



Amazon Studios Orders Series Adaptation of Anansi Boys

July 21, 2021

Based on Neil Gaiman's International Best-Selling Novel, the Six-Part Limited Series Will Begin Filming in Scotland Later This Year

LONDON & CULVER CITY, Calif.–July 21, 2021–Amazon Studios today announced that it has ordered a series adaptation of Neil Gaiman's international best-selling novel *Anansi Boys*. *Anansi Boys* will premiere exclusively on Amazon Prime Video in more than 240 countries and territories worldwide. The six episode limited series will begin shooting in Scotland later this year.

Based on Gaiman's novel of the same name, *Anansi Boys* follows Charlie Nancy, a young man who is used to being embarrassed by his estranged father. But when his father dies, Charlie discovers that his father was Anansi: trickster god of stories. And he learns that he has a brother. Now his brother, Spider, is entering Charlie's life, determined to make it more interesting but making it a lot more dangerous.

Gaiman, Sir Lenny Henry, Douglas Mackinnon, Hanelle M. Culpepper, Hilary Bevan Jones (Endor Productions) and Richard Fee (Red Production Company) are executive producers. Gaiman and Henry will also write for the series along with Arvind Ethan David, Kara Smith, and Racheal Ofori. Gaiman and Mackinnon will serve as co-showrunners. Culpepper (*Star Trek: Picard*, *Memories of Ptolemy Grey*) will direct the pilot. Jermain Julien (*Grantchester*) and Azhur Saleem (*Doctor Who*) are also directing for the series. Paul Frift will produce.

Anansi Boys is a stand-alone story, not a sequel or spin-off of Gaiman's novel *American Gods*. The book's story was originally developed in conversation between Gaiman and Henry with the series adaptation reuniting the collaboration between the pair.

Said Gaiman: "*Anansi Boys* began around 1996, from a conversation I had with Lenny Henry about writing a story that was diverse and part of the culture that we both loved. I wrote a novel, an (I hope) joyous and funny book about a dead god and his two sons, about birds and ghosts and beasts and cops, based in Caribbean and African tales. It was my first number one NYT Bestseller and went on to become a beloved and award-winning book.

"*Anansi Boys* as a TV series has been a long time coming -- I first started working with Endor and Red on making it over a decade ago. We needed Amazon Prime to come on board and embrace our vision, we needed a lead director with the craft and vision of Hanelle Culpepper, we needed the creative and technical wizardry of Douglas Mackinnon (who worked out how we could push the bounds of the possible to shoot a story set all over the world in a huge studio outside Edinburgh), and we needed the rest of the amazing talents that nobody knows about yet.

"I am thrilled that Sir Lenny Henry is one of our executive producers. He was there when it was conceived, he narrated the audiobook and he has kept the heart of the production true.

"We are trying to make a new kind of show with *Anansi Boys*, and to break ground with it to make something that celebrates and rejoices in diversity both in front of and behind the camera. I'm so thrilled it's happening and that people will be meeting Mr. Nancy, Charlie and Spider, the Bird Woman and the rest of them."

Said Henry: "I've been a huge fan (and couch sleeping friend) of Neil Gaiman's for over 30 years and I have loved being a part of the *Anansi Boys* creative team. I love that we're going to have a suitably diverse cast and crew to tell this joyous story! What's great is that the whole production is listening and ensuring that inclusion is happening and is being seen to be done."

Said Mackinnon: "I'm thrilled that we get to take the story of *Anansi Boys* from page to screen with the creative powers of Neil and Lenny, as well as an extraordinary group of other writers, directors, and a cast and crew of so many diverse perspectives alongside us. We'll be shooting in brand new studios in Scotland where we'll have the most cutting-edge CGI technology in the world to make all the magic and wonder of *Anansi Boys* come to life."

Said Culpepper: "There's nothing quite like *Anansi Boys* - a compelling and contemporary story wrapped in unique and powerful mythology from the Black diaspora. I'm both excited and honored to be working with legends like Neil Gaiman and Lenny Henry, along with the rest of the incredible Anansi team, using new technology and new studios to create a great show in ways that couldn't have been done before now. This is a dream project for me as a director."

Said Bevan Jones and Fee: "We're delighted to be working with Amazon Studios and our talented team of writers, directors and producers to bring Neil's magical story to the screen. *Anansi Boys* has all of Neil's trademark wit, mischief and heart, and is bursting with joy. We feel very lucky to have the backing of Amazon Studios and such a strong creative team to do justice to Neil's epic vision."

Said Vernon Sanders, Co-Head of Television, Amazon Studios: "No one can weave a story of fantasy, humor, and deep emotion quite like Neil Gaiman, and *Anansi Boys* is a funny, weird, wonderful ride. We're so happy to have Neil, Lenny, and Douglas bring their vision for *Anansi Boys* to the screen for our Prime Video customers around the world."

The show is produced by Amazon Studios, The Blank Corporation, Endor Productions, and RED Production Company. With this announcement, Amazon Studios continues its relationship with Gaiman, who has an overall deal with the studio.

About Amazon Studios

Amazon Studios is the home for talent, creating and producing original films and television series for a global audience. Original series premiere on

Amazon Prime Video, which is available in over 240 countries and territories, including the Emmy Award-winning comedies *Fleabag*, created by and starring Emmy Award-winner Phoebe Waller-Bridge, and *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* from Emmy Award-winners Amy Sherman-Palladino and Daniel Palladino, as well as the action thriller drama *Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan* starring John Krasinski, the irreverent superhero series *The Boys*, Greg Daniels' comedy *Upload*, and *The Underground Railroad*, from Academy Award-winner Barry Jenkins. Amazon Originals also include culturally relevant and buzzed about content such as Rihanna's annual *Savage X Fenty* music and fashion event. Amazon Studios also produces original content for IMDb TV, Amazon's premium free streaming service. Upcoming IMDb TV series from Amazon Studios include the *Bosch* spin-off series starring Titus Welliver and the *Untitled Judge Judy Sheindlin Project*.

In film, Amazon Studios produces and acquires original movies for theatrical release and exclusively for Amazon Prime Video. Amazon Studios became the first streaming service to win Oscars for *Manchester by the Sea* and *The Salesman*. In 2021, Amazon Studios received a record-breaking 12 Academy Award nominations, winning two for *Sound of Metal* for Best Editing and Best Sound. Recent Amazon original movies include the sci-fi escape *The Tomorrow War*, starring Chris Pratt, the action-packed thriller *Tom Clancy's Without Remorse* starring Michael B. Jordan, the cultural smash hit *Coming 2 America* starring Eddie Murphy, the Golden Globe-winning comedy *Borat Subsequent Moviefilm* with Sacha Baron Cohen, the Oscar-winning *Sound of Metal* starring Riz Ahmed, the family comedy *My Spy* starring Dave Bautista, Garrett Bradley's *Time, Sylvie's Love* starring Tessa Thompson and Nnamdi Asomugha, Regina King's directorial debut *One Night in Miami...*, and *I'm Your Woman* starring and produced by Rachel Brosnahan.

About Neil Gaiman:

Neil Gaiman is the award-winning author of books, graphic novels, short stories, and films for all ages, including the Oscar nominated *Coraline*. Some of his most notable titles include *Norse Mythology*, *American Gods*, *The Graveyard Book* and the *Sandman* comic series which is being adapted for television by Netflix and Warner Bros TV, with Gaiman as Adviser and Executive Producer. He was the writer and showrunner for the Amazon Prime and BBC Studios adaptation of *Good Omens*, based on the book he co-authored with Sir Terry Pratchett, and his script for *Good Omens* Episode 3, "Hard Times" won the 2019 Ray Bradbury Award, and *Good Omens* won the 2020 Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation (long form). His novel *American Gods* was also adapted to a critically acclaimed, Emmy-nominated TV series on Starz. Born in the UK, he now lives in the United States.