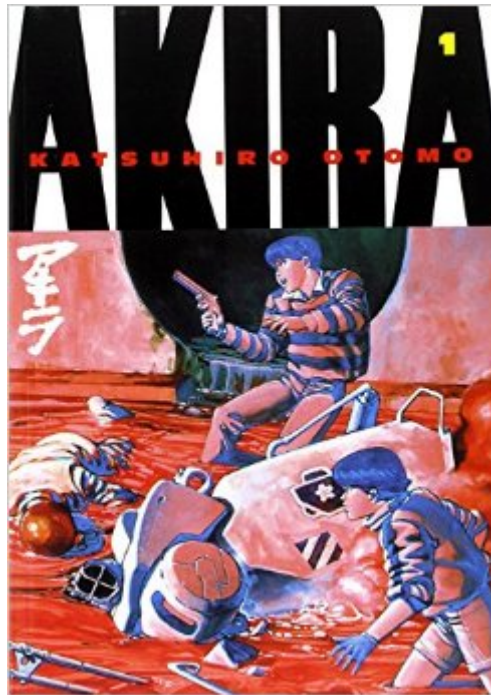


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Akira, Vol. 1



Synopsis

Welcome to Neo-Tokyo, built on the ashes of a Tokyo annihilated by a blast of unknown origin that triggered World War III. The lives of two streetwise teenage friends, Tetsuo and Kaneda, change forever when paranormal abilities begin to awaken in Tetsuo, making him a target for a shadowy agency that will stop at nothing to prevent another catastrophe like the one that leveled Tokyo. At the core of the agency's motivation is a raw, all-consuming fear of an unthinkable, monstrous power known only as Akira. Katsuhiro Otomo's stunning science fiction masterpiece is considered by many to be the finest work of graphic fiction ever produced, and Otomo's brilliant animated film version is regarded worldwide as a classic. This edition includes a new foreword from the author and a postscript from Dark Horse publisher Mike Richardson!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A lot of people are familiar with the film version of Akira. Readily available in the US, it's become a keystone in many American anime collections and is revered by many as one of the best Anime films ever made. Of course, along with the praise comes the obvious (and, in many cases, justified) complaints regarding the movie's plot and pacing. As wide in scope as the movie is, it's also exceedingly vague on many topics, and it seems like it only offers a glimpse into something much larger as opposed to being a singular narrative in and of itself. Well, Akira fans, your boat has come in. The original Japanese Mangas (comics) are now available in the US, and to those unfamiliar with the works of Mr. Otomo, brace yourself. This is the world of Akira as it was originally conceived, and the result is simply breathtaking. If you thought the movie lacked scope, wait 'till you get ahold of

these books. The futuristic story of Akira revolves around several factions - government, anti-government, spiritual, political, and more - all struggling against each other in an attempt to unearth a secret that started the third world war. That secret is a child, Akira, subjected to tests and adjustments by a government project to bring his latent psychic abilities to their full potential. Now, he is gifted with a complete attunement to the ebbs and flows of all the energies in the universe... And the ability to control them. He is the ultimate evolution of humanity, and the most dangerous and uncontrollable weapon ever unearthed by science. After an unleashing of his energy sets off World War III, he is locked deep underground at absolute zero, kept asleep until modern science can figure out a way to deal with him.

'Akira' and 'Lone Wolf and Cub' were among the first complete manga masterpieces to be published in English, and despite the mirror-imaging, were very similar to their original tankobon incarnations. Katsuhiro Otomo's SF-classic 'Akira' -- as well as its equally brilliant predecessor, 'Domu' -- revolutionized Japanese comics. It introduced realistic, incredibly detailed artwork that merged a far more subtle manga stylization with European influences, incorporating aspects from the art of 'Metal Hurlant' regulars Moebius, Francois Schuiten, and Enki Bilal. The importance of 'Akira' is difficult to express, but it certainly rivals US contemporaries 'Watchmen' and 'The Dark Knight Returns', though it ran far longer than either title. While the film adaptation is perhaps the best anime -- and animated -- film ever made, Otomo wrote and directed his debut when he was only around half-way through the manga. The 6-volume, 2200+-page series is not just 'worth checking out' for fans of the anime, it's essential. The film contains less than 15% of the super-epic that inspired it, but the art, the characters, the basic plot, and the light-speed pacing will all be unmistakably familiar. P.S. While I prefer the original right-to-left orientation for translated manga, Kodansha is still using the Dark Horse translation that appeared before Japanese formatting surprised the hell out of US publishers by catching on. It's only as big a deal as you make it, in my opinion; obsessive-compulsive types are out of luck, but anyone who has recovered from the mind-blowing shock of confronting a left-handed doppelganger in the bathroom mirror will do just fine. My preference for R-to-L has to do with preserving the artist's original vision... does that sound right? Something like that, anyway.

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