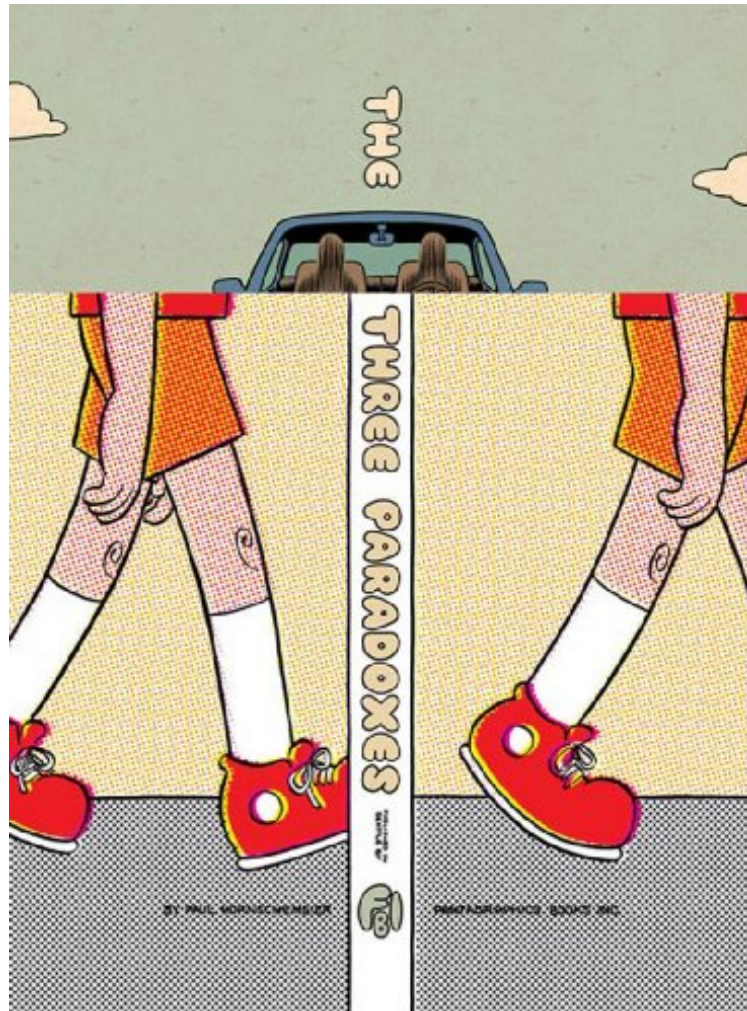


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Three Paradoxes

Paul Hornschemeier

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Paul Hornschemeier : Three Paradoxes before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Three Paradoxes:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Makes You Think, But It Could Have Been Much MoreBy D. ScottWhat the author is doing in The Three Paradoxes is interesting. His narrative freely flows from a comic he is working on ("Paul and the Magic Pencil") and its distinctive style to his last night of a visit at home with his parents and a talk with his father, with its own distinctive style. It then goes to flashbacks from childhood ("Summer School") with its own style. The author's talk with his father then triggers another childhood memory ("The Scar") and finally delves into a discussion of Zeno's Paradoxes ("Zeno and His Friends"). The story ends with the author considering his potential future with a fan he is meeting, perhaps romantically, in a few days.It is fascinating to see the author's creative process as he comes up with new ideas for stories based on what he sees around him, and then to apply the

discussion of the paradoxes to the structure of the story itself, which mirrors Zeno and his belief in the unchanging. The story, caught at the end in a single point in time, never really concludes, as Zeno's arrow never really reaches its target. The stories represent the author's own past, present, and (potential) future as moments in time, flowing from one to the next yet each a snapshot unto itself. That said, the book *The Three Paradoxes* comes across more as a philosophical or as an art school exercise than as a subject for a full graphic novel. As I was reading it occurred to me that Zeno's paradoxes might make a passable theme for a book in order to tie together several unfinished story fragments into one cohesive whole. Although the book makes you think a bit about the creative way it is structured, on the whole it feels a bit cobbled together. I would like to see the author continue with a fully realized story based on his time at home and back in the city. I understand that the story ending where it does serves to illustrate Zeno's paradoxes, but the book is slight and could go much further. Still, the book is very creative and makes you think, and that is more than many books can say. I am rounding up from 3 1/2 stars to 4 because *The Three Paradoxes* is at least trying to do something different. For another and more fully realized example of this type of free-flowing graphic novel using different styles to great effect you may want to try reading the terrific *Asterios Polyp* by David Mazzucchelli.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Blane Kilegood 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Tender, moving tale By Matthew Snope Made me cry (for personal reasons). This is basically a slice o' life narrative about a man's relationship with his father, interspersed with back stories about other characters and a story about Zeno from ancient Greece. I found the main story (the father-son relationship) kind of understimulating, but the backstory "The Scar" was very moving, as was the backstory of the man's childhood. Well-drawn and well-scripted, with an interesting structure that illuminates how the human mind wanders around making associations, remembering the past, and anticipating the future. Worthwhile reading overall.

An intricate, complex autobiographical comic blending multiple threads of reality and fantasy, each drawn in a different style, coming together as one story questioning change, progress, and worth in the author's life. *The Three Paradoxes* is an intricate and complex autobiographical comic by one of the most talented and innovative young cartoonists today. The story begins with a story inside the story: the cartoon character Paul Hornschemeier is trying to finish a story called "Paul and the Magic Pencil." Paul has been granted a magical implement, a pencil, and is trying to figure out what exactly it can do. He isn't coming up with much, but then we zoom out of this story to the creator, Paul, whose father is about to go on a walk to turn off the lights in his law office in the center of the small town. Abandoning the comic strip temporarily, Paul leaves with his camera, in order to fulfill a promise to his girlfriend that he would take pictures of the places that affected him as a child. Each "chapter" of the story is drawn in a completely different style, with strikingly unique production and color themes, and yet, somehow, despite (or perhaps because of) this non-linear progression, it all comes together as one story: a story questioning change, progress, and worth within the author's life.

From Publishers Weekly In Hornschemeier's third major work, the clearly inked panels of a framing story show the main character, a comics artist named Paul, on a walk with his father. The touchingly honest conversation between father and son is intercut with stories that include childhood memories and Zeno's presentation of his three paradoxes to a group of Athenian philosophers. The book's funniest moment comes when Socrates, upon hearing the paradoxes, interrupts to say, Man, no offense, but are you guys retarded? and then goes on to berate Zeno for his insistence on the impossibility of change. A young luminary of experimental comics, Hornschemeier offers a brilliant narrative demonstration of the paradoxes in this graphic personal essay, in which the protagonist simultaneously connects with his past, mulls over his present and anticipates the future. The book is formally brilliant as well, with a dust jacket that peels back to reveal preparatory sketches on the hard cover of the book and stories that are each told in a different, fully realized style. Childhood memories are shown in newsprint comic color-dot style while Zeno's story is presented as pages torn from old comics, their frayed edges laid out on the white pages of the book. (July) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist In this structurally complicated memoir, Hornschemeier portrays the last evening of a visit with his parents in Ohio that, casual in itself, carries the tensions of his ambitions and of meeting, when he returns to Chicago, longtime correspondent-fan Juliane. "Paul and the Magic Pencil," a comics story resembling Jay Ward's Peabody and Sherman cartoons, which Hornschemeier is drafting seemingly as an exercise in self-encouragement, frames the main action, a nighttime walk with his father. The walk in turn encompasses Paul's mental flashbacks to "Paul and the Magic Pencil," a confrontation with a bigger boy when he was about sixth-grade age, the story behind the scar on the neck of a convenience-store clerk, and a comic-book account of the paradoxes of Zeno. The visit is the most realistically rendered narrative element, and each flashback is differently styled in figuration and coloration. If there is an educible point to this calm slice of common life, it is that memory, like arithmetical logic in Zeno's paradoxes, dissolves time. The artist, however, proves more impressive than the philosopher. Olson, Ray Moments like those have earned Hornschemeier his legion of champions, and that make us want him to reach a little more. - The A.V. Club To breathe even a lungful of fresh air into the autobiographical comics genre is a challenge, but Hornschemeier succeeds. Although the

mysterious pull of a place and its stories is never fully explained, the book is made stronger and more memorable by his elliptical approach. - The Guardian
It is an intelligent example of how much the graphic novel form can achieve with such economy: a picture is indeed worth a thousand words. - Neel Mukherjee, The Times
Paul Hornschemeier uses the medium of cartooning here as the message he is sending, as each new chapter in the book references different cartoon styles and axioms.... I loved it. - Alex Jarvis, Spandexless