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Avengers Assemble, Vol. 1



Synopsis

Fan-favorite creators Kurt Busiek and George P  rez usher in a new era for Earth's Mightiest Heroes! Since the team's inception, the Avengers have always defended humanity against the forces of evil. When duty calls, these legendary champions answer, fighting valiantly until justice prevails. But what happens when their oldest foes strike directly at the team? On the eve of a huge Avengers gathering, an attack by the evil enchantress Morgan Le Fay sends these assembled heroes into a strange medieval reality where nothing is as it seems. Held under Le Fay's thrall, the Avengers have lost all memory of their true identities. Breaking free of Morgan's spell, Captain America and Hawkeye must fight to free their teammates before the Marvel Universe is altered forever! Plus: The Avengers take on the Squadron Supreme! AVENGERS MOVIE PREMIERES SUMMER 2012 COLLECTING: Avengers (1998) #1-11, Annual 1998; Iron Man (1998) #7; Captain America (1998) #8; Quicksilver #10

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Customer Reviews

"Avengers Assemble" is the first volume collecting the Avengers' most recent line of comics. This series re-started with a new number "one" issue immediately following the whole "Heroes Reborn/Heroes Return" thing from a few years back. The key to this run's success is twofold: Kurt Busiek and George Perez. Busiek is a comic writer with a historian's knowledge of the past, yet a contemporary tone accessible to all readers. George Perez is on the very short list of great Avengers artists...only John Buscema comes to mind, although Kirby, Byrne and others had some

stellar runs, and Neal Adams provided three classic issues. But no one can fill a page with a multitude of costumed characters like George. The tome opens with a three-issue Medieval adventure, the villainess being Morgan Le Fay. We get re-introduced to all the characters, setting up plot lines that extend through all eleven issues (plus an in-continuity Annual nicely drawn by Carlos Pacheco). We get an old-fashioned "kickball team" issue. Every so often, there's a story where it's time to pick a new team. Some people make it, some people don't, just like back in the day when you waited to get picked to be on somebody's kickball team. It always ends with a group shot, everyone looking either up into a non-existent camera or out to an adoring throng, usually with the words "Avengers Assemble" emblazoned across the bottom. The Squadron Supreme return for a few issues. The "soap opera" aspects are nicely incorporated into the heroic goings-on. Binary/Ms. Marvel's little "problem." Scarlet Witch's nascent powers AND the whole thing with the resurrected Wonder Man. Hawkeye still doesn't like being second fiddle. Vision's still floating around. Thor still talks funny. The New Warrior recruits, Justice and Firestar, serve their purpose, and by the end of the run, felt like part of the team, as opposed to a Rick-Jones-like add-on. There are a few surprise appearances that I won't spoil. The physical book itself is lovely (except the reproduction of the last issue in my copy was a bit fuzzy or out-of-focus). All the original covers, many variant covers, covers to the trade collections, posters and pin-ups are included. The first issue is reproduced at the end in its' original pencil form. There's a script too. This is another stellar example of the Marvel Renaissance. When they say they don't make them like they used to, this is exactly how they "used to make `em."

Right after the craziness of *Heroes Reborn* in '96 & '97, the Avengers experienced a new direction with *Heroes Return* in 1998. We see this new direction here. Highlights here for me... *Issue 1- And there came a day...! Earth's mightiest heroes- yes, all 1 million of them- unite here to face a common threat. How many Avengers can fit in one comic? Maybe we find out here! *Issue 4- The team is remade. A million Avengers is too many, so we pare it down to 7, plus 2 reserves. This is probably my favorite issue in this paperback. I love everything about it: writing, visuals & characters. *Issue 8- Battle in an airport. And introducing Triathlon & Silverclaw! Are they friends, enemies, or maybe new Avengers? New story lines begin here. First, the visuals- I consider myself a bit of a George Perez fan. His art style is somewhat cartoon-like yet hyper-detailed; some people really love it and some people not as much. As for me, I'm thinking I mainly like it here, even if I find myself preferring his *80's New Teen Titans* work, which is also crazy-detailed. It's this amazing attention to detail that separates Perez from most other pencillers. He displays this same great skill

with detail in his first Avengers run in the mid to late 70's, and I consider Perez to be among the greatest-ever artists to tackle Earth's Mightiest Heroes. As to the coloring- Tom Smith's work in this volume is among my favorite-ever coloring jobs since computers took on an ever-increasing role in production in the 90's. His colors are bright & clear, with a decent amount of contrast, special effects, textures, clouds in the sky, etc. I'm loving it! As to the story- Maybe this restart will appeal to longtime fans a bit more than it will to newer ones. Kurt Busiek's writing is entertaining to me, and this entire paperback is filled with references to Avengers history. If I maybe have a single complaint here, it would be that this '98 version of Avengers is a bit too fractured as a team, and this does get a bit irritating to read about. The saving grace, for me at least, is that Busiek actually has Captain America recognize this fact right after a great confrontation with Hawkeye in issue #6. At least the readers aren't the only ones who see the team is in disarray! Having said that, I think Busiek does an impressive job handling a crazy amount of distinct characters & personalities, and I really appreciate his efforts. Back in '98, this was my favorite of the Heroes Return titles. I still really like it today. Whether people appreciate it these days or not, I think it's easily a landmark in Avengers history. After years of convoluted stories and team changes the Avengers as a title had kind of lost its identity. Busiek & Perez did a decent job of whipping the team back into fighting shape.

This collection is great. I remember spending much of my teenage years reading this run on Avengers. Busiek and Perez were a winning team of creators. Busiek really strove to write a team that dealt with real-world concerns reminding us that super heroes are people too. I especially enjoyed the alcoholic sub-plots of Warbird, it was gritty and real. Perez is a masterful artist. He has some of the cleanest and richest pencils I've ever seen in comics. His characters are very distinct. Some artists tend to let characters look generic and indistinct, but not George Perez. Every character looks like a real person would. It's subtle, but very effective. This collection is great in that it includes extra issues of Iron Man, Captain America, and Quicksilver. All of which were part of a crossover storyline that was crucial to the alcoholism of Warbird. Also included is the Avengers/Squadron Supreme annual which ties up a story from a two issue storyline in the main Avengers series. If you're an Avengers fan, this is a great series to read. If you're looking for something kind of old-school compared to today's writing style, then this is definitely worth reading. Don't hesitate in picking this up. You won't regret it.

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