

The Wonderful Hierogrammate of Oz

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 05 Mar 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1416>

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Mitchell A. Bailey — 05 Mar 1999, 17:36

Hey guys. Having devoured Robert Borski's Fifth Head of Cerberus site and communicating with him re it, he suggested I check out this list. I've been reading the archives (..through the arch to the other end of the big room and down the back stairs into the hidden door to Master Ultan's lightless study in the nethermost stack...) and lurking around up to now. I must say your discussions have already vastly augmented my appreciation of Wolfe.

Anyway, to my point: There was a recent line of discussion about allusions to "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" in The Eyeflash Miracles (which thus far I haven't read). That pricked my ears up because I had thought I detected a more subtle allusion in Urth of the New Sun, the chapter entitled "The Captain":

"...we halted before great doors...These...swung slowly and ponderously open of themselves, revealing a long vista of marmoreal arches- each at least a hundred cubits high- down which played such light as was never before seen upon any world that circled a star, light silver, gold, and berylline [light blue-green] by turns... The doors shut behind us with a crash..."

Isn't that a pretty fair description of the entry to the Wizard's hallway leading to his audience chamber in the movie? The endless marmoreal arches (some dictionary entries for "marmoreal" include an illustration very like the scene from "Oz") and their unreal lighting of course was provided by the studio's backdrop-painters.

"...Gunnie and the remaining hands recoiled in fear at all this and had to be driven through the doorway..."

The Cowardly Lion's reluctance to enter the hall!