

Gormeghast

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 29 Jun 2001

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Russell Wodell — 29 Jun 2001, 08:26

There is an excellent BBC book, "The Art of Gormeghast," about the making of the series. In fact, it's in my opinion better than the series, because it allows the reader to feast on the extraordinary art direction without the tedium of watching the series. Well, maybe it's not fair to call it "tedium." The problem, IMHO, is that the adaptation is too successful: it captures the unique slow-motion grotesquery of Peake so faithfully that it becomes quite remarkably unpleasant.

And, of course, in case there was any doubt, it makes it indisputably clear that Peake was a direct influence on The Book of the New Sun. (Imagine that as a mini-series!)

About eight years ago or so, there was an equally remarkable tv version of Peake's "Mr. Pye," starring Derek Jacobi as the protagonist who moves to the Isle of Sark to found a new religion. He is disturbed to discover he is growing wings...so behaves less well, and discovers he is growing horns.... Like "Boy in Darkness," it is essentially a good-humored attack on Christianity quite daunting in its ferocity.