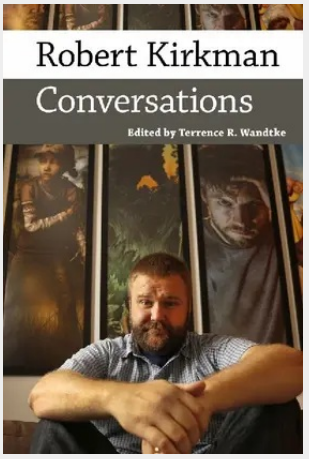
University Press of Mississippi

Robert Kirkman

Conversations



Robert Kirkman (b. 1978) is probably best known as the creator of The Walking Dead. The comic book and its television adaptation have reinvented the zombie horror story, transforming it from cult curiosity and parody to mainstream popularity and critical acclaim. In some ways, this would be enough to justify this career-spanning collection of interviews. Yet Kirkman represents much more than this single comic book title. Kirkman's story is a fanboy's dream that begins with him financing his irreverent, independent comic book Battle Pope with credit cards. After writing major titles with Marvel comics (Spider-Man, Captain America, and X-Men), Kirkman rejected companies like DC and Marvel and publicly advocated for creator ownership as the future of the comics industry. As a partner at Image, Kirkman wrote not only The Walking Dead but also Invincible, a radical reinvention of the superhero genre. Robert Kirkman: Conversations gives insight to his journey and explores technique, creativity, collaboration, and the business of comics as a multimedia phenomenon. For instance, while continuing to write genre-based comics in titles like Outcast and Oblivion Song, Kirkman explains his writerly bias for complex characters over traditional plot development. As a fan-turned-creator, Kirkman reveals a creator's complex relationship with fans in a comic-con era that breaks down the consumer/producer dichotomy. And after rejecting company-ownership practices, Kirkman articulates a vision of the creator-ownership model and his goal of organic creativity at Skybound, his multimedia company. While Stan Lee was the most prominent comic book everyman of the previous era of comics production, Kirkman is the most prominent comic book everyman of this dynamic, evolving new era.

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