



Astonishing X-Men: Ultimate Collection, Volume 1

Joss Whedon, John Cassaday

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In 'Gifted' Cyclops and Emma Frost reform the X-Men with the purpose of 'astonishing' the world. As demand for the mutant cure escalates, the X-Men go head-to-head with the enigmatic Ord. In 'Dangerous' a tragic death reveals a powerful enemy living among them that they could never have suspected.

Astonishing X-Men: Ultimate Collection, Volume 1 Details

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From Reader Review Astonishing X-Men: Ultimate Collection, Volume 1 for online ebook

Alex says

This may come as a surprise, but Joss is good with snappy dialogue and ensemble casts.

Alan says

Joss Whedon and John Cassaday's critically acclaimed 'Astonishing X-Men' run was the spiritual successor to Grant Morrison's 'New X-Men', so (as Whedon alluded to in an email conversation reprinted at the back of this book) they were always going to have a mammoth task ahead of themselves. However, although this run makes several references to Morrison's stories, and uses mostly the same team from that period, Whedon and Cassady pretty much took this in their own direction. For one thing, this is far more accessible than Morrison's run, so it's pretty much the perfect jump-on point for X-Men newcomers (though I'd always recommend following this up from Morrison's run, if that's at all possible). Also, the whole tone of the book couldn't be more different than that of Morrison's. It's very much "grounded" compared to Morrison's far-out "space opera" drama, while a subtle humour is laced throughout (sometimes hilariously so). While Morrison's run will always be my favourite of the two (back in the days, you used to not be able to go a month without fans on the comic book message boards debating about which is best), re-reading this now, it's clear that Whedon & Cassaday's run is the consistently stronger of the two. Morrison's run was definitely quite a disjointed read, where a brilliant story arc might immediately precede a not so good one. And it also suffered from rotating artists of varying quality (from great to awful), which wouldn't have been so bad if they had changed per arc, but often changed per issue instead. Although it lead to severe delays, and much agitation from the fans at the time, Whedon's writing was always complimented with the brilliant pencils and inks of John Cassaday. Read it, if you haven't already done so. X-Men comics don't come much better than this.

Eric says

4 1/2 stars

Nicolo Yu says

I just got the second volume of the *Astonishing X-Men* hardcover series that collects Joss Whedon's and John

Cassaday's entire twenty-five issue run on the title that I thought I'd read again the first volume that I bought a few years back. Reading it again reminded how good Whedon was with the X-Men, abetted by Cassaday's crisp and clean line art, he channels much of the excitement from Chris Claremont's legendary turn with the characters.

The first twenty-four issues and the giant sized issue of *Astonishing X-Men* have Whedon's fingerprints all over it. Ever since his cult classic **Buffy the Vampire Slayer** movie he has been known for his strong female characters. Reading his Kitty Pryde, I can't help but imagine her as his Buffy analogue, especially her interaction with Emma Frost. Their relationship reminds me of Buffy and Cordelia from the first few seasons of the Buffy television series.

The first volume hardcover contains two arcs. The first, "Gifted", sets up the characters who will all have important parts to play for the entirety of Whedon's run. Whedon carries over Grant Morrison's core X-Men from *New X-Men*, returning them to their superhero roots as Morrison took them to a more paramilitary direction. There are two key additions as well; one is Kitty Pryde, who is both his Buffy and avatar. This is Whedon returning to the X-Men of his youth, as Shadowcat is returning to the X-Mansion.

He returns Colossus to the team. In a series of a few pages, Whedon and Cassaday draft an emotional sequence that brought the armored Russian back into the lives of Kitty and the X-Men readers. It brings me goose bumps every time I turn to that page where Kitty and Peter meet again for the first time since his death.

The second arc, "Dangerous" reminds the reader that the X-Men inherited their will to survive from their founder, Charles Xavier. The professor has a gritty turn as an action hero of sorts. This story also planted the seeds that lead to the estrangement of Cyclops and Xavier. In a moment of weakness, Xavier enslaves a sentient intelligence to serve a need the many, essentially bending his principles for his beloved X-Men. The threat they face here is not the only dangerous one, Xavier, despite his physical handicap could be what the title is referring to as well.

This is an excellent collection of the first twelve issues of *Astonishing X-Men*. It is done in an oversized trim, so to better enjoy Cassaday's fine work with the pencil and brush. Laura Martin's colors look better with the slick archival paper. This should be essential reading for every X-Men fan and this is one of the best formats to enjoy it in.

Marianna Neal says

So. Much. Fun!

I'm sorry, X-Men, I'm sorry I ignored you my entire life. You win. I am yours.

Roy says

Woah this had me from the get go. Great action packed adventure story telling with some awesome art with the fight scenes. Has everything you want from an xmen story. This is highly recommended and a must read!!!Read it from start to finish without breaking!!

Simone says

Se volete leggere la mia recensione, cliccate qua! [http://ascwblog.blogspot.com/2017/06/...](http://ascwblog.blogspot.com/2017/06/)

Raquel Evans says

Joss Whedon wrote an X-Men comic! Really that pretty much says it all--all the sad, funny, painful moments and good fight scenes are already summed up in that one sentence.

MerryMeerkat says

Astonishing X Men Volume 1
5 Stars, Buy it

Self Purchase, Comixology

SERIOUS SPOILERS

I haven't read all of the X-men or really any of the continuing, ongoing X-men series but I know enough about them to get by. I wasn't sure where to start so I'm just jumping in reading what I remember my ex read. After reading about 4-5 issues of this, I realized I have read this before, but it was pre internet databases of book tracking. So I will shelve this as a re-read review. But even as a re-read this is one amazing ass series. The lines are freaking awesome. This was blow me away it was so good. Highly recommend.

I love the beginning, Kitty has some great lines, like "Sorry about the timing, did I miss the sorting hat?" Wolverine also has a great line when he makes his appearance in the first issue. OOOHH I've forgotten how much I like Hank McCoy aka the Best. Emma frost is a Whore but whatever, she looks good with the ice lipstick. And again, Kitty has some kick ass lines. LOVE Lockheed. SO it's announced that there is a cure for the mutant gene. The Beast seems to be considering taking the serum to the dismay of all the other mutants. It turns out that the scientist got some help on discovering the cure, and it appears to be alien in nature. In issue 4, a evil guy who I don't know breaks into the academy while the Xmen are out on a mission. Kitty disappears while on their mission. Other stuff happens but I don't want to ruin anything. Issue 5 Kitty has to deal with one major as surprise and Issue six semi wraps things up.

Sans says

I think the fact that I picked this up and put it down so many times in the last week and a half says a lot about my opinion of this book. There were some great moments, sure. Whedon's zingers and one liners are sprinkled throughout and they make for some great I-laughed-out-loud panels (my favourite being Logan's internal monologue consisting of "I really like beer"). But...there just isn't enough here to really get me excited.

See, part of my problem is that I abandoned comics back in the 90's, after the ridiculousness of the first Age of Apocalypse event. That summer stripped me of my deep-seated love of the X-Men. It broke the ties I had to graphic novels. It wasn't until a few months ago, literally twenty goddamn years, that I rediscovered my love for comics. Instead of Storm and Wolverine, I love Nightwing and Midnightrer now, discovering everything I missed in DC and in Marvel's Avengers related titles. I'm even trying to read X-Men from the very beginning to see if I can rediscover the magic that had me spending my entire after school job paycheck every week. Trouble is, I still carry the mistrust of X-titles AoA left me with. I find myself holding back on these stories because I figure hey, I've already been burned once, why get too invested?

The short of it is, for me at least, this *is* a fun book, it *does* have some good stories. They just aren't great.

Jessica says

I remember picking up the first issue of this and putting it down again in disgust after seeing that Cyclops, who I already thought was a jackass, was now dating Emma Frost. (Who is even worse.) Reading the whole story arc, however, I quite quite liked it. I can see why Scott and Emma would get together (they are both hot and the only ones who reliably act like adults), I liked what was happening with the school. I feel bad for Beast, and was actually interested in Kitty Pryde for the first time in ever. I feel like the end of this collection was a big tease for something that involves people I should know but don't, due to my only sporadic comic reading. Hence the only 4 stars. The overall story, however, was pretty tight and extremely interesting.

Raj says

I must confess that I'm not hugely familiar with the X-Men. I used to watch the cartoon when I was young, and watched the first couple of films. This first half of Joss Whedon's run with the X-Men covers two story arcs. In the first, the idea of a cure for mutation is introduced, along with an alien who has a vendetta against the X-Men. In the second, a damaged sentinel attacks the X-Men mansion under the orders of an unseen mastermind and there is danger from within.

The volume focusses on a core group, missing Professor X, who reform the X-Men as a superhero team to be visible and a beacon for the good that mutants can do in the world. Scott Summers and Emma Frost are co-leaders, with Hank McCoy, Kitty Pride and Logan filling out the ranks (superhero codenames are hardly ever used). It's a fun book, filled with Whedon's trademark humour (a particular favourite is a fight where Kitty and (view spoiler) have thought bubbles that are mostly angst, and then we cut to Logan who's just thinking how much he loves beer). It's a great way to cut the tension and stop it feeling too "woe is me".

It's also a decent introduction to the characters, even for someone like me, whose knowledge of the X-Men and the universe is limited. We get up to speed with who everyone is, what the setup is and what the factions are quickly, and without infodumping - as you would expect from a writer of Whedon's calibre.

The art is pretty good, although I wouldn't call it special. There are some good splash pages and it fits the superhero style well. The one disconcerting thing for me in terms of the art is that Nick Fury is white. As far as I'm concerned Nick Fury is, and has always been, black (and looked like Samuel L. Jackson). This series predates the MCU by a good four years, but it's still disconcerting for someone who's main entry to Marvel has been the MCU.

So a good entry to the X-Men universe, with good characterisation of the cast and a fun book to read, enhanced by Joss Whedon's ear for dialogue.

Robert says

Now that was a headrush!!

guanaeps says

Joss Whedon hits the ground running and doesn't stop. Some of these pages by John Cassaday deserve to be in museums, on display to illuminate the incredible art form of comic books. Pages explode with momentum, Laura Martin also deserving a mention, as her colors complete this imagery.

The idea of the "Mutant Superhero" team returns, as this seems to be one of the clearest ways to distance Whedon's run from the juggernaut that was Morrison's New X-men. Cassaday's clean, sleek penciling also a stark contrast from the motley crew of artists that worked with Grant Morrison. Indeed, even the continuity of having one artist gives this run a different feel. As mentioned earlier, while Morrison's run really went through its paces, Whedon keeps a tight focus with two intense six-issue arcs contained in this volume. No need to mention plot points, as its best experienced within the pages.

Whedon proves, once again, his talent for writing and delivers big, satisfying X-men storytelling. John Cassaday and Laura Martin create some of the most wondrously real depictions of the X-men I've ever seen. And things are stewing underneath. Onward to volume two!

Chelsea says

I started this review laughing because I finished this book and forgot I'd finished it 10 minutes later. Nothing about this was memorable for me.

I tried letting my feelings on Whedon's take on the MCU films aside to read this. He's definitely not my favorite person when it comes to Marvel products but I like Firefly and Serenity and I like X-men, so I have this a shot. Strangely enough, the problems I have with his shows weren't present here. The problems I have with his films were, however.

One liners.

He loves his one liners. And a lot of them feel like he was just patting himself on the back as he wrote them. Why? Because they came from characters that wouldn't say things like this. Emma Frost is a complex character but her comments are often biting or slightly cold, not quippy. It made her dialogue seem awkward. Even her making blatantly sexual comments about Scott seemed more in character and those were kind of awkwardly placed, too.

Kitty was... interesting. I appreciated the reference to when she first met Emma and she had a few bad ass

moments. She didn't stand out the same way she usually does to me and I'm not sure why that is?

I feel like I should give props for an X-men book that didn't focus on Wolverine over everyone else. That's a rarity.

That being said, I must admit that this is certainly not my favorite line up. I'm not sure why but there are no characters of color here. None of my favorite X-Men, aside from Emma, are here. Even Charles is gone for most of this. My excitement was at a 5/10 to begin with.

Anyway, the first plot contains is kind of the plot to the Last Stand. There's a potential cure for mutants and for two minutes, we get the debate over whether it's okay to choose to be cured Scott says it's not because it's they'd be naive to think the government wouldn't force it on proud mutants. Wolverine thinks it'll increase self-hatred. Beast would like the option. It's X-Men Last Stand. But somehow, more bland?

Anyway, of course there's something that kind of kills the choice. The doctor creating the cure is experimenting in dead mutants. So the X-men go to stop them.

The villains here are not memorable. The first one is a dude, I forgot his name, who's trying to cure the mutants for reasons. The second is the fucking Danger Room. Because Whedon thought that would be fun. Then it's a big ass, hybrid Sentinel. No real complexity here.

It's bland. There's nothing exciting about this. I don't think the next volume will excite me more unless they change the line up.
