

The best books of 2003

Q & Q's top 5 Canadian fiction, non-fiction, and children's titles

Non-fiction

Louis Riel: A Comic-Strip Biography

Chester Brown, Drawn & Quarterly/Raincoast Books

Brown's sympathetic biography of Métis leader Louis Riel is a landmark work by an artist considered to be one of the greatest cartoonists living today. To some Canadians, Riel was one of the founding fathers of a new nation; to others he was a murderer who nearly tore a country apart.

To Brown, he was honourable but flawed – a rebel whose intentions to protect his community from a corrupt, alien government were distorted by his megalomania and religious fanaticism. Brown's consistent narrative sails along, but the real treat here is the artist's strikingly vibrant black and white artwork, inspired by Harold Gray's *Little Orphan Annie*. Not overly intellectualized



yet dense with detail, the book is a wonderful combination of factual resources and powerful art and storytelling. *Dave Howard*



Winona McMorrow, manager of Pages Books & Magazines in Toronto, with *Louis Riel*. Chester Brown's graphic novel was one of Pages' best-selling books over the holiday season.