enough so you can make out the more - without giving the game away.

Mike Tully says

This is the most enjoyable book having anything to do with design I've read to date. I recommend this to anyone and everyone.

Stephen says

A Well-Designed Life Is Not Without Disorder: Paul Sahre's *Two-Dimensional Man: A Graphic Memoir*

I made two mistakes when I chose this book. One I make all the time and may get Paul Sahre's approval as a designer. I chose this book because of its cover. I'm rarely rewarded, but I do it anyway. The cover design for Sahre's book looks like somehow all the cover information had been set on top of the book, and then someone picked it up and everything slid down in a ragged pile at the bottom. It immediately drew me in. My second mistake was thinking that this was a book written by or about Jean-Paul Sartre and that the "two-dimensional man" was maybe one who acted in bad faith or was unfulfilled in some way. While Sahre broaches some existential angst and anxiety, that's not this book.

The first thing to hate about this memoir is the author's style. It's well-written and funny. I hated this because a part of me hoped if Sahre was this entertaining in writing, his design work would be awful. This, of course, counter to the fact that he likely designed the cover that piqued my interest. And that's the second thing to hate. His work is really good. It seems unfair.

When I opened the book and realized it was about design, I thought that at least it would be a quicker read than the imagined Sartre book. It was so immediately entertaining, I had to go back and check that I was indeed reading a memoir about work in graphic design. Sahre's intro about his early art and his family is as easy and fun to read as David Sedaris. I didn't expect it. An early drawing, prominently and embarrassingly displayed in his parents' house, gives the name to the prologue: "Demon Eating Human Flesh." This picture

was a favorite of Sahre's troubled brother who renamed himself "Angus" after Angus Young from AC/DC. Sahre describes his grandfather's choice of one day capping his Old Spice with the head of a GI Joe doll, and deciding to continue this until his death. What's wonderful about this object is that it is at once a bizarre juxtaposition, like something in a Devo video, and also a functional aspect of someone's toilet. Quotidian magic.

When Sahre's book finally becomes the book one expects, the one about design, the reader may feel cheated, but that's only in comparison to the rest, and then only slightly. The table of contents page for Part Three seems to be a clue. Echoing the cover, the contents are in a heap at the bottom of the page. He's sifted through piles of ideas, work, and events from his career and offering lessons and observations. The sections are shorter and more matter-of-fact. He discusses everything from teaching to business, including what he learns after a profanity-laden shouting match with Steely Dan.

Two-Dimensional Man also reminds me of Stephen King's craft book/memoir *On Writing*, one of the few books about the craft that non-writers seem to have read and enjoyed. Both books are worth multiple reads in the way they show how lives shape art and art shapes lives. Like other satisfying books about particular arts, Sahre's book has important lessons not only for others hoping to go into graphic design, but also anyone hoping to improve their work or hoping to find inspiration. Besides seriously analyzing fonts and their features, and having a deep understanding of basics like shape and color, Sahre put in a great deal of sweat equity painting signs and creating his own silk screen machines to create posters outside of his regular hours of design work at a firm. He sometimes slept on a cot in his office. There is some luck to his process and success, but a lot of labor went into creating that luck.

Tiina Pärtel says

Great easy, catchy read. Paul is explaining his journey into graphic design, how he's always kept experimenting and exploring. And his family life around it all.

Favorite thing throughout the book was how playful the layout and text was set and all the illustrations on the right places - so pleasing!

Nick says

Recommended if any or all of the following apply to you: you work as a designer; you are intimately familiar with Upstate New York geography; you went to art school and no one in your family understands what you do for work; you've obsessed over some cultural artifact; you were ever curious about designing a book cover; you were ever curious about dropping out of high school to work for the circus; you were ever curious about getting in a cussing match with Steely Dan; you were the "art nerd" on your hockey team and the "jock" at your art school; you grew up around people who banned certain kinds of music from their house; you've gotten attached to a dog; you had to live with the repercussions of releasing something you made in the wild.

Eric says

Would this appeal to anyone not a graphic designer and in awe of Paul Sahre's work (and work ethic)?

Frankly, I could give a s--t. I'm a graphic designer, I love his work, and I'm just impressed that he chose to write an honest, often very moving memoir of (mostly) words rather than publish the usual hagiographic eye candy monograph that so many other designers have opted for. It's the kind of monograph I'd have hoped to write if I actually was a famous designer and had the opportunity. Nice job, Paul.

Karol Borrero says

I loved this book. I like the way Paul Sahre is able to write a design memoir that is entertaining, interesting and quick. Of course, his layout and format is super convenient and allows you to read without feeling like it's dragging on. The way he separates chapters and sections is underwhelming. The information is just enough. He also makes you interact with the book, in particular when he is talking about record covers from childhood. I went on to googling each album cover and was not disappointed. I love Miller, this is one of my favourite typefaces that I use in some of my work. Felt very comfortable and at home. He is comical, flawed, and personable. A great story teller and an amazing designer.

Erik Carter says

YOU NEED THIS BOOK.
RECOMMENDED FOR GRAPHIC DESIGNERS, WEIRDOS, AMERICANS, HUMANS.

Kokie says

I enjoyed this fresh take on the memoir genre. I, as an English language person, was fascinated by the way Paul Sahre's brain works! The visuals and stories were definitely inspiring. For a 300+ page book, I found it a quick read and I'll be recommending this to friends.
