

Reviews of Books by Rudy Rucker

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- (4) Infinity and the Mind, nonfiction. Birkhäuser 1982, Princeton U. Press 2005.
- (3) White Light, SF novel, Ace Books 1980, Four Walls Eight Windows 2001.
- (2) Spacetime Donuts, SF novel, Ace Books 1981.
- (1) Geometry, Relativity and the Fourth Dimension, nonfiction, Dover 1977.

(35) *Journals 1990-2014, Transreal Books, 2015.*

Rucker's 828-page compilation of journal jottings captures, with the proper dose of absurdity, Silicon Valley at the millennium's cusp, a digitized microcosm of the human paradox, simultaneously beautiful and futile, like a wry batch of contaminated ethanol torched by humor. Rucker always surprises. ... His *Journals* shine some 4D sunlight on a human time period when the collective brain punched through former perceived limits with code and chemicals, and which is just now taking its place in a literary context.

— San Jose *Metro*.

(34) *The Big Aha, Transreal Books, 2014.*

Rudy Rucker's latest novel, *The Big Aha*, is pure transreal Ruckeriana featuring extreme biological and quantum technologies, steamy techno-sex, nasty aliens from higher dimensions — and all soaked in the unique atmosphere of the magical 1960s. ... This is a great example of how science fiction publishing is being redefined.

— Giulio Prisco, [io9](#).

The Big Aha gloriously and objectively exists on an absolute level with all of Rucker's classic work, chockfull of crazy yet scientifically rigorous ideas embodied in gonzo characters and plots. Like a jazzman, Rucker takes his intellectual obsessions as chords and juggles them into fascinating new patterns each time out...a rollercoaster ride that is never predictable and always entertaining...straight out of some Kerouac or Kesey novel, yet with a twenty-first century affect. Rucker is remarkably attuned to a new generation. Ultimately, all the craziness and whimsy and otherworldly menaces of Zad's mad odyssey induces true pathos and catharsis in the reader.

— Paul Di Filippo, [Locus Online](#).

Some passages have an oddly beautiful weirdness, tinged with old memories, like a humid summer day... Splendid flights of the imagination.

— Faren Miller, review in *Locus Magazine*

Rucker has been writing like a mind-meld of Gödel and Burroughs on acid, but with some sort of academic overmind trying, and for the most part succeeding, to run the result through a logical scientific-refereed-paper process... But there is something else to this novel, a characterological sweetness combined with a political passion the nature of which might cause Rucker to deny that it *is* political... What Rudy Rucker presents and champions is the last and finally successful battle in the culture war dating back to the Transcendental Movement of the nineteenth century that peaked in the 1960s.

— Norman Spinrad, , [Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine](#).

(33) *Turing & Burroughs: A Beatnik SF Novel, Transreal Books, 2012.*

Rucker accomplishes a significant feat by mashing up Greg Bear-level speculations with a kind of *On the Road* vibe, full of slang-laden hipster contempt for the Establishment and a desire to break free of stifling conventions. ... The Eisenhower-era conformity and general societal suspicion of weirdos is a perfect adventure matrix for these ultimate outsiders: chimerical, telepathic slugs.

— Paul Di Filippo, review in [Locus Online](#)

Rucker's "Beatnik SF Novel" deftly combines historic characters and wild flights of imagination in a spin-off of our world's history. ... Rudy Rucker has produced an SFnal *tour de force*. ... The prose in *Turing & Burroughs* can flow like a drug-stoked dream.

— Faren Miller, review in *Locus Magazine*

Rucker's novels have ... an angle of attack reminiscent of the Thomas Pynchon of *Gravity's Rainbow* and the Terry Southern of *The Magic Christian*. *Turing & Burroughs* is all of that and more. Much more. It is Rudy Rucker's most ambitious novel, and while perhaps not a perfect success, it *is* a success. ... Rucker being Rucker, the central story line is not even half the bizarre, fascinating, scientific, sexual, and historical content of this delightfully humorous yet somehow thematically serious novel.

— Norman Spinrad, review in [Asimov's SF Magazine](#)

A delightful alternative history romp set in the middle of the 1950s. Rucker immerses the reader in the beat milieu, with the added twist that here they *really are* pod people, and loving it. ... This novel engages the reader to such an extent that it's easy to overlook the extensive research that went into making it authentic, not just superficially, but in depth.

— John Walker, review in [Fourmilog](#).

(32) *Jim and the Flims*, Night Shade Books, 2011.

Jim and the Flims offers Rucker's delightfully eccentric and transrealist approach to what turns out to be a kind of modern-day Orpheus tale. It's often silly and lighthearted, but it's buoyed by the emotional weight of Jim's quest, and also by the often beautiful and moving view of life and death. And I can guarantee that it's probably not at all like anything else you're going to read this summer.

—Karin L. Kross, review in *Tor.com*

I love Rudy Rucker. The guy is simply incomparable when it comes to writing science fiction, managing to seamlessly blend highly intelligent existential and scientific speculation with wildly satirical and insanely imaginative plotlines...You can imagine my delight when a copy of his newest release, *Jim and the Flims*, landed on my doorstep. In this novel, Rucker reimagines the myth of Orpheus as only he can – Jim Oster is a former surfer dude, part-time stoner, and current Santa Cruz mailman who dabbles in high-tech research.

—Paul Goat Allen, review on *Barnes & Noble Book club*

Jim and the Flims...Rudy Rucker's weirdest, craziest, colorfulest book yet? That's saying a lot, I know. But when it is at its most bizarre, it is also most hilarious. Nobody else writes like Rudy.

—Marc Laidlaw, author of *Kalifornia*

(31) Nested Scrolls, Tor Books, 2011.

Immensely entertaining, spirited and deep. This is Rudy Rucker at his thoughtful best.

—Greg Bear

Rucker is a writer to whom that cliché “a genuine original” legitimately applies. His memoir is a pleasantly meandering, chattily digressive read. We hear the authentic voice of the beat, the hippie, the cyberpunk, the hacker, and the bomb-throwing revolutionary iconoclast that, at heart, Rucker has always been and remains—he is the most pleasant and decent bomb-thrower one could ever hope to meet.

—Paul Witcover, *Locus*

Rucker knew from an early age that he wanted to be a beatnik writer, and in many ways, he has succeeded. It is not an easy road: there is trouble with his parents and with his wild-man lifestyle, and with work and sheer existence. It's been an interesting and well-lived life, and it makes for a fascinating story... Reads like Rucker's novels, packed with adventures, filled with humor, and often quite surreal.

—Regina Schroeder, [Booklist](#)

(30) Hylozoic, Tor Books, 2009.

Rucker's yarn of a future where everything—animals, rocks, the planet Earth—is conscious, telepathic and often irrepressibly chatty. Rucker's approach takes a high-comic trajectory with a satirical edge... Serious, uproarious fun, with brain-teasers and brilliant ideas tossed about like confetti.

— *Kirkus Reviews*.

Bristling with cool ideas, bizarre but witty formulations and neologisms, Carrollian mathematical/logic puzzles, gnarly tech applications and gonzo speculations, wicked satire, hot sex, nasty aliens, anarchic plots, and psi powers ... Rucker juggles the disparate elements of his plot with the zany aplomb of the Flying Karamazov Brothers. His vision of the future is a hopeful and inclusive one—and one hell of a party.

— *Locus*

Hylozoic goes much further into the realms of the twisted, the disturbing and the post-everything. ... The whole thing gets more and more demented, until it almost feels like you need a post-singularity brain to understand all of the eighth-dimensional drama and weirdness. But just when you think Rucker's layered on too much ... for one book, it reveals itself, once again, to be the story of JayJay and Thuy's marriage, and of their battle to stay married in the face of alien birds, addictive manta-ray gel, and a personality-eating world mind.

— io9

(29) *Postsingular*, Tor Books, 2007.

Alt-cultural folk strive to save Earth from digitized doom in this novel from the prince of gonzo SF. A computer mogul's threat to replace messy reality with clean virtuality and by a memory-hungry artificial intelligence called the Big Pig propels nanotechnologist Ond Lutter, his autistic son, Chu, and their allies on an interdimensional quest for a golden harp, the Lost Chord, strung with hypertubes that can unroll the eighth dimension and unleash limitless computing power. ... Rucker favors the flower power of San Francisco over the number crunching of Silicon Valley. His novel vibrates with the warm rhythms of dream and imagination, not the cold logic of programming ... Playing with the math of quantum computing, encryption and virtual reality, Rucker places his faith in people who find true reality "gnarly" enough to love.

— *Publisher's Weekly* (C) Reed Business Information.

Always willing and able to embrace SF's trendiest themes, Rucker here takes on the volatile field of nanotechnology and the presumed inevitable "singularity" of human and computer unification. In a series of interrelated vignettes, he describes the calamity that befalls nanotech inventor Ond Lutter and his would-be benefactors when Ond unleashes a variety of self-replicating nanobots. In one episode, trillions of microscopic bots, dubbed nants, chew up Mars to create a colossal Dyson Sphere orbiting the sun. When the nants move on to Earth to transform every living being into a virtual-reality doppelganger, Ond saves the day with a nant-busting virus. The real fun begins, however, when Ond "improves" on the nants with apparently benign nanobots, called orphids, that blanket every surface and provide plugged-in users three-dimensional access to every conceivable scrap of knowledge and experience. ... His devoted fans and dazzled newcomers to him will revel in his willingness to push technological extrapolation to its soaring limits.

— Carl Hays, *Booklist*

When it comes to unique voices in science fiction, few can claim to have quite as distinctive a style as Rudy Rucker. *Postsingular* is packed full of the larger-than-life weirdness that has become his trademark; classic genre tropes and clichés rub shoulders with mathematical theorems and wild technological speculation, delivered in prose that captures the languid vibe and hippie undercurrents of California. ... Rucker's quick-draw style acts as a sleight-of-hand that allows him to slip some of SF's biggest tropes and ideas beneath the reader's radar, as well as touching some very human character aspects that are often skipped over (or, worse still, rendered tiresome) by the pens of others. *Postsingular* has all the bells and whistles that only a computing professor could provide, but never at the expense of the story.

—Paul Raven, *Interzone*

Rudy Rucker's new novel *Postsingular* is pure Rucker: a dope-addled exploration of the way-out fringes of string theory and the quantum universe that distorts the possible into

the most improbable contortions... A kick-ass, weird-ass post-cyberpunk novel...This is one of the most fun, strangest, most thought-provoking SF novels I've read.

—Cory Doctorow, [BoingBoing](#) and [BoingBoing](#) (two reviews)

This book is densely written...yet also captivatingly plotted for sheer narrative verve and laced with plenty of humor and suspense. Walking a tightrope between information overload and thriller action, the book captures the heady zip, zest and buzz of the post-singular milieu, a world where miracles are commonplace but structured logically to provide real challenges, risks and triumphs.

—Paul DiFilippo, [SciFi.com](#)

Rucker writes with a hyperactive level of inventiveness that seems to owe bits in equal measure to Lewis Carroll, William Burroughs, and Ray Kurzweil. Rucker can be enormous fun to read, and there are some stunningly bold ideas here.

—Gary K. Wolfe, *Locus*

Any true singularity pretty much by definition has to be so over-the-top that it would stun present-day minds. This is over-the-top as only Rudy Rucker can do it.

—Tom Easton, [Analog](#)

It's fast-paced and subversive: nanomachines dismantle all life on Earth and send everyone to a virtual world, and you're still only on page 20. *Postsingular* turns the singularity, the mythical moment when we all transcend our humanity and become cyberer, into something much weirder and more ambivalent. Just as other cyberfiction is becoming more cautious in its predictions, Rucker takes wilder and wilder leaps into outer possibility.

—Charlie Jane Anders, [San Francisco Bay Guardian](#)

Postsingular is hugely enjoyable. It's never boring, and never gets bogged down in difficult info-dumps. Rucker's ideas are simple and elegant, despite the complex thinking behind them shown in his working notes. Exotic concepts such as shoons, orhipds, beezie and a universe 1.8 Planck lengths away in another dimension all seem natural and logical without the need for dense scientification to justify them. Highly recommended, and when you're done take a look at the working notes for further insight into Rucker's ideas and inspirations.

—Patrick Hudson, [The Zone](#)

Rudy Rucker is well-loved for tons of things, but I am totally in love with his characters. Not since Philip K. Dick has there been an author more able to drill down to what exactly makes us human and expose it for everyone to see. *Postsingular*—which deals mostly with society's total, overnight change and the people who get mixed up in it—has an unbelievably awesome, unbelievably human cast of characters, from the dumpy scientist to his autistic genius son, to the street kids who have huge dreams and small ambition. Every word of dialogue is pitch-perfect, and along with a fairly adventurous interdimensional plot, *Postsingular* is my favorite Rucker book in years.

—Ryun Patterson, [Bookgasm](#) Best Sci-Fi Books of 2007

(28) ***Mathematicians in Love*, Tor Books, 2006.**

Rucker cleverly pulls off a romantic comedy about mathematicians in love. This excursion into alternative versions of Berkeley, Calif., is full of quirky, charming life-forms human and otherwise and ruled by a god who's the female jellyfish-creator of Earth. All this seethes around Bela Kis; Bela's roommate, Paul Bridge; and Bela's girlfriend, Alma Ziff, who ping-pongs between them in a sometimes acute, sometimes obtuse love triangle. Bela and Paul struggle for their Ph.D.s under mad math genius Roland Haut by inventing a paracomputer "Gobubble" that predicts future events. ... Rucker's wild characters, off-the-wall situations and wicked political riffs prove that writing SF spoofs, like Bela's rock music avocation, "beats the hell out of publishing a math paper."

— *Publisher's Weekly*

In *Mathematicians in Love* Rucker has created a love story wrapped up in a cross-cultural mystery tour that could only have happened inside the mind of a crazy mathematician. Buy a ticket. It's well worth the price. It allows you to immerse yourself in math lingo as cool and arcane as anything jazz musicians could come up with and feel knowledgeable, even though it's all so much mumbo jumbo. Somehow, when Rucker's characters talk about the nature of the universe (or the curve of a yellow bikini) in terms of fractals, curved planes and number theory, it all seems totally, intense, relevant and hip. Which would be a pretty good description of the author.

— *SFRevu*

Rucker ... is palpably and quiveringly tuned in to the zeitgeist and can offer cultural and scientific commentary and satire better than almost any other SF author practicing today. And if, as some have it, SF always speaks of the present, no matter what era it's set in, then Rucker has just cut straight to the chase this time, nevertheless retaining all the glorious weirdness that comes with more futuristic milieus.

— *SciFi.com*

Mathematicians in Love ... percolates with off-the-wall characters and trippy extra-dimensional shenanigans. Nobody writes math-based science fiction like Rudy Rucker does. He keeps the tone light and the action playful, even as his characters grapple with the meaning of tragedy and the ultimate mechanics of the universe. A definite high point in Rucker's singular writing career.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*

All the pleasures of a Rucker novel come forth abundantly: playfully weird higher physics and math; bizarre conceptual psychedelia; distinctively Californian counter-cultural comedy; zany romance; doppelgangers; generally happy endings. ...

Mathematicians in Love is an engaging and entertaining book, light yet thought-provoking, funny yet of some gravity. It deserves success.

— *Locus*

Rudy Rucker should be declared a National Treasure of American Science Fiction. Someone simultaneously channeling Kurt Gödel and Lenny Bruce might start to approximate full-on Ruckerian warp-space, but without the sweet, human, splendidly goofy Rudy-ness at the core of the singularity.

— William Gibson, author of *Pattern Recognition*

What a Dickensian genius Rucker has for Californian characters, as if, say, Dickens had fused with Phil Dick and taken up surfing and jamming and topologising. He has a hotline to cosmic revelations yet he's always here and now in the groove, tossing off lines of beauty and comic wisdom. 'My heart is a dog running after every cat.' We really feel with his characters in their bizarre tragicomic quests.

— Ian Watson, author of *The Great Escape*

Rudy Rucker is the most consistently brilliant imagination working in SF today

— Charles Stross, author of *Accelerando*

For sheer gonzo inventiveness, trust Rucker and this gut-wrenching, near-FTL-speed intellectual adventure. And trust me, too: You won't read another SF work all year this much mind-bending, synapse-tingling fun.

— Michael Bishop, author of *Philip K. Dick Is Dead, Alas*

This may well be Rudy Rucker's best novel — funny, wise, fast and inventive. A real advance.

— Gregory Benford, author of *The Sunborn*

Rudy Rucker writes like the love child of Philip K. Dick and George Carlin. Brilliant, frantic, conceptual, cosmological . . . like lucid dreaming, only funny. This book rocks!

—Walter John Williams, author of *Dread Empire's Fall*

Rudy Rucker never fails to leave me breathless. . . Reading one of his stories is like a reset button on reality: when it's over, the whole universe looks slightly different...and much stranger.

—Spider Robinson, author of *Night of Power*

(27) Mad Professor, stories, Thunder's Mouth Press, 2007.

Much cyberpunk SF is grimly noir in depicting future-shocked people trapped by their limitations, but in this collection of 19 laid-back yarns, Rucker (*Mathematicians in Love*) finds human dilemmas much too important to take seriously. "Jenna and Me," for example, co-written with his son Rudy Rucker Jr., shows President Bush's daughter brain-wiped by agents of the "conspiracy elite," but eventually becoming the unwitting focus for an alien invasion that may remake humanity for the better. "Junk DNA," a collaboration with Bruce Sterling, depicts the accidental benefits of unprincipled commercial exploitation of bioscience. Other stories emphasize extreme physical

transformation, positive or negative results of thought experiments, and cheerful horniness. While readers who want rigorously developed plots or characterization may be disappointed, those who can groove on something like a collaboration between Italo Calvino and Jimmy Buffett will find themselves grinning and humming along.

—*Publishers Weekly*, Copyright © *Reed Business Information*.

Often cited as one of the original cyberpunk pioneers, Rucker has channeled his groundbreaking ideas and yen for mathematics into almost 30 volumes of fiction and cerebral nonfiction over as many years. His latest book of stories finds him in fine form, extrapolating number theory into madcap tales about quantum elves and lotto-playing programmers. Five of the 13 pieces are collaborations with other notable SF veterans, such as Bruce Sterling and John Shirley. In "2+2=5," written with Terry Bisson, two nursing home-bound seniors zero in on breaking the world counting record. "Cobb Wakes Up" recounts the fate of a long-dead robot inventor resurrected as a conscious computer program. In perhaps the volume's most satirical entry, "The Men in the Backroom at the Country Club," aliens infiltrate Rucker's former home base of Lynchburg, Virginia, and meet their unlikely nemesis in the form of the town's religious zealots. A delight for both Rucker devotees and SF fans who prefer that their fiction be a little zany.

—*Carl Hays*, [Booklist](#), Copyright © *American Library Association*.

In his introduction to *Mad Professor*, Rucker cites four factors that spawn his stories: thought experiments, power chords, gnarliness and wit. In other words, Rucker isn't just a hard-core science geek but a true-blue Californian. In fact, it's almost impossible to read a Rucker book without encountering the word "gnarly." One component unmentioned here is the Rucker-styled "transrealism," a form of poetic realism in which Rucker draws upon personal experience, melding this with a speculative fiction-plot staple, such as time travel or a parallel universe. This generates, by way of the weld, symbolic and often perceptive narratives sometimes atoning for genre implausibilities. ... It's not all as preposterous as it seems, in part because Rucker's enthusiasm is infectious. He is an author determined to entertain by any means necessary.

—*Edward Champion*, *Los Angeles Times*.

Rucker stands alone in the science fiction pantheon as some kind of trickster god of the computer science lab; where others construct minutely plausible fictional realities, he simply grabs the corners of the one we already know and twists it in directions we don't have pronounceable names for. ... Within the scope of the logical system he has built for his work, he is a peerless genius — a mad professor, in fact.

—*Paul Raven*, [SF Site](#).

(26) *The Lifebox, the Seashell, and the Soul*, Thunder's Mouth Press, 2005.

A key debate of the computer revolution concerns Stephen Wolfram's argument that everything is equivalent to computation; this book explores the implications of that

thought. Rucker modifies Wolfram's basic premises to apply to everyday experience — ending with a half-dozen practical rules for attaining happiness. Charmingly written and thought-provoking.

— *Kirkus Reviews*

Lifebox is valuable in the same way a wide-ranging philosophical classic like *The Republic* is valuable. To read it is to peer through a conceptual lens with its own unique focal length -- an act that allows us to see the world in a way we never glimpsed it before. ... Rucker's stylistic approach, featuring bite-size sci-fi stories that illustrate his points, is so innovative that even non-techies will find themselves enjoying the ride.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*

Rudy Rucker is an outstanding prophet of what will probably be the greatest intellectual revolution of our times. This book tells the ever-surprising story of his transformation as he discovers the wonders of the computational universe, and grapples with their implications for humanity's oldest questions. For people who thrive on new ideas, this book will be a classic.

— Stephen Wolfram, author of *A New Kind of Science*.

This is the Big Book I wish everyone would do. Audacious and simply inimitable. You are inside Rudy Rucker by the end. Nobody takes the late-night idea that the universe is a computer as seriously (or with as much fun) as this book does. What I love about it: it's part biography, part far-out science fiction speculation, part best course-in-computation-ever-taught, part romp through the intellectual frontiers of mathematics and philosophy, part sage wisdom, part blog, part graduate student thesis, part genius. What it might become: a new *Gödel, Escher, Rucker*.

— *Kevin Kelly, Wired editor.*

Computation, pattern, and information are hot topics these days as they find increasing applications in science, pure mathematics, computing, and even philosophy. Dr. Rudy Rucker, long at the center of this cyclone, has produced a truly stunning survey of their manifold consequences. No one should pass up the experience of stepping through the portals of this beautiful book into fantastic new worlds — and topics ranging from brains and robots to hive minds and quantum souls.

— *Cliff Pickover, author of A Passion for Mathematics.*

With the soul of a poet and the insight of a logician, Rudy Rucker dramatizes the story of one of the most transforming ideas in modern science: that of computation. Interpreting the notion oh so broadly, Rucker calls on his impressive background in computer science and science fiction to clarify, amplify, and vivify a whole complex of seminal concepts. And the book's fun to read too!

— *John Allen Paulos, author of Innumeracy and Once Upon a Number*

How did a universe composed of just a few kinds of absolutely identical particles, starting from a state of almost complete uniformity, evolve in an ever ascending chain of complexity to produce galaxies, stars, planets, life, intelligence, and culture? In this

fascinating book, Rudy Rucker explores how structures in nature, human consciousness, and society may actually be *computations*, showing how extremely simple computer programs manifest complex emergent behavior which mimics natural phenomena, suggesting that computer science may become part of the foundation of the sciences of the twenty-first century.

— *John Walker, co-founder of Autodesk, Inc.*

In this immense and ambitious work, former computer science professor Rucker (*The Fourth Dimension*) speculates that life is a computation. He offers examples of everyday activities that are computational processes—speech, agriculture, hunting—as well as instances of computations found in nature and attempts to model those computations using cellular automata. He applies this view of life as computation to problems in physics and biology (e.g., DNA and genetic reproduction) and goes on to explore artificial intelligence and the application of computation to questions of society. The “lifebox” in the title is a digital copy of a person’s memory that would be hyperlinked and “give a reasonably good impression of having a conversation with you.” Though Rucker ultimately sees the world as beyond computation, he convincingly argues that the computational view can shed perspective on reality. Including many examples from the history of computing, this dense and challenging read is recommended for science collections in larger public and academic libraries.

— *Library Journal (Garrett Eastman, Rowland Inst. at Harvard Univ.)*

Rucker ... is reaching as high as he can to try to use available computer science and math metaphors to create a new, comprehensive, multidisciplinary sensibility. The Ruckerian future is one in which new guiding explanatory ideas will connect all areas of intellectual curiosity.

— *Jaron Lanier in American Scientist*

(25) *Frek and the Elixir*, Tor Books, 2004.

With this book, Rudy Rucker seems to have boldly ascended a new peak in his career. *Frek* is utterly believable and empathy-inducing from the first page of the tale. *Frek* remains both a conquering hero and a 12-year-old boy, showing us that we all may contain avatars bigger than our shells. This book is *Robert Heinlein’s Have Spacesuit — Will Travel* with the vacuum tubes replaced by wetware and all the knobs turned up to 11.

— *SF Site*

Completely delightful and amusing. A great adventure in a book that is an enormous amount of fun and full of charms that will appeal to readers of all ages from about 12 up. *Frek and the Elixir* may happily become something to read for the millions of fans who are waiting for Harry Potter Six.

— *San Jose Mercury News*

Rucker possesses a wild, unfettered imagination, and he uses concepts from string theory and quantum mechanics to power this wide-ranging, almost psychedelic yarn. Fresh, funny and frequently mind-boggling.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*

Rucker has a clarity of purpose: to entertain with intelligence.

— *Kansas City Star*

Rucker successfully combines sharp-edged satire with old-fashioned pulp sensibilities to create a frantic tale of dirty double-dealing and high adventure. Readers in search of something different need look no further than this droll saga of the future.

— *Publishers Weekly*

Imagine Frodo Baggins as a 31st-century human kid in a transformed Earth where bio-engineering and consumerism have run amok... Frek's grand adventures will leave you simultaneously enlightened, awestruck, dazed, and amused — "Ruckerized," you might call it — by an author working at the height of his powers.

— *Locus*

Frek and the Elixir is perhaps Rucker's best book, containing as it does such a wealth of material in a compelling story. In some ways, Rucker is a literary descendant of Philip K. Dick, and this book felt to me like the masterpiece of trashy culture, ordinary people, and wacked-out ideas that Dick never quite wrote.

— *Challenging Destiny*

Before you can say "E.T." or "A Wrinkle In Time," Frek and some very odd companions are off on an escapade that will span space, time and numerous other dimensions ... a magical mystery tour of the universe according to string theory.

— *New York Times*

(24) *Software Engineering and Computer Games*, Addison-Wesley, 2003.

(23) *As Above, So Below: A Novel of Peter Bruegel*, historical, Tor Books, 2002.

A delightful book, one that carries us through the sixteenth-century picture-plane at extraordinary angles, illuminating Bruegel, his art and his world, with warmth and candor.

— William Gibson, author of *Pattern Recognition*

Rucker manages the delicate trick of making his tale both exotically foreign in time and space yet resonant with the present day. Much of Rucker's success stems from his obvious identification with his subject. Given a relative paucity of solid historical data about Bruegel, Rucker is able to reverse-engineer the man from his paintings, and the

result is a visionary artist who embodies Rucker's own dichotomous concern with the matters both of dirty earth and of numinous heaven."

— *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine*

What possesses a popular science fiction writer to write a historical novel about a sixteenth-century Flemish painter enamored of peasant ways? Unbridled fascination with the depiction of worlds real and imagined. Rucker's keen insights into Peter Bruegel's spellbinding and politically subversive work underpin this animated, suspenseful, and affecting tale, a step up from Tracy Chevalier's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* (2000). Biographical information about Bruegel is scant, but Rucker's sense that the painter was lively, compassionate, courageous, and determined feels right, and the characters Rucker invents to flesh out Bruegel's violent and precarious universe are equally compelling, especially the cultured mapmaker Abraham Ortelius, who is so careful to conceal his homosexuality; the sexy and volatile half-Native American, Williblad Cheroo, and Bruegel's smart, saucy wife. Just as Bruegel's paintings are a great joy to behold even as they induce the viewer to face the grimmer aspects of life, Rucker's vivid imagining of Bruegel's trials and triumphs is set against a cutting indictment of the horrors of the Spanish occupation and Inquisition. Bruegel's great gift was his perception of the sacred in the earthy, and Rucker follows suit in this vital portrait of a sweet-natured disciple of life's fecund beauty in a time of cold-blooded tyranny.

— *Book List*

Pictures at an exhibition, sort of, as mathematician and SF writer Rucker tells the life of the great Flemish painter. ... Here we follow Bruegel's story from 1552 to 1569 in sixteen chapters that organize themselves around sixteen of the master's best-known paintings. ... A lively and well-narrated tale that will appeal to Bruegel fans and may awaken newcomers to an interest in his work."

— *Kirkus Reviews*

As intricate ... as one of its subject's own vivid depictions of 16th-century life in the Spanish-dominated Low Countries, Rucker's fictionalized life of Bruegel draws its readers into a teeming world of politics, art, love, sin and loss. ... This is clearly a labor of love and ... it grapples handily with Bruegel's genius — his ability to wittily and gracefully recreate all human activity, from the sublime to the scatological."

— *Publisher's Weekly*

(22) Spaceland, SF novel, Tor Books, 2002.

Speculative fiction based on mathematics, rather than the physical sciences, is a rare commodity. Edward Abbot's turn-of-the-century, geometric fantasy "Flatland" is recognized as one of the classics of the genre. Rudy Rucker has fashioned an engaging homage to it in *Spaceland*. Rucker is one of the genre's most reliable humorists, and he packs *Spaceland* with plenty of wry observations and loopy scenarios. Even if you couldn't handle college algebra, *Spaceland* provides more than its fair share of mind-bending fun.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Spaceland puts the hyper into hyperspace and the high into higher dimensions. A fast-paced tribute to the classic *Flatland* that challenges all of our comfortable assumptions about the world we inhabit.

— Ian Stewart, author of *Flatterland* and *The Annotated Flatland*.

Books on higher dimensions with such beauty, breadth, and insight are rare. Dr. Rucker's *Spaceland* is chock full of mind-boggling images and ideas. The eclectic Rucker is both a mathematician and science-fiction guru, and with the cold logic of the one and the inspired vision of the other, he covers an array of topics sure to stimulate your imagination and sense of wonder at the incredible vastness of our mathematical universe.

— Clifford Pickover, author of *Surfing Through Hyperspace*

Rucker's new hard SF satire tweaks the dot-com Y2K subculture into a hilarious tribute to Edwin Abbott's *Flatland* (1884). ... Combining valid mathematical speculation with wicked send-ups of Silicon Valley and its often otherworldly tribespeople, Rucker achieves a rare fictional world, a belly-laugh-funny commentary on the Faustian dilemma facing a lumpish 21st-century tech-addicted everyman: What is the real price in human relationships, in love and friendship and compassion, of those cutesy little user-friendly gadgets that happen to materialize so innocently on our desks?

— *Publishers Weekly*

The astonishing Rudy Rucker ... gets off a lot of good shots at the peculiar dotcom-nerd mentality of his California environs. And the romantic mishaps among Joe and his crowd are touchingly real. But Rucker reserves his most brilliant sallies for depicting the strangenesses associated with higher dimensions.

— *Washington Post Book World*

Rucker laces his hard science with ample doses of humor to create an SF adventure for the dot-com generation. A good choice.

— *Library Journal*

Rucker's determination to one-up the dimensional explorations of *Flatland* gives *Spaceland* appeal.

— *The New York Times Book Review*

In the grand tradition of Jonathan Swift (with a tip of the hat to the ancestral mathematical absurdist, Lewis Carroll), *Spaceland* is a sharp morality tale in fool's motley. Beneath all the riotous wordplay and antic multi-dimensionality lies a fable about conservative fear-mongering and corporate greed, as well as the trials of a man muddling his way through everyday life. ... I predict a long shelf life.

— *Locus*

This tribute to Edwin A. Abbott's classic novel *Flatland* works wonderfully. This is because *Spaceland* is written by Rudy Rucker, a Silicon Valley professor of mathematics

and computer science who is also a hard-SF writer with the most gonzo sensibility in science fiction.

— *Amazon.com*

(21) Gnar!!, stories, *Four Walls Eight Windows*, 2000.

His work links the largest possible cosmic view with the trivia and tribulations of everyday life ... He portrays thoroughly real, everyday people grappling with some farfetched phenomenon ... with comic results.

— *Fantasy & Science Fiction*.

Rucker has fun with all kinds of sci-fi and mathematical concepts, from Venusians who travel from dimension to dimension, sucking people's brains out, to scientists who learn to move objects three seconds into the future via the fourth dimension.

— *San Jose Mercury News*.

Rucker has always displayed a taste for the goofily outlandish... He dares to show the details of his outré creations rather than simply sketch their outlines.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*.

(20) Realware, SF novel, *Avon Books*, 2000, *Prime Books* 2010.

Rucker's writing is great like the Ramones are great: a genre stripped to its essence, attitude up the wazoo, and cartoon sentiments that reek of identifiable lives and issues. Wild math you can get elsewhere, but no one does the cyber version of beatnik glory quite like Rucker. Rucker does it through sheer emotional force ... it's not his universes, it's his people and how they relate to each other — and to the spiritual. That's what *Realware* has going for it: healing and a calm sense of spirituality.

— *New York Review of Science Fiction*.

Realware is a joy to read. The characters are some of the best crafted of Rucker's career.

— *NOVA Express*.

Realware is the fourth and possibly last volume in Rucker's 'Ware' series, which began in 1982 with *Software*. Strangeness is one of the main attractions of science fiction, and Rucker delivers plenty of it — exotic technologies, a funky future culture, mathematical head trips. Yet Rucker invests his main characters with surprising depth and complexity. From time to time the novel's often madcap tone becomes unexpectedly serious, even tragic.

— *SCIFI.COM*

Few writers pack as many ideas into their novels as Rudy Rucker ... and getting there is a lot of fun.

— *Orlando Sentinel*.

Rucker has written a generational saga that spans sixty years of mind-blowing change. Without sacrificing any of his id-driven wildness, Rucker has developed into a benevolent, all-seeing creator ... *Realware* brings to a fully satisfying conclusion this landmark quartet.

— *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*.

Realware continues his wild funny series of a neo-hippy multidimensional future. ... Rucker takes premises that seem faintly possible and develops them to wild, albeit logical, conclusions.

— *Denver Post*.

(19) *Saucer Wisdom*, SF novel/nonfiction, Tor Books, 1999.

We have seen the future and it crawls, swims, teems with billions of soft, sentient piezoplastic beasts — a brave new biotech world where Rucker-revealed secrets of immortality, space travel and congress with aliens are as readily available as mushroom pizzas or a bigger hard drive. *Saucer Wisdom* soars.

— Nick Herbert, author of *Faster Than Light*.

With *Saucer Wisdom* Rucker has reached a new peak. *Saucer Wisdom* is absolutely one of the best books of the year. Rucker has ... grown up, elucidating the wild-eyed, gonzo ideas of his youth with the clear-eyed, well-honed craft of a mature writer at his creative peak.

— *NOVA Express*.

Groove to a mind-expanding leap into the future.

— *Publisher's Weekly*.

How delightful it was to open up Rudy Rucker's latest madcap fantasy, *Saucer Wisdom*. Of all the new science-fiction writers, it is Rucker who most nearly approaches Dick's imaginative mania.

— *The Australian's Review of Books*.

It's brilliantly funny, prescient, and as fully engaging as a coffee-fueled late-night conversation with a slightly manic genius. From the aloof-yet-naughty aliens ... to the detailed, personalized visions of future people's technology, *Saucer Wisdom* shines with a humanity firmly rooted right here on Earth... It seems that 'the William S Burroughs of cyberpunk' can't help but write good books.

— *Amazon.com*.

Generous, wild-eyed, yet sage ... The future envisioned here is one of liberating, near-utopian technologies that make the Extropians look like Alan Greenspan.

— *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine*.

Saucer Wisdom is, first and foremost, a wild and exhilarating ride through the next 2,000 years of human history, throwing up enough bizarre concepts to sustain two or three careers of SF writing. What saves the book from overload is Rucker's characteristically snappy, wisecracking style... Rucker is able to explain in witty and convincing ways just how most of the technological innovations he proposes would work, and — unusual in futurist narratives — he shows how these various technologies evolve. A pop-science book like no other.

— *Locus*.

Rucker's sensibility is a combination of gonzo humor, fictionalized autobiography in the Kerouacian mode (what Rucker calls "transrealism"), and the sheer, bugs-in-your-teeth thrill of scientific extrapolation taken to blitz-punk extremes.

— *Salon.com*.

(18) *Seek!*, essays, *Four Walls Eight Windows*, 1999.

Whether cast as travelogues, journalism, musings, speculations, or autobiography, these essays offer intimate insights into both Rucker's keen unique mind and the universe in which it is embedded — if they're not indeed one and the same.

— *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine*.

Whether he's investigating the fractal-ized cutting edge of science and math theory, or traveling through Tonga and Tokyo, it's hard to think of a more genial, or more well-informed tour guide. And like his idol Kerouac, Rucker's a hell of a reporter.

— *American Book Review*.

This is Rudy Rucker having fun, the purpose of life. In *Seek!* he's picked a brilliant bunch of his columns, essays and interviews, a travelogue of discovery from cellular automata to his 'transreal' fiction. So this is how to be a professor of computing science, write acclaimed nonfiction, become a hit with the cyberpunks and have an excellent time.

— *New Scientist*.

Rucker's collection of short nonfiction, *Seek!*, is just as clear and sassy as his novels. [These essays are] infused with Rucker's intense delight and frustration with the things and people of this world; they inevitably provoke the kind of staring-into-space reveries long thought lost to our youth.

— *Amazon.com*

Science-fiction author Rudy Rucker is an oddity and a treasure. In *Seek!*, Rucker explains his preoccupations as mathematician, professor, family man, and limit breaker with a novelist's attention to freaky and convincing details. Few writers attempt to cover so much ground.

— *Wired*.

(17) ***Freeware***, SF novel, Avon Books 199, Prime Books 2010.

Rudy Rucker is in a class by himself. He writes mathematics-based science fiction with a wild hippie sense of humor ... [and] a view of robots unlike anything Isaac Asimov ever considered.

— *Denver Post*.

One of science fiction's wittiest writers. A genius ... a cult hero among discriminating cyberpunks.

— *San Diego Union-Tribune*.

Thought-provoking, highly original, and at times extremely funny. *Freeware* is the real stuff, 180 proof and smooth as silk.

— *SF Site*.

Genially twisted ... this is your kind of book.

— *The New York Times Book Review*.

Eminently satisfying ... intelligent and witty ... the climax of what may well have been one of the most important SF series of the past 15 years.

— *Washington Post Book World*.

Reading a Rudy Rucker book is like finding Poe, Kerouac, Lewis Carroll and Philip K. Dick parked on your driveway in a topless '57 Caddy ... and telling you they're taking you for a RIDE. The funniest science fiction author around.

— *Sci-Fi Universe*.

Much has been made of Rucker's affinity with Dick, insofar as they both identify with and honor the common man, and both men write with a lucid simplicity that allows them to convey the weirdest ideas in the easiest to understand form. Rucker wishes — for himself, his characters, and everyone else — the maximum freedom that reality will allow.

— *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine*.

It is fast-paced, funny, and celebrates the complexity of the universe without dumbing it down. It adds up to a unique voice in SF, exuberant, vigorous and dense with strange but vividly realized ideas.

— *Interzone*.

Freeware is a fearlessly weird and very funny romp through a seedy, decadent 21st century America. Rucker's evocation of the 21st century has an internal logic that provides a firm foundation for his gonzo inventiveness and dark humor.

— *San Francisco Chronicle-Examiner*.

(16) The Hacker and the Ants, SF novel, Avon Books 1994.

A professor of mathematics with a penchant for the unusual, if not for the downright weird... Rucker's writing is filled with cunning comic twists.

— *Austin American-Statesman*.

A fascinating vision of corporate intrigue and digital creativity run amok. Told with a great amount of humor, this lighthearted look at the world of hacking and cyberspace is as much parody as a possible misadventure of the future.

— *Interzone*

An incredibly hilarious and adventurous sci-fi novel.

— *Computer Literacy*.

He has caught the very soul of Silicon Valley.

— Nick Herbert, author of *Quantum Reality*.

As a satire of Silicon Valley and a cockeyed glimpse at the future of virtual reality, *The Hacker and the Ants* works marvelously. Rucker is one of science fiction's wittiest writers, and this new novel displays his considerable talents to full effect.

— *San Francisco Examiner-Chronicle*.

Humorous thriller... Estimable.

— *New York Times Book Review*.

(15) Transreal!, fiction and nonfiction collection, WCS Books 1991.

This is SF rigorously following crazy rules. My mind of science fiction. At the heart of it is a rage to extrapolate. Rucker is what happens when you cross a mathematician with the extrapolating jazz spirit.

— Robert Sheckley.

(14) The Hollow Earth, SF novel, William Morrow & Co. 1990, Avon Books 1992.

Rucker never wants for new inventions... Irresistible.

— *Washington Post Book World*.

Jam-packed with Rucker's dada-gaga, aurora-borealism, and gargantuan playfulness. Rucker is one of my all-time favorite writers. He warms the cockles of my heart and fires up the little gray cells.

— Philip Jose Farmer.

Terrific... A thrilling-wonder sci-fi novel... Rucker's Poe is the most endearingly repulsive character I can recall having met in fiction.

— *Fantasy & Science Fiction*.

Edgar Allan Poe would have loved this book — and so will you!

— Robert Bloch, author of *Psycho*.

A craftily conceived adventure story, full of wonder, beauty and humor ... Goofily outlandish ... *The Hollow Earth* is a treat.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*.

I never doubted that Mr. Rucker knew the way, and I never lost interest in the plucky young Mason and the redoubtable if reprehensible Eddie Poe, who encounters in real life every one of the nightmares he has so memorably to paper.

— *The New York Times Book Review*.

It's more fun than anything I've read in I don't know how long, and it's certainly the reigning king of the 'hollow Earth' novels. Rucker has an enviable imagination, an astonishing ear for language, and a rare sense of proportion and humor. I wish books like this would come along more often.

— James P. Blaylock, author of *The Digging Leviathan*.

(13) All The Visions, memoir, Ocean View Books, 1991.

(12) Wetware, SF novel, Avon Books 1988, Prime Books 2010.

Delightfully irreverent... This is science fiction as it should be: authoritative and tightly linked with our real lives and our real future.

— *Washington Post Book World*.

Rucker [gives you] more ideas per chapter than most authors use in an entire novel.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*.

(11) Mind Tools, nonfiction, Houghton Mifflin 1987.

One of Rucker's greatest assets is his ability to make complexities comprehensible to the general reader without lecturing.

— *Washington Post*.

Rudy Rucker's *Mind Tools* is an original and fascinating look at various aspects of mathematics that is rue to fascinate the non-mathematician. Throughout Rucker has the gift of the apt illustration that makes the most abstruse notion accessible.

— Isaac Asimov.

Approaching all of mathematics, and everything else, by way of information theory, Dr. Rucker's latest and most exciting book opens vistas of dazzling beauty — scenes that blend order with chaos, reality with fantasy, that startle you with their depths of impenetrable mystery.

— Martin Gardner.

(10) *The Secret of Life*, SF novel, Bluejay Books 1985, www.electricstory.com 2001.

Rucker is an artist well worth discovering, reading, and keeping up with... [His novels] sparkle with deadpan wit and a natural storyteller's flair...blending mathematical speculation, such concepts as Hilbert space, rock'n'roll, drugs, and sex...[with] imaginative ideas worthy of H.G.Wells.

— *Washington Post Book World*.

One of the writers we will follow into the new future.

— *Raleigh Spectator*.

(9) *Master of Space and Time*, SF novel, Bluejay Books 1984, Baen Books 1985.

Master of a playful, intellectual humor ... Rudy Rucker's sense of fun is rare indeed. He has been compared to Lewis Carroll, and the comparison is not presumptuous. Like Carroll, Rucker is a mathematician who not only enjoys paradoxes, but can propagate that enjoyment as pure lunatic humor... Pure frivolity aside, Rudy Rucker is genuinely curious about space and time.

— John Sladek in *The Washington Post*.

An amusing, high-speed, lunatic whirl through a variety of unlikely worlds. Inventive, agreeable batty fun.

— *Kirkus Reviews*.

Money? A cure for world hunger? A beautiful body? Rudy Rucker, professional mathematician and master of the crazy scenario, has probably already thought of it.

— *Locus*.

Rucker is a mathematician bewitched by the absurdity of the universe, and a writer possessed of a brilliantly witty pen. An inventive and hilarious variation on the fairy tale of the granting of three wishes.

— *Publisher's Weekly*.

(8) The Fourth Dimension, nonfiction, Houghton Mifflin 1984.

Those who think the fourth dimension is nothing but time should be encouraged to read *The Fourth Dimension*, along with anyone else who feels like opening the hinges of his mind and letting in a bit of fresh air.

— *Washington Post Book World*.

Anyone with even a minimal interest in mathematics and fantasy will find *The Fourth Dimension* informative and mind-dazzling... Rucker plunges into spaces above three [dimensions] with a zest and energy that is breathtaking.

— Martin Gardner.

One great achievement of the book is that it should help to overcome the feeling of bemused awe by which non-mathematicians are often overwhelmed when multi-dimensional space is mentioned.

— *Nature*.

(7) The Sex Sphere, SF novel, Ace Books 1983.

Alien invaders tend to squirt acid, go invisible, or drive humongous ships. Not the ones in Rudy Rucker's 1980s classic *The Sex Sphere*, where an alien named Babs and her crew take the form of disembodied sex organs that attach to human hosts... Only trip-tastic writer Rucker could imagine such a scenario. The best part is that Rucker, a mathematics professor, opens the book with a whole introduction on the fourth dimension and how it works. The aliens, you see, are trying to return to this dimension... If you like your science fiction to contain hard science mixed with bizarro humor, don't miss *The Sex Sphere*.

— Annalee Newitz, *io9*

You cannot know where modern science fiction has gotten to unless you are familiar with Rucker's work.

— *Fantasy and Science Fiction*.

(6) The Fifty-Seventh Franz Kafka, stories, Ace Books 1983.

(5) Software, SF novel, Ace Books 1982, Prime Books 2010.

One of cyberpunk's most inventive works.

— *Rolling Stone*.

Rucker is one of science fiction's wittiest writers.

— *San Francisco Examiner*.

(4) Infinity and the Mind, nonfiction. Birkhäuser 1982, Princeton U. Press 2005.

Rudy Rucker's *Infinity and the Mind* is a terrific study with real mathematical depth.

— *The New Yorker*

He leads his readers through these mental gymnastics in an easy, informal way, often illustrating his points with cartoons.

— *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Informal, amusing, witty, profound ... In an extraordinary burst of creative energy, Rudy Rucker has managed to bring together every aspect of mathematical infinity... A dizzying glimpse into that boundless region of blinding light where the mysteries of transcendence shatter the clarity of logic, set theory, proof theory, and contemporary physics.

— Martin Gardner.

Rudy Rucker, set theorist and science-fiction author, has continued the tradition of making mathematics and computer science accessible to the intellectually minded lay-person. *Infinity and the Mind* is funny, provocative, entertaining and profound.

— *Journal of Symbolic Logic*.

Attempts to put Gödel's theorems into sharper focus, or at least to explain them to the non-specialist, abound. My personal favorite is Rudy Rucker's *Infinity and the Mind*, which I recommend without reservation.

— *Journal of the American Mathematical Society*.

A captivating excursion through the mathematical approaches to the notions of infinity and the implications of that mathematics for the vexing questions on the mind, existence and consciousness.

— *Mathematics Teacher*.

(3) White Light, SF novel, Ace Books 1980, Four Walls Eight Windows 2001.

White Light is a good, intelligent powerful novel, and the most auspicious debut in the SF field since I don't know when.

— Thomas M. Disch. in *Fantasy & Science Fiction*.

In *White Light* Rucker commandingly synthesizes mysticism, pop imagery, the Devil Himself, Jesus Christ, the great mathematicians and their ideas, 'head culture,' and even voodoo into a novel that takes us on a wild journey to infinity, to the Absolute, and back again. As for sheer writing, there's probably no one like him.

— John Shirley, author of the *Eclipse* trilogy.

White Light is a marvelously inventive and lunatically logical story, where not only is the scaling of infinity a mad, convincing adventure, but where ordinary human happiness matters too movingly.

— Ian Watson in *Vector*.

An adventure through time and space, the likes of which only a collaboration between Umberto Eco and Lewis Carroll could attempt. With traveling companions ranging from Einstein to the devil to a giant beetle named Franx...each turned corner of *White Light* is another gleeful surprise, another celebration of cleverness and imagination... This novel belongs to the tradition of science fiction pioneered by H. G. Wells, where the science is the source of intrigue that adventures grow from and propel the protagonists.

— *Amazon* editorial review.

(2) Spacetime Donuts, SF novel, Ace Books 1981.

Hip, humorous, and refreshing.

— *American Book Review*.

It's all done up in great style and it marks an auspicious debut.

— *Roanoke, Virginia, Times & World News*.

He knows how to boggle the mind and, next chapter, to boggle it again.

— Thomas M. Disch.

(1) Geometry, Relativity and the Fourth Dimension, nonfiction, Dover 1977.