



Telegraph Avenue: A Novel

By Michael Chabon

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“An immensely gifted writer and magical prose stylist.”

—Michiko Kakutani, *New York Times*

New York Times bestselling, Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Michael Chabon has transported readers to wonderful places: to New York City during the Golden Age of comic books (*The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*); to an imaginary Jewish homeland in Sitka, Alaska (*The Yiddish Policemen's Union*); to discover *The Mysteries of Pittsburgh*. Now he takes us to *Telegraph Avenue* in a big-hearted and exhilarating novel that explores the profoundly intertwined lives of two Oakland, California families, one black and one white. In *Telegraph Avenue*, Chabon lovingly creates a world grounded in pop culture—Kung Fu, '70s Blaxploitation films, vinyl LPs, jazz and soul music—and delivers a bravura epic of friendship, race, and secret histories.

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Telegraph Avenue: A Novel By Michael Chabon Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #178242 in Books
- Brand: Harper Collins Publishers
- Published on: 2012-09-11
- Released on: 2012-09-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.45" w x 6.00" l, 1.68 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 480 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

“An amazingly rich, emotionally detailed story....[Chabon’s] people become so real to us, their problems so palpably netted in the author’s buoyant, expressionistic prose, that the novel gradually becomes a genuinely immersive experience - something increasingly rare in our ADD age.” (**Michiko Kakutani**, *New York Times*)

“Astounding....steamrolls the barrier that has kept the Great American Novel at odds with the country it’s supposed to reflect....[A] huge-hearted, funny, improbably hip book.” (**Boston Globe**)

“Chabon has made a career of routing big, ambitious projects through popular genres, with superlative results....The scale of *Telegraph Avenue* is no less ambitious....Much of the wit...inheres in Chabon’s astonishing prose. I don’t just mean the showy bits...I mean the offhand brilliance that happens everywhere.” (**Jennifer Egan**, *New York Times Book Review* (cover review))

“*Telegraph Avenue* is so exuberant, it’s as if Michael Chabon has pulled joy from the air and squeezed it into the shape of words....His sentences spring, bounce, set off sparklers, even when dwelling in mundane details....Fantastic.” (**Carolyn Kellogg**, *Los Angeles Times Book Review*)

“Fresh, unpretentious, delectably written....For all his explorations into the contentious dynamics of family, race and community, Mr. Chabon’s first desire is simply to enchant with words. Eight novels in, he still uses language like someone amazed by a newly discovered superpower.” (**Sam Sacks**, *Wall Street Journal*)

“Witty and compassionate and full of more linguistic derring-do than any other writer in American could carry off.” (**Washington Post**)

“A genuinely moving story about race and class, parenting and marriage...Chabon is inarguably one of the greatest prose stylists of all time, powering out sentences that are the equivalent of executing a triple back flip on a bucking bull while juggling chain saws and making love to three women.” (**Esquire**)

“Chabon’s hugely likable characters all face crises of existential magnitude, rendered in an Electra Glide flow of Zen sentences and zinging metaphors that make us wish the needle would never arrive at the final groove.” (**Elle**)

“A beautiful, prismatic maximalism of description and tone, a sly meditation on appropriation as the real engine of integration, and an excellent rationale for twelve-page sentences.” (**GQ**)

“A magnificently crafted, exuberantly alive, emotionally lustrous, and socially intricate saga....Bubbling with lovingly curated knowledge about everything from jazz to pregnancy...Chabon’s rhapsodically detailed, buoyantly plotted, warmly intimate cross-cultural tale of metamorphoses is electric with suspense, humor, and bebop dialogue....An embracing, radiant masterpiece.” (**Booklist**, starred review)

“‘Virtuosity’ is the word most commonly associated with Chabon, and if *Telegraph Avenue*, the latest from Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Yiddish Policeman’s Union*, is at first glance less conceptual than its predecessors, the sentences are no less remarkable.” (**Publishers Weekly**)

“Expect its publication to be one of the bigger literary events of the year, akin to the release of *The Marriage Plot* this year or *Freedom* in 2010.” (*The Atlantic*)

“An end-of-an era epic....A Joyce-an remix with a hipper rhythm track.” (*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review))

“An exhilarating, bighearted novel.” (*O magazine*)

“If any novelist can pack the entire American zeitgeist into 500 pages, it’s Chabon....Ambitious, densely written, sometimes very funny, and fabulously over the top, here’s a rare book that really could be the great American novel.” (*Library Journal* (starred review))

From the Back Cover

As the summer of 2004 draws to a close, Archy Stallings and Nat Jaffe are still hanging in there—longtime friends, bandmates, and co-regents of Brokeland Records, a kingdom of used vinyl located in the borderlands of Berkeley and Oakland. Their wives, Gwen Shanks and Aviva Roth-Jaffe, are the Berkeley Birth Partners, two semi-legendary midwives who have welcomed more than a thousand newly minted citizens into the dented utopia at whose heart—half tavern, half temple—stands Brokeland.

When ex–NFL quarterback Gibson Goode, the fifth-richest black man in America, announces plans to build his latest Dogpile megastore on a nearby stretch of Telegraph Avenue, Nat and Archy fear it means certain doom for their vulnerable little enterprise. Meanwhile, Aviva and Gwen also find themselves caught up in a battle for their professional existence, one that tests the limits of their friendship. Adding another layer of complication to the couples' already tangled lives is the surprise appearance of Titus Joyner, the teenage son Archy has never acknowledged and the love of fifteen-year-old Julius Jaffe's life.

An intimate epic, a NorCal *Middlemarch* set to the funky beat of classic vinyl soul-jazz and pulsing with a virtuosic, pyrotechnical style all its own, *Telegraph Avenue* is the great American novel we've been waiting for. Generous, imaginative, funny, moving, thrilling, humane, triumphant, it is Michael Chabon's most dazzling book yet.

About the Author

Michael Chabon is the bestselling and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Moonglow* and *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*, among many others. He lives in Berkeley, California with his wife, the novelist Ayelet Waldman, and their children.

Users Review

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Michael Milliner:

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