

You're 30, Charlie Brown. Good Grief!



Charles Schulz



Thirty years ago United Feature Syndicate began distributing a new comic strip about a pint-sized sad sack with a round head and a slightly precocious dog. The original client list was just seven news-

papers — the Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, Minneapolis Star-Tribune, Allentown Call-Chronicle, Bethlehem Globe-Times, Denver Post and Seattle Times. The

strip caught on. Its popularity grew and grew and it still hasn't stopped. Today it is read by more than 60 million people every day in 1,800 newspapers worldwide. Good grief, Charlie Brown! "Peanuts" is 30 on October 2, 1980.

The universal appeal of "Peanuts" accounts for its spectacular success. The strip

is translated into 22 foreign languages for newspapers in

64 foreign countries. None of the humor or warmth is lost in the translation. Somehow, the

"Peanuts" gang — Charlie Brown, Linus, Lucy, Schroeder, Woodstock, Peppermint Patty, and, of course Snoopy

— touch all of us. That is the unique genius of their creator, Charles "Sparky" Schulz.

"I have frequently referred to the comic strip as a sidewalk medium," says Schulz. "By

this, I mean that the comic strip appeals to just plain people. However, if handled in the proper manner, the comic strip can burst these traditional bounds and appeal also to people who are better edu-

cated and are fortunate enough to have a more cultured background. To do this, the cartoonist himself need not be this educated or cultured, but he must possess that rarest of all commodi-

ties, which is plain common sense."

As the popularity of the "Peanuts" strip has grown, so

has its success in other media. The record now seems nothing short of remarkable. The 20th animated network TV special,

"Life is a Circus, Charlie Brown," will be aired in October. There have been four feature-length movies, a long-

running stage musical, "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," and literally hun-

dreds of books. Additionally, the "Peanuts" characters have appeared on merchandise ranging from greeting cards to sportswear to loaves of bread. Schulz personally approves every item before the licensee begins marketing the product.

And, just like when he started out 30 years ago, Schulz writes and draws every strip himself. Many syndicated cartoonists employ gag writers or artist assistants. Schulz does not.

"My main objective has always been to try to draw a good strip every day," he says. "Every emotion that you have, plus every experience and bit of knowledge which you have acquired, go into the creation of a comic strip."

Schulz, who is 57, lives in Santa Rosa, California, with his wife, Jean. His five children range in age from 19 to 27. He was born and raised in Minneapolis, and an early incarnation of "Peanuts," called "Li'l Folks," appeared weekly in the St. Paul Pioneer Press in 1947. "I grew up with only one real career desire in life," he says, "and that was to some day draw my own comic strip."

Does he have any advice for the legion of young cartoonists who would follow in his footsteps? "There is no definite series of steps which you have to take," he believes. "You certainly do not have to have an 'in' someplace. All you have to do is be able to draw a comic strip which is better than any other now running."

Gypsy

Continued from page 1

think "Gypsy" adapts itself well to arena so that presents a challenge to me. In 50% of the show they are either playing on stage or back stage. When you do a show like "Gypsy" which is a multi-set show working in an arena is a way of saving money.

A: Are you spending a lot of money for this show?

B: The royalty for musicals is 500% more than for a straight show. So you have that problem; you have to hire

people with specialties that we don't have on campus. At times we do; at times we don't. We hired a choreographer; we hired a pianist. But it's not big sums of money. It's going to

cost these people more of their time and more of their gas money and their energies to do this than they're getting from it. We are renting specialty costumes, the stripper costumes, the

cow costume. We just don't have the man-power to build costumes, so consequently the costumes have to be rented. Because of the added popularity of musicals, you get a bigger gate. That balances out the higher expense. So

we're not spending a great deal.

A: What about the seating: This show is going to be in the Belk Center. Are there as many seats as in the auditorium?

B: There are approximately two hundred seats in the LA auditorium, and we can fit that many into the Belk Center.

A: How many nights is this show running?

B: It's running four nights, starting Friday, October 24th and ending Monday the 27th.

Brad and I also talked about shows coming up. He said that if people sat back and analyzed the season, they would find that first there is a musical,

then something from the classical repertoire, an experimental show ("Buried Child" by Sam Sheppard), and then another audience-oriented show, "A Thousand Clows". Dr. Arthur

McDonald, directing that show, will also direct "She Stoops To Conquer," being presented in November.

The theater department encourages participation in the productions, whether you intend to major in theater or

not. They are always looking for help with set construction. If you have never had experience in theater, St. Andrews is a good place to get it, be it acting or technical work. There are also a variety of theater courses offered to students, from technical theater to theater history. If you would like more information about the theater department or the Highland Players, drop by Brad's office in the mornings.

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