



Madame Xanadu, Volume 4: Extra Sensory

Matt Wagner (Writer) , Amy Reeder (Illustrator) , Marley Zarcone (Illustrator) , Marian Churchland (Illustrator) , Chrissie Zullo (Artist) , Mark Buckingham (Cover Artist)

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Writer Matt Wagner redefines the way we think about the five senses in *Madame Xanadu*, Volume 4: *Extra Sensory*; a 6-issue storyline featuring different interior art each issue by some of today's most talented female comics artists and covers by Mark Buckingham (*Fables*).

This fourth, and final, volume finds *Madame Xanadu* in 1963 New York City, where she encounters a young woman from Harlem who sees horrific metamorphoses right in front of her eyes. It all leads to a mind-reading ad executive, a woman who gets visions of her food's demise and a young boy whose powerful sense of smell may hold the key to unlocking a mystery.

Collecting: *Madame Xanadu* 24-29

Madame Xanadu, Volume 4: Extra Sensory Details

Date : Published August 16th 2011 by Vertigo

ISBN : 9781401231590

Author : Matt Wagner (Writer) , Amy Reeder (Illustrator) , Marley Zarcone (Illustrator) , Marian Churchland (Illustrator) , Chrissie Zullo (Artist) , Mark Buckingham (Cover Artist)

Format : Paperback 144 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Fantasy, Fiction



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Download and Read Free Online Madame Xanadu, Volume 4: Extra Sensory Matt Wagner (Writer) , Amy Reeder (Illustrator) , Marley Zarcone (Illustrator) , Marian Churchland (Illustrator) , Chrissie Zullo (Artist) , Mark Buckingham (Cover Artist)

From Reader Review Madame Xanadu, Volume 4: Extra Sensory for online ebook

Paul says

I had never really known or even been interested in the character of Madame Xanadu, to me she was mostly a go-to character other superheroes consulted once in a while, I had pretty much relegated her to the level of the Phantom Stranger... maybe even lesser than.

This all changed with the release of this book. I've been a long-time fan of Wagner from his Grendel and Mage books so I thought I'd give this a shot.

So basically, this up-to-now almost completely unknown character is given a past. And what a past it is! We witness her beginning and ascension from the dark ages to (eventually) today. I don't know if any of what was written in this book is actually considered "cannon", but I enjoyed the ride.

+ The art is just phenomenal!

Alan says

This is the final volume in the current Madame Xanadu series, and it remains some of Matt Wagner's best writing since his days on his creator owned Grendel and the first volume of Mage. The Madame is a supporting character in these tales, each one centering on a sense (taste, touch, etc.) Each story is a done in one tale and the artists change with each installment. Satisfying, and a nice way for the series to end. Open ended enough so that Wagner could return to it if sales or other factors provide him the opportunity.

Nancy Meservier says

Extra Sensory is the fourth and final volume in the Madame Xanadu series. Unlike previous volumes, which told of Madame Xanadu's history, Extra Sensory collects six short stories. Each tale focuses around a single sense. Not all stories are created equal, making this the most uneven of the Madame Xanadu graphic novels, but the collection as a whole is solid, capturing different elements of the sixties, and giving us a glimpse of things to come.

“None so Blind” (art- Marley Zarcone)- The first story focuses on a young woman named Rosalyn who develops a disturbing ability related to sight, then turns to Madame Xanadu for help. “None so Blind” does a good job of telling a creepy supernatural tale, while lightly touching on the more realistic issue of how living life as a black woman in the 1960s was not very easy, with very few career opportunities. I found the art to be attractive, and Rosalyn to be a likable protagonist. Four and a half stars.

“Dirty Little Mouth” (art- Laurenn McCubbin)- During the second story, we meet Spenser Wilkins, an up and coming young businessman in the ad industry, who doesn't know what to do when the people around him begin to tell him to do awful things. At least, that's what he's hearing. I wasn't really fond of the artwork on in “Dirty Little Mouth,” finding it too bulky. Still, this Mad Men-esque story is quite enjoyable to read and I really liked the ending. Four stars.

“Lingering Scent” (art- Chrissie Zullo). Perhaps the saddest of the stories in this collection, “Lingering Scent” tells the story of a young homeless boy who can't find a way to fit in, due to the fact that the people around him can't stand how he smells. What I enjoyed the most about the story, was the artwork, which reminded me of a picture book. This was really appropriate given the fantastical dreams little Sammy has where he becomes a hero, haunted by a witch. This is my favorite story of the bunch. The bittersweet ending with Sammy and Madame Xanadu was really heart wrenching. Five stars.

“Don't Touch Me There” (art- Celia Calle)- It's interesting that my favorite story in the collection would be followed by my least favorite. “Don't Touch Me There” focuses around Blue, an unemotional fashion model with strange abilities related to her touch. I don't necessarily think that this was a poorly done story, just not a good one for me. I had no interest in Blue as a character, and the fashion inspired artwork, filled with unique angles, didn't mesh well with me. One enjoyable aspect of this story is getting to figure out what real life people from the 1960s inspired the fictional ones (Roosevelt Coats is clearly supposed to be Truman Capote). Three stars

“A Taste of Things to Come” (art- Marian Churchland)- I figured it wouldn't be long until hippies were brought into this sixties themed collection. In this story, Carly, experiments with acid. Afterwards, whenever she eats something, she feels it's entire history with overwhelming intensity. One thing I liked about this story was how well the artwork fit the mood, whether it be illustrating Carly's crazy acid trip, or the barrage of sensation she feels with every following taste. This was an enjoyable addition to the collection. Four stars.

“The Advent of Tomorrow” (art- Amy Reeder Hadley)- In the final story of the collection, series artist Amy Reeder Hadley returns for a tale that's ties up some loose threads (want to know what happened to Betty from Broken House of Cards?) as well as hints to come. I'm a little disappointed that series has to wrap up here, but this is a rather appropriate place to end it. I enjoyed the appearance from past characters (especially one in particular) and found the art to be fantastic as always. Four and a half stars.

One might expect a series to end on epic battles and big emotional highs as Broken House of Cards did, but Extra Sensory's quiet finale is fitting, if somewhat unconventional. After all Madame Xanadu's greatest work is the help that she provides to others, so it makes sense that the series would end on a volume showing her interacting with various clients. I'm sad to see the series end, but I'm happy it at least ended on an enjoyable note.

Daryl says

The final volume of Matt Wagner's Vertigo Madame Xanadu series is a collection of six inter-related short stories, each with art by a different (female) artist. The stories mostly have a touch of the horrific, some are sad and some are creepy. The art is mostly okay, although Chrissie Zullo's children's book style contrasts ironically with the essence of the story she illustrates, and Celia Calle's angular and exaggerated style really doesn't fit with the rest of the book at all. Amy Reeder's return to the art chores for the final story is a welcome relief. Unlike the previous volumes, Madame Xanadu is a minor presence in these stories (except perhaps the last one), appearing generally at the end to provide an answer, solve a mystery, or wrap things up. Overall a decent series and one that may have ended too soon.

William Thomas says

The final volume of Wagner's Madame Xanadu changes its style once again, and does something incredible while using Nemue very sparingly. Volume 4 of Madame Xanadu has the gorgeous feel of a creator-owned book and this makes all the difference here.

The focus of this collection isn't necessarily Wagner's stories, but the collection of artists that were assembled to collaborate. An all female lineup of artists is a step in the right direction for DC, who, like Marvel, isn't the most friendly company when it comes to using female artists or writers. All 6 of these issues have female artists bringing Wagner's scripts to life. Each issue is a self-contained story, revolving around one specific character which has little to do with Madame Xanadu until the resolution. This didn't bother me in the slightest. It was fantastic to see how each artist took on the art chores. Marley Zarcone, Laurenn McCubbin, Chrissie Zullo, Celia Calle, Marian Churchland and Amy Reeder bring such gorgeous visuals to this book that the stories seemed secondary.

A gorgeous end to a great series.

Writing: B

Art: A

Derek says

I have mixed feelings about this volume. The ending is rather strong, but the first independent story-line issues weren't as strong. They took away the cohesiveness I'd come to expect of Madame Xanadu. What's cool though is the cliffhanger ending of this volume and the cameo appearance of 'The Stranger.' His appearance in the first volume was a delight and I didn't anticipate missing him so much until I saw him appear again. His appearance after so long heralds some really evil shit afoot. Can't wait to read the next volumes and see what's cooking.

Calista says

I enjoyed this book immensely. It is wonderful to have a series about tarot and other phenomena that I am interested in. It was really well done. There are 6 stories in this volume, each with a different cast except madame Xanadu. Each chapter explores someone whose perception opens. There is hearing, seeing, tasting, touching, smelling, and the 3rd eye or precognition. In each case the person's life gets weird and Madame Xanadu helps them deal with their new gift.

Fantastic series. It is set in the 60s and the art gives it that 60s feel. I am going to have to see if I can find the first 3 volumes of this as my library only has this one. Anyone into the extraordinary - this is a great story for you.

It simply makes me happy.

Dan says

Quite a nice collection of vignettes spanning the decade of 1960 - 1969; the parade of prominent female illustrators is excellent, although the series' regular artist, Amy Reeder, remains my favorite. So this was issues 24 - 29, and I'm a bit disappointed that the series is concluded here. What a shame...

Batmark says

The first four chapters in this book are standalone stories, in which someone needs Madame Xanadu's help. The artists for each of these stories is different, and some are better than others--but none hold a candle to Amy Reeder, who illustrates the second half of the final story.

Perhaps hindsight is 20/20, but knowing that this was the final volume, it felt to me as if the series were purposefully winding down. The standalone stories were rather uninspired, and seemed like filler issues while Matt Wagner waited for Amy Reeder to be available again so he could resume the actual story. I liked the final, two-part story in this volume, because it introduced the concept of a protégée for Madame Xanadu, and *also* because it answered the biggest question I had at the end of volume 3: namely, what happened to poor Betty?

I would've loved to read a fifth volume in which Madame Xanadu taught Carly Blackwood, her protégée, the secrets of the mystic arts. Alas, it was not to be.

Wing Kee says

Ending on a strong arc.

World: The art for this arc was the best of the series. The different artists, the styles made for a fun and enjoyable book. The world building was a bit smaller in scope but that is not a bad thing, it was much more character driven and thus much more relatable to the reader.

Story: Many little small tales with Xanadu being somewhat of a side character and treated and handled well. Yes it did a bit like magic case of the month but it was done well the thing about these tales is that they have art and emotion which was not always the case for the series. The series of course ended too soon but I did rather like the ending and yes I wanted a bit more.

Characters: This was a strong character arc. Not for Xanadu but for the people she meets. For the most part the test of the cast has been fairly meh but for the stories here they had heart and relatable situations making it good. I liked it.

A strong arc that makes you wish there was more than 29 issues.

Onward to the next book!

Rochelle says

I adored the theme of the 'senses' in this volume and the stories were absolutely incredible from start to finish, some were even a little heartbreaking. Each sense story had different artists and they were all fabulous in their own way. The ending includes a return to the main story of Xanadu and reappearance of the Phantom Stranger, I'm only disappointed that this is the last volume in the series! It's so different and interesting with great female characters. I would love to see more of Madame Xanadu.

JonCPup says

A wonderful ending to an awesome series! Madame Xanadu has always been the enigmatic guide in the DCU. The stories in this book showcase her role in the world. The final story ends just before the modern heroes begin making their appearance bringing her story to when we first met her so long ago.

Deborah says

I like the concept of little vignettes each drawn by female artists about Madame Xanadu helping (or trying to help people). But unlike House of Mystery, there was no thread that wove them together, and some of the art was so stylized I couldn't focus on the fact that it was a Madame Xanadu story. All was forgiven in the end, drawn by the original and my favorite artist, Amy Reeder Hadley, which tied it together and had the Phantom Stranger and an open ending.

Fizzgig76 says

Reprints Madame Xanadu #24-29 (August 2010-January 2011). Madame Xanadu has existed for centuries...from her time in pre-history to modern day, Madame Xanadu has seen and experienced things that most have only dreamed about. As Madame Xanadu seeks to help those who have experienced hardship due to mystic attacks, she finds herself continuously brought into the strange and occult...and now Madame Xanadu might have found an assistant to help her.

Written by Matt Wagner, Madame Xanadu Volume 4: Extra-Sensory was released by DC Comics under their Vertigo imprint. Following Madame Xanadu Volume 3: Broken House of Cards, Madame Xanadu 4: Extra-Sensory is the final volume in the series.

Madame Xanadu is a fun ride. I like the character, and I like Matt Wagner's writing. He takes the character and puts her in a place where she is almost an observer in the lives of the characters in the story she's watching. It is very similar to old House of Mystery and House of Secret issues or even reminiscent of The Sandman. Unfortunately for Madame Xanadu, she didn't have as long of a run.

This volume takes the story and looks at the different senses. Each story is based upon a sense and the series is finished with a wrap-up issue. The stories are interesting and generally self-contained (minus the overreaching theme), and it does feel like an ending for the series. It also wraps up a small storyline which began in Madame Xanadu 3: Broken House of Cards by revealing what happened to Betty Reynolds after her

possession.

What really stands out in this volume of Madame Xanadu is the art. The book is loaded with fun art and with different artists on each issue, you get to see a ton of different styles that generally wouldn't make it into a mainstream comic. In particular, I like Chrisie Zullo's issue (Madame Xanadu #26) which deals with sense of smell.

Madame Xanadu was always a second tier book in DC's Vertigo line which is generally treated as a second tier line...this always spells trouble for a series in that situation. Despite great writing and good art, it felt like Madame Xanadu just limped around with little help from DC in promoting it. The character was part of the DC/Vertigo mesh which ultimately led to the cancellation despite modest sales. It is sad to see this series go since it feels more like DC's '90s Vertigo series like The Sandman. With Madame Xanadu coming back in full force in the New 52, I'd love to see the character get another chance (or actually recon this series into the proper DC Universe through her recent

Joseph says

Probably the best of the four volumes of Madame Xanadu, so of course, it's also the last. Oddly, these last issues read almost like the beginning of a series, rather than the ending, demonstrating her powers, introducing a sidekick, and giving the series a little more structure than it had in its previous issues.

The framing device of Xanadu solving problems related to the five senses (and, I suppose, her own senses beyond those five) is clever without being gimmicky and the stories are genuinely disturbing. The art, especially, is gorgeous, matching each story perfectly.

In a perfect world, I think I might have wanted to see a little more closure. The Phantom Stranger's final appearance didn't do much to resolve their issues. We never found out what happened to the rest of the items her sister was trying to collect. Were we ever supposed to know what was going to happen with the green genii's lamp from the first volume? Maybe, though, it's better to have a little ambiguity.
