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# **Orfeo:** A Novel

Richard Powers



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### **Orfeo: A Novel**

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Orfeo: A Novel Richard Powers

A *Chicago Tribune* 'Best Books of 2014' *New York Times* Bestseller Longlisted for The Man Booker Prize Longlisted for the National Book Award

The National Book Award–winning author of *The Echo Maker* delivers his most emotionally charged novel to date, inspired by the myth of Orpheus.

"If Powers were an American writer of the nineteenth century...he'd probably be the Herman Melville of *Moby-Dick*. His picture is that big," wrote Margaret Atwood (*New York Review of Books*). Indeed, since his debut in 1985 with *Three Farmers on Their Way to a Dance*, Richard Powers has been astonishing readers with novels that are sweeping in range, dazzling in technique, and rich in their explorations of music, art, literature, and technology.

In *Orfeo*, Powers tells the story of a man journeying into his past as he desperately flees the present. Composer Peter Els opens the door one evening to find the police on his doorstep. His home microbiology lab—the latest experiment in his lifelong attempt to find music in surprising patterns—has aroused the suspicions of Homeland Security. Panicked by the raid, Els turns fugitive. As an Internet-fueled hysteria erupts, Els—the "Bioterrorist Bach"—pays a final visit to the people he loves, those who shaped his musical journey. Through the help of his ex-wife, his daughter, and his longtime collaborator, Els hatches a plan to turn this disastrous collision with the security state into a work of art that will reawaken its audience to the sounds all around them. The result is a novel that soars in spirit and language by a writer who "may be America's most ambitious novelist" (Kevin Berger, *San Francisco Chronicle*).

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