

Peace_ cover art

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 03 Mar 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1412>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Dan Rabin — 03 Mar 1999, 22:15

William Ansley asks,

Who drew the cover art?

The back of the Orb edition says: Cover art by Gahan Wilson

But the copyright page says: Cover art by Tony Roberts

I don't know for sure, but when I first saw the cover, I said, "Aha, Gahan Wilson!" and was surprised not to see it credited to him--his style is so distinctive.

I speculate that there may have been some contractual reason why Gahan Wilson's art could not appear under his own name at the time the artwork was originally used, probably on the Berkley paperback edition dated 1982 (which edition bears no cover artwork credit that I can find).

The 1975 hardcover first US edition does not have the Wilsonic artwork. The Orb edition seems to have been otherwise either photographically reproduced from the first edition or else printed from the same plates, as the typography and pagination are identical.

The Berkley edition contains an additional scrap of artwork on the spine, a skeleton that is sitting on the "P" of "PEACE" with its back leaning against the right edge of the spine. This skeleton is reused on the title page with its back leaning against the "G" of "Gene" (oooh, secret hidden meanings!). The occurrence on the title page has an additional component that looks like a mandible placed below the pelvis of the skeleton.

The Berkley cover also has one bone and five other little marks outside the hatched area that is reproduced on the Orb cover. These marks are directly beneath the "P" of "PEACE". The paperback also gives the letters of the title raised outlines.

It is possible that the Wilsonic artwork was introduced for some edition between 1975 and 1982, but the book doesn't seem to have been that popular.

Or maybe the discrepancy is a subtle clue that Tom Doherty Associates is an unreliable narrator, and that "Gene Wolfe" is almost certainly a persona forged to avoid paying royalties to a real author (note that "Peace by Gene Wolfe" is an anagram of "Enfeeble copy wage").

-- Dan Rabin