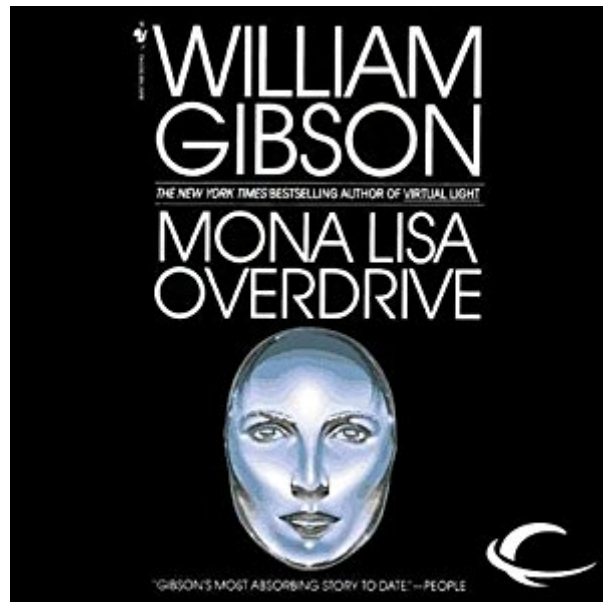


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Mona Lisa Overdrive



Synopsis

William Gibson, author of the extraordinary multiaward-winning novel *Neuromancer*, has written his most brilliant and thrilling work to date. Enter Gibson's unique world—lyric and mechanical, erotic and violent, sobering and exciting—where multinational corporations and high-tech outlaws vie for power, traveling into the computer-generated universe known as cyberspace. Into this world comes Mona, a young girl with a murky past and an uncertain future whose life is on a collision course with internationally famous *Sense/Net* star Angie Mitchell. Since childhood, Angie has been able to tap into cyberspace without a computer. Now from inside cyberspace, a kidnapping plot is masterminded by a phantom entity who has plans for Mona, Angie, and all humanity, plans that cannot be controlled or even known. And behind the intrigue lurks the shadowy Yakuza, the powerful Japanese underworld, whose leaders ruthlessly manipulate people and events to suit their own purposes or so they think. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

First: read *NEUROMANCER*, and *COUNT ZERO*, also by Gibson. Then: read *MONA LISA OVERDRIVE*. Read the three books in that order, and without reading other books intermittently. Actually, consider them one large novel. This will increase your comprehension and enjoyment of these books, which have come to be called *The Sprawl Trilogy*. MLO mainly follows the same pattern as *COUNT ZERO*. Several different characters are notable: Bobby Newmark, aka Count

Zero, who is jacked into cyberspace. Kumiko, daughter of a Yakuza, supposedly protected in London. Sally Shears, aka Molly, who may attempt to kill or kidnap Angie Mitchell, a star of Internet simulation programs, and various other bit players. Of course there is Mona, an illegitimate human, since she exists without an ID number in the digital age. Mona is almost a street person, a nonentity, but she looks much like Angie Mitchell. Sinister persons have plans for Mona and Angie: they plot (apparently) to kidnap one and kill the other. Cyberspace cowboys, Yakuza, Londoner thugs, and weird freakish types populate the plot, with The Finn from COUNT ZERO playing a minor role in this novel as well. Gibson, as always, manages to make the various plots converge at the end. Gibson's world is futuristic, both fantastic and somewhat scientifically plausible, dystopic and frightening. London is trapped in a time warp. Japan is shiny and ultra-modern. Cleveland is a dump. The Sprawl is forbidding, amazing, huge, and imposing. Cyberspace is where everyone wants to be. In MONA LISA OVERDRIVE, he mainly succeeds at delivering his vision and an entertaining plot. Kudos to Gibson for creating this amazing fictional universe; this is his forte. I found the novel's ending somewhat confusing and unsatisfying. Don't let me dissuade you! MONA LISA OVERDRIVE is a fine novel and a successful conclusion to The Sprawl Trilogy; however, if you're new to Gibson, start with BURNING CHROME (short stories) or NEUROMANCER.ken32

I could seriously not put this book down. I read Neuromancer, which I thought was an awesome book, and I read Count Zero, which was good but sort of boring. Mona Lisa Overdrive however was a true masterpiece true to Gibson. The environment, so dark and un-organic paints a dark picture in your mind that is so real and tangible in a way. Cyberspace and the computer-driven networked world also played so much of a part in this simply amazing imaginary world. When it matches with the characters so nicely you can't discount the book because it's so enthralling. I loved this book and I know a lot of others that did too (although most of them tell me it's a cult following to like Gibson's work).

The third in the Sprawl trilogy, I'd really recommend reading this but preferably if you've read Neuromancer and Count Zero first. It's an awesome book, but without the background knowledge from the two previous books it could be a struggle. The imagery Gibson concocts for us is exquisite, from the neon and chrome plated Sprawl, to the urban junkyard of the Factory, the dilapidated future London stuck in a time warp and of course the wonders of Gibson's Cyberspace, made even more fantastic here by some clever plot twists. It's all so real you're right there with his characters yet he doesn't bore you with over description - that's quite an achievement. His characters are complex

and breathe life and aren't just mono dimensional cardboard cutouts - they each have their strengths and frailties. And by the end of the book it all makes sense almost but leaving you to ponder some aspects of the story. Which is just as it should be :) Well recommended.

In *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, the third and final novel in William Gibson's *Sprawl* trilogy, it's been seven years since Angie Mitchell (from *Count Zero*) was taken out of Maas Biolabs and now she's a famous simstim star who's trying to break her designer drug habit. But a jealous Lady 3Jane plans to kidnap Angie and replace her with a cheap prostitute named Mona Lisa who's addicted to stimulants and happens to look like Angie. In a dilapidated section of New Jersey, Slick Henry makes large animated robotic sculptures out of scrap metal. He owes Kid Afrika a favor, so now he has to hide the comatose body of Bobby Newmark (aka "Count Zero"). Bobby is jacked into an Aleph where he's got some secret project going on. A Cleveland girl named Cherry Chesterfield is Bobby's nurse. Kumiko is the daughter of a Japanese Yakuza crime boss. Her father has sent her to live in London while the Yakuza war is going on. There she meets Gibson's most iconic character, Molly Millions, who's going by the name Sally Shears. Molly is being blackmailed by Lady 3Jane, so Kumiko inadvertently gets dragged into the kidnapping plot. *Mona Lisa Overdrive* contains several exciting action scenes which feature kidnappings, shoot-outs, helicopter escapes, remote-controlled robot warriors, collapsing catwalks, and falling refrigerators. These are loosely connected by the continuation and conclusion of the AI plot which began in *Neuromancer*. I wasn't completely satisfied with the sketchy ending or the wacky reveal on the last page, but that's okay. I was mainly reading *Mona Lisa Overdrive* for the style, anyway. So much of Gibson's style and success stems from the mesmerizing world he's built -- a future Earth in which national governments have been replaced by large biotech companies. Japan is modern and glitzy and much of the former United States has fallen into decay. By the time you get to *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (don't even attempt to read it before reading both *Neuromancer* and *Count Zero*), you're feeling rather comfortable (or as comfortable as is possible to feel) in this world, so the setting lacks the force it had in the previous novels. In *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, you'll visit London, but it seems to be stuck in the 20th century, so it feels instantly (and a little disappointingly) familiar. But Gibson manages to keep things fresh and highlight his unique style by introducing new characters and delving deep into their psyches. Even minor characters are works of art, such as Eddy, Mona's low-class scheming pimp, and Little Bird, who earned that moniker because of his weird hairdo. Even when the plots don't satisfy, it's entertaining enough just to hang out with Gibson's unforgettable characters. The exception is Kumiko, who has little personality and seems to exist mainly to remind us that Japan has surpassed

America, and for an excuse to show us a new bit of cool technology (Colin, the chip-ghost). In 1989, *Mona Lisa Overdrive* was nominated for, but did not win, the Nebula Award, the Hugo Award, and the Locus Award. It lacks the impact of its prequels, but it's still a stylish piece of work and not to be missed if you're a fan of William Gibson. I listened to the audio version narrated by Jonathan Davis. He is excellent, as always, and I recommend this version to audio readers. You may have to work at *Neuromancer* on audio if you're not familiar with this world and its slang, but by the time you get to *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, that problem is long gone.

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