

Fairy Tale algame

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 02 Nov 1999

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 02 Nov 1999, 14:30

A bit of thread:

I strongly suspect that Damien Broderick knows exactly what I'm talking about. (I also know that alga is rolling her eyes at all this!)

Well, no. Actually I agree---how not. The Gothic elements refer directly back to alchemy, most specifically in Baldanders's castle by the lake with his "experiments" aided by "elementals" from the air and his great familiar/catamite/clone (and the whole parody, almost Pythoneque, in which Baldanders is both Frankenstein and creature, with Dr. Talos as a "beard"). Also much later when we find the homunculus/mandragora at the Citadel. But, as I have said before, these are almost certainly filtered from the direct Gothic tradition (mostly English) by Wolfe's reading of Goethe's Faust, Part II (the one people don't read so much), which is a weirdly hallucinogenic "take" on the Gothic/alchemical novel with its castles and laboratories and "philosopher's stones" and transmutations.

Typhon too appears in this general air of the Gothic.

And mantis, I don't roll my eyes at your allusions, they start to roll when you seize them (the allusions, not the eyes) with your mandibles and brutally worry them into virtuality.

(Technical aside: that last paragraph is what is called in alchemy a "retort.")

Doh! Er, I mean, "I meant you were rolling your eyes at how very commonplace and obvious the topic was!" <g>

(This is an example of the fabled "weak force," a masking companion for the fabled element Chagrinium.)

I won't be writing an essay on the subject (alchemy in/of/on Urth) anytime soon, since I've sworn off essays for a while (with the exception of things that I've already promised). And it would take an essay to me to figure out if it was really there or not.

Completely off topic: I've seen a new movie called "Being John Malkovich" and I recommend it.

=mantis=