

PRESS RELEASE
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THE LEGEND OF LUTHER ARKWRIGHT – a milestone in British comics history

To be published by Jonathan Cape in the U.K. and Dark Horse Books in the U.S.A., author/artist Bryan Talbot has completed the script for the third *Luther Arkwright* book and started drawing it. It is scheduled to be published in 2022.

The first, *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright*, is considered by many to be the first British graphic novel. First serialised in the adult SF comic *Near Myths* from October 1978, the same month that *A Contract with God* by Will Eisner, considered to be the first U.S. graphic novel, was published. The first collected volume appeared in 1982.

Praised by many writers and artists, such as Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman, Jean Giroud (Moebius), Michael Moorcock and Iain Banks, the ground-breaking, experimental adult SF story was a seminal work and inspired and influenced many comic creators including Garth Ennis, Rick Veitch and Warren Ellis, winning four *Eagle Awards* and the Society of Strip Illustration Award for Best Graphic Novel. The subject of role-playing games and a 3-hour audio drama in 2004, featuring David Tennant as Luther Arkwright, it is frequently cited as an all-time favourite graphic novel by its readers. The second Arkwright graphic novel, *Heart Of Empire*, was published in 2001. Both books have been in continual print since they were first published.

Like the first two books, *The Legend of Luther Arkwright*, to be released nearly 20 years after the last one, contains a strong anti-fascist theme. The first book, appearing against the background of the rise of the British extreme right, with the coming-to-power of the Thatcher Government and the National Front marching on the streets, was a forerunner of *V for Vendetta*. At the time, Talbot was doing voluntary illustrative work for his local *Anti-Nazi League* Group. Now, with the extreme right on the rise again, all over the world, the timing of the book is especially pertinent.

Heart of Empire was not just a repetition of *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright*, but a different kind of adventure, told in a different style. *The Legend of Luther Arkwright*, another stand-alone story, continues this tradition, while still maintaining continuity with the Arkwright mythos.

The Legend of Luther Arkwright, a 220-page hardback black and white graphic novel, is set 51 years after the events of *Heart of Empire* and takes place on several very different parallel worlds, though Arkwright, being a *homo novus*, looks not a day older.

Incidentally, the previous two books, currently available as a lavish 550-page hardback *Arkwright Integral* version from Dark Horse, will be republished next year in a trade paperback omnibus edition, minus all the extra material contained in the Integral.