



## Anathem

By Neal Stephenson

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A #1 *New York Times* Bestseller, *Anathem* is perhaps the most brilliant literary invention to date from the incomparable Neal Stephenson, who rocked the world with *Snow Crash*, *Cryptonomicon*, and *The Baroque Cycle*. Now he imagines an alternate universe where scientists, philosophers, and mathematicians live in seclusion behind ancient monastery walls until they are called back into the world to deal with a crisis of astronomical proportions.

*Anathem* won the Locus Award for Best Science Fiction Novel and the reviews for have been dazzling: “Brilliant” (*South Florida Sun-Sentinel*), “Daring” (*Boston Globe*), “Immensely entertaining” (*New York Times Book Review*), “A tour de force” (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*), while *Time* magazine proclaims, “The great novel of ideas...has morphed into science fiction, and Neal Stephenson is its foremost practitioner.”

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## Anathem By Neal Stephenson Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #208660 in Books
- Brand: William Morrow Paperbacks
- Published on: 2010-09-01
- Released on: 2010-11-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x 1.64" w x 5.31" l, 1.80 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 981 pages

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. This audiobook goes the extra mile, giving listeners something the printed page-turner can not. Fans of the cult author will enjoy his vocal cameo appearances when he calmly reads definitions from a non-Earth dictionary at the start of many chapters. Another added bonus is the music between chapters that was composed specifically for this production; working with Stephenson and early drafts of the novel, David Stutz beautifully captures the complex traditional, coded choral music described therein. Moreover, the extras do not obscure the remarkable performance by William Dufris, who reads as if he knows the 900+-page text by heart. The story is told by a monastic scholar, and Dufris—with a twinkle in his proverbial eye and a sense of awe in his voice—is the perfect match. His intelligent rendering of the cast of characters is a delight for the ears. *A Morrow hardcover (Reviews, July 28). (Oct.)*

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Stephenson has never been an easy writer to pin down, and he has a reputation for not always wearing his erudition lightly. Particularly in his later books—and that now includes *Anathem*—readers are vetted at the door before being invited into the author’s labyrinthine worlds. The early books were held up alongside the work of William Gibson, Bruce Sterling, and other cyberpunk gods, though in the last decade Stephenson has carved a niche as one of the most ambitious writers working today in any genre. *Anathem* is intellectually rigorous and exceedingly complex, even to the point, as the *Washington Post* avows, of being “grandiose, overwrought and pretty damn dull.” Others complained of too much abstraction. Stephenson’s fans are legion, however, and many will add *Anathem* to their list of must-read doorstops.

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Review

“Reading *Anathem* is a humbling experience.” (Washington Post on ANATHEM)

“A sprawling disquisition...[a] logophilic treat for those who like their alternate worlds big, parodic and ironic.” (Kirkus Reviews on ANATHEM)

“Stephenson’s expansive storytelling echoes Walter Miller’s classic *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, the space operas of Larry Niven and the cultural meditations of Douglas Hofstadter – a heady mix of antecedents that makes for long stretches of dazzling entertainment.” (Publishers Weekly on ANATHEM)

“A magnificent achievement.” (Booklist (starred review) on ANATHEM)

“Clever and intricate...truly ingenious...it’s brilliance is undeniable.” (Locus, Gary K. Wolfe on ANATHEM)

“A masterpiece...mind-bogglingly ambitious...readers will delight in puzzling out the historical antecedents in philosophy, science, mathematics, and art that Stephenson riffs on with his customary quicksilver genius...it’s one of the most thought-provoking novels I’ve ever read, and also one of the most engaging.” (Locus, Paul Witcover, on ANATHEM)

“The Seattle writer is kind of a cross between William Gibson and Richard Powers, hard-wired to tell stories, explore technology and riff on anything that catches his fancy.” (The Oregonian (Portland) on ANATHEM)

“[O]ne of Stephenson’s best novels...a captivating blend of culture clash, deductive reasoning and pure action.” (Columbus Dispatch on *ANATHEM*)

“What ever happened to the great novel of ideas? It has morphed into science fiction, and Stephenson is its foremost practitioner. A-” (Time magazine on *ANATHEM*)

“[R]iveting idea porn.” (Details on *ANATHEM*)

“The cult legend’s newest book, *Anathem*, [is] destined to be an instant sci-fi classic.” (Popular Mechanics on *ANATHEM*)

“He mashes up genres with the flair of Thomas Pynchon and the intellect of William Gibson.” (Winnipeg Free Press on *ANATHEM*)

“Blending quantum physics, phenomenological philosophy and various other fun hobbies...Stephenson’s enthusiasm to share his theories and explanations is infectious...think “The Name of the Rose” crossed with “Dune”...genuinely fascinating brain food.” (The Oregonian (Portland) on *ANATHEM*)

“Stephenson writes in twists and turns, double-backs and cul-de-sacs, winding tunnels and fast-moving tracks. It’s a Rube Goldberg sort of book: intricate, sometimes difficult to follow but always fascinating to read.” (Grand Rapids Press on *ANATHEM*)

“*Anathem* duly marries extensive dialogues on quantum mechanics and the nature of consciousness to literal cliffhangers, hi-tech warfare and derring-do.” (Leicester Mercury on *ANATHEM*)

“*Anathem* is a challenge: Make yourself one of the avout. Make yourself a scholar, and try to understand the world a little differently.” (Eugene Weekly on *ANATHEM*)

“Stephenson displays his ingenuity when it comes to mixing science, sociology and satire with swashbuckling adventure. *Anathem* marries extensive scientific and philosophical dialogues to cliffhangers, hi-tech warfare and derring-do.” (Sunday Sun (UK) on *ANATHEM*)

“It’s almost impossible to not be impressed by *Anathem*; there’s simply too much erudition, wit, craft and risk-taking.” (San Francisco Chronicle on *ANATHEM*)

“In *Anathem*, Stephenson creates a religion for skeptics and nerds.” (Austin American-Statesman on *ANATHEM*)

“*Anathem* is a brilliant, playful tour of the terrain where logic, mathematics, philosophy and quantum physics intersect, a novel of ideas par excellence, melding wordplay and mathematical theory with a gripping, human adventure.” (London Times on *ANATHEM*)

“Anyone who has read Stephenson’s Baroque Cycle will be familiar with his ingenuity when it comes to mixing science, sociology and satire with swashbuckling adventure, and *ANATHEM* duly marries extensive dialogues on quantum mechanics and the nature of consciousness to literal cliffhangers, high-tech warfare and general derring-do.” (The Examiner (Ireland) on *ANATHEM*)

“As with Stephenson’s previous work, plot and character are wrought to the highest standards of literary fiction but they’re scarcely as fascinating as the worlds he conjures up. If there’s anything more readable

than ANATHEM it should probably be banned.” (Word (UK) on ANATHEM)

“Learned, witty, weirdly torqued, emotionally complex, politically astute, and often darkly comic...ANATHEM is an audacious work by a highly intelligent imagination, a delightfully learned text.” (Edmonton Journal (Alberta) on ANATHEM)

“A daring feat of speculative fiction...ANATHEM offers the reader a luscious arrangement of words, jokes, and speculations.” (Boston Globe)

“This is a book about science and philosophy which demands the full concentration of the reader -a worthwhile, smart, exciting read.” (Time Out London)

“A tour-de-force of world building and high-concept speculation, wrapped around a page-turning plot.” (St. Louis Post-Dispatch on ANATHEM)

“[R]avishingly brilliant, outrageously ambitious...ANATHEM is thought-provoking fun, at turns a post-graduate seminar of philosophy and physics, and a rousing yarn with characters you care about.” (Orlando Sentinel on ANATHEM)

“Suddenly, novels of ideas are cool again.” (io9 on ANATHEM)

“The world Stephenson builds is richly visual, its complicated social politics are convincingly detailed, and its cool and conflicted heroes struggle with thrilling intellectual puzzles while they are tested in epic physical adventures.” (Slate, Best of 2008 List, on ANATHEM)

[R]avishingly brilliant, outrageously ambitious...Stephenson embarks on a mission of world-building, and he is thoroughly successful at it.” (South Florida Sun Sentinel on ANATHEM)

## Users Review

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**Jerold Niemi:**

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