

coverstory

BY GEORGE DICKIE



"The Snoopy Show" premieres Friday on Apple TV+.

The iconic beagle flies high in Apple's 'The Snoopy Show'

For those who have delighted in the adventures of the Peanuts gang over the decades, "The Snoopy Show" offers up pure red meat.

Indeed, the half-hour series that premieres Friday, Feb. 5, on Apple TV+, presents the further adventures of the care-free beagle made famous in late animator Charles Schulz's 1950-2000 comic strip and subsequent TV specials, joined by his best friend Woodstock. Charlie Brown, Linus and Lucy and the rest of the crew serve as background characters here.

Each episode consists of three seven-minute vignettes that are based on the iconic comic series and features the signature animation style that has entertained audiences for more than seven decades.

The objective, says executive producer Mark Evestaff, is to stay as true to Schulz's original creation as possible.

"For a lot of the people working on the show, they're all fans first and all the artists are fans first, so the opportunity to give Snoopy his own series felt like the right thing to do," he explains. "And certainly there was enough material with Charles Schulz producing like almost 18,000 strips over the years, and a lot of our stories are mined from those strips specifically to create stories in the show. ... We really did go back to the strips and really looking at the

details of Schulz's poses and even of course lines from the strip, if we can use them and it still works, then absolutely. We tried to stay as close and faithful to that spirit."

And part of that spirit lies in the dialog – or lack thereof. As a dog and a bird, Snoopy and Woodstock don't speak human English so Evestaff and the team had to come up with ways to tell stories without the use of words.

"It really was just more animation, more acting and then adding, of course, the odd vocalizations to what we do have and carried that through ...," Evestaff explains. "You throw enough artists at it, enough talented artists that have a passion and bring that passion, we're able to tell these stories and it's really wonderful how that some of our best stories are almost without dialog at all through seven minutes and are some of our most heart-warming and our best friendship stories."

In the end, this is a story of a friendship between two iconic characters with whom viewers have had a long relationship and Evestaff didn't want to betray that.

"There's, of course, a lot of trepidation off the top – are we going to ruin Snoopy in all these things?" he admits. "But truthfully, I think if you pack it with enough of the right people and they bring enough of that passion and hard work, then the results sort of speak for themselves."

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