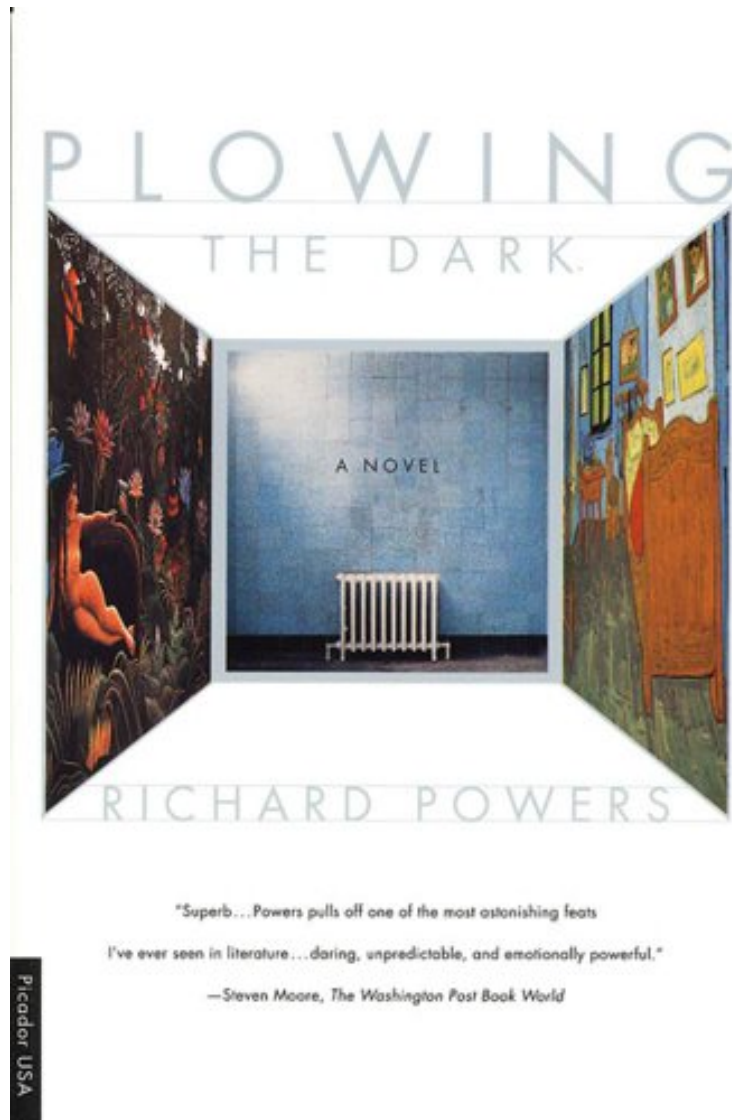


Plowing the Dark: A Novel

Von Richard Powers

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Von Richard Powers : Plowing the Dark: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Plowing the Dark: A Novel:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The most gifted contemporary fiction writerVon Ein KundeAfter completing Plowing the Dark, I marvel at Richard Powers' range of knowledge use of language. As he does so successfully in his previous six novels, Powers challenges the reader with dense, powerful prose that requires some serious effort. However, as in Plowing the Dark, the effort is

richly rewarded by a writer who uses dazzling language to draw the reader into two seemingly unrelated stories. I will not soon forget the richly drawn experiences of the major characters the power of the human imagination.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Thought provoking, inspiring, but...Von Thad BeierRichard Powers is well named; for this is a powerful book. Every page just slams your head with a combination of punches that just does not stop. While incredibly impressive, at times you wish the bell would ring and you could go back to your corner to catch your breath.I've lived in the world described in the book, doing research in computer graphics for the last 22 years; and in weaving his tapestry he does not drop many stitches. Every detail of the hardware, and almost everybody I know in the field can be found here. Still, the arcaneness of some of his references (Cornell boxes, please!) go over the line that separates authenticity from pedantry.In the end, this is a very good book. By packing so much into each page Powers can explore a huge number of subjects. Some characters are two dimensional, perhaps; but between them they span the limits of human experiential space. The book soars breathtakingly then in crashes despairingly in a few pages; it's a remarkable ride.This book reminded me at times of Asimov's Foundation; and at other times of Stephenson at his best. It's a book that I wish I had read more slowly -- Powers demands that the reader work hard to digest fully all the courses in this feast...and I'm sorry I pushed through to the end so quickly. This is a book for savoring. Maybe next time.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A cracking good tale in crackling proseVon J Scott Morrison"This room is never anything o'clock." That's the first line of this marvelous tale about two rooms a world apart--a virtual reality lab in Seattle and the room in Beirut where a man is held in solitary confinement by fundamentalist terrorists. What ties those two rooms together is the power of imagination both to destroy and to save. Powers manages to create a forward-rushing tale using such poetic language that one has to force oneself to slow down and savor his slightly quirky but always evocative prose. Two passages picked literally at random (I closed my eyes and pointed my finger) from page 11: "They drove out to his lair in the silence of small talk." "She did well around black. She understood it: one of the big two, not a true color, yet fraternizing with the deepest maroons, hoping to smuggle itself back over hue's closely guarded border."Powers is one of that group of young American writers who are so imaginative, so stylish, so knowing that their prose snaps like a flag in a gale. Yet he's not a smart aleck like some of the others. You care about his characters. You care "how it turns out."His previous novel, "Gain", seemed a bit flaccid to me. In "Plowing the Dark" he's back in top form.

KurzbeschreibungA dazzling new novel by the author of Galatea 2.2 and GainIn a digital laboratory on the shores of Puget Sound, a band of virtual-reality researchers races to complete the Cavern, an empty white room that can become a jungle, a painting, or a vast Byzantine cathedral. In a war-torn Mediterranean city, an American is held hostage, chained to a radiator in another empty white room. What can possibly join these two remote places? Only the shared imagination, a room that these people unwittingly build in common, where they are all about to meet.Adie Klarpol, a skilled but disillusioned artist, comes back to life, revived by the thrill of working with cutting-edge technology. Against the collapse of Cold War empires and the fall of the Berlin Wall, she retreats dangerously into the cyber-realities she has been hired to create. On the other side of the globe, Taimur Martin, an English teacher recovering from a failed love affair, is picked up off the streets in Beirut by Islamic fundamentalists and held in solitary captivity.A mesmerizing fiction that explores the imagination's power to both destroy and save, Plowing the Dark recasts the rules of the novel and stands as Richard Powers's most daring work to date..deNo one who enjoyed Richard Powers's remarkable breakthrough novel, Galatea 2.2, will be surprised that he has returned to the richly promising realm of cyber-invention, one of our age's few remaining frontiers and a siren call to restless intellects. In Plowing the Dark, an old friend recruits a disillusioned New York artist named Adie Klarpol to work on "the Cavern." TeraSys, a Seattle-based company, is building this virtual environment at great expense in the hope that it will lower its enormous tax liability as well as, in the long run, provide the template for all such virtual playrooms. "Millions of dollars of funding," Adie's friend Steve tells her when she arrives on the job, "and nobody around this dump can draw worth squat." Suitably impressed by the Cavern's programming, and slowly absorbing its dazzling capacity to project vivid and convincing illusions, she sets herself the task of creating a faithful 3-D version of Rousseau's Dream. Her painstaking efforts in the Realization Lab are aided by a host of supporting characters, one of whom, Spider Lim, proves so sensitive that he gets a bruise from bumping into one of Adie's virtual tree branches. And when the central female figure appears among the foliage, Lim is irresistibly drawn in, marveling that their first successful leaf, twirling in the Cavern darkness, had led to this--this pale, lentil body turning in his mind's dark. This scapular profile, these tow-line braids. Her hips fell somewhere on the Limaon of Pascal. The squares of her breasts' abscissas and ordinates summed to an integer. This was the math of women, a field he'd given up studying, female equations whose complexities had long ago surpassed his ability to differentiate. Powers's lush language corresponds to Adie's vision of Rousseau's jungle, and in turn to Rousseau's own ecstatic vision. Yet there is also something elegiac in the author's lavish descriptions of the Cavern's miracles, as if he were offering a late, last flowering of words before the cultural ascendancy of the image. Great, quotable chunks weight every page. Even readers fond of extravagant prose may find

Powers's verbal persistence wearying, though it argues that there are still contradictions and subtleties of mind that no image can track. --Regina Marler.co.uk

In *Plowing the Dark*, Richard Powers returns to the richly promising realm of cyber-invention, one of our age's few remaining frontiers and a siren call to restless intellects. No one who enjoyed his remarkable breakthrough novel, *Galatea 2.2*, will be surprised by this. Here, an old friend recruits a disillusioned New York artist named Adie Klarpol to work on "the Cavern". TeraSys, a Seattle-based company, is building this virtual environment at great expense in the hope that it will lower its enormous tax liability as well as, in the long run, provide the template for all such virtual playrooms. "Millions of dollars of funding," Adie's friend Steve tells her when she arrives on the job, "and nobody around this dump can draw worth squat." Suitably impressed by the Cavern's programming, and slowly absorbing its dazzling capacity to project vivid and convincing illusions, she sets herself the task of creating a faithful 3-D version of Rousseau's *Dream*. Her painstaking efforts in the Realization Lab are aided by a host of supporting characters, one of whom, Spider Lim, proves so sensitive that he gets a bruise from bumping into one of Adie's virtual tree branches. And when the central female figure appears among the foliage, Lim is irresistibly drawn in, marvelling that their first successful leaf, twirling in the Cavern darkness, had led to this--this pale, lentil body turning in his mind's dark. This scapular profile, these tow-line braids. Her hips fell somewhere on the Limaon of Pascal. The squares of her breasts' abscissas and ordinates summed to an integer. This was the math of women, a field he'd given up studying, female equations whose complexities had long ago surpassed his ability to differentiate. Powers' lush language corresponds to Adie's vision of Rousseau's jungle, and in turn to Rousseau's own ecstatic vision. Yet there is also something elegiac in the author's lavish descriptions of the Cavern's miracles, as if he were offering a late, last flowering of words before the cultural ascendancy of the image. Great, quotable chunks weight every page. Even readers fond of extravagant prose may find Powers's verbal persistence wearying, though it suggests that there are still contradictions and subtleties of mind that no image can track. --Regina Marler, .com