

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910451893703321
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Titolo	Epic of evolution [[electronic resource]] : seven ages of the cosmos / / Eric Chaisson ; illustrated by Lola Judith Chaisson
Pubbl/distr/stampa	New York, : Columbia University Press, c2005
ISBN	1-281-74762-9 9786613790149 0-231-50960-X
Descrizione fisica	xviii, 478 p. : ill
Altri autori (Persone)	ChaissonLola Judith
Disciplina	523.1
Soggetti	Cosmology Life - Origin Matter Electronic books.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [443]-444) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Preface -- Prologue: COSMOLOGICAL OVERVIEW -- 1. PARTICLE EPOCH: Simplicity Fleeting -- 2. GALACTIC EPOCH: Hierarchy of Structures -- 3. STELLAR EPOCH: Forges for Elements -- 4. PLANETARY EPOCH: Habitats for Life -- 5. CHEMICAL EPOCH: Matter Plus Energy -- 6. BIOLOGICAL EPOCH: Complexity Sustained -- 7. CULTURAL EPOCH: Intelligence to Technology -- Epilogue: A WHOLE NEW ERA -- Further Reading -- Glossary -- Index -- About the Author
Sommario/riassunto	How did everything around us—the air, the land, the sea, and the stars—originate? What is the source of order, form, and structure characterizing all material things? These are just some of the grand scientific questions Eric J. Chaisson, author of the classic work <i>Cosmic Dawn</i> , explores in his enthralling and illuminating history of the universe. Explaining new discoveries and a range of cutting-edge ideas and theories, Chaisson provides a creative and coherent synthesis of current scientific thinking on the universe's beginnings. He takes us on a tour of the seven ages of the cosmos, from the formless era of radiation through the origins of human culture. Along the way he

examines the development of the most microscopic and the most immense aspects of our universe and the complex ways in which they interact. Drawing on recent breakthroughs in astrophysics and biochemistry, Chaisson discusses the contemporary scientific view that all objects—from quarks and quasars to microbes and the human mind—are interrelated. Researchers in all the natural sciences are beginning to identify an underlying pattern penetrating the fabric of existence—a sweepingly encompassing view of the formation, structure, and function of all objects in our multitudinous universe. Moreover, as Chaisson demonstrates, by deciphering the scenario of cosmic evolution, scientists can also determine how living organisms managed to inhabit the land, generate language, and create culture. *Epic of Evolution* offers a stunning view of how various changes, operating across almost incomprehensible domains of space and nearly inconceivable stretches of time and through the evolutionary combination of necessity and chance, have given rise to our galaxy, our star, our planet, and ourselves.

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