

Wizard Knight and after

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 01 Apr 2002

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Christopher Culver — 01 Apr 2002, 05:04

I've been corresponding with Gene Wolfe for a few weeks now, and I'm pleasantly surprised that he has time to answer letters from fans.

Apparently, The Wizard Knight will be in two volumes called, appropriately enough, WIZARD and KNIGHT. Wolfe seems to be pretty modest about his talents, he tells me there's no guarantee that David Hartwell will accept it.

I asked him if after Wizard Knight we'd see a conclusion to the Soldier series, and his response was "I don't know what my next book will be. Or even if there will be a next book. If there is, it may be another Soldier book. If it is, it may conclude the series, though I doubt it." That the Soldier series wouldn't be completed after three volumes makes me wonder what sort of plans Wolfe has come up with for Latro since SOLDIER OF ARETE was published.

I wonder why the Soldier series tends to be the most underappreciated of Wolfe's work. (Well, it's certainly rated higher than Operation Ares for everyone, I'm sure.)

Christopher Culver

David DiGiacomo — 03 Apr 2002, 19:06 · follows Christopher Culver

I wonder why the Soldier series tends to be the most underappreciated of Wolfe's work. (Well, it's certainly rated higher than Operation Ares for everyone, I'm sure.)

I would distinguish between underappreciated and low rated books. I think that if the Soldier series is underappreciated, it's because very few readers are sufficiently well read in history to have more than a vague understanding of it. CASTLEVIEW is also underappreciated, because it's incomprehensible (but good otherwise).

In contrast, THERE ARE DOORS and PANDORA BY HOLLY HOLLANDER are low rated because readers understand them (?), but dislike them.

Fernando Gouvea — 03 Apr 2002, 19:25 · follows David DiGiacomo

David DiGiacomo said:

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Hmm, I don't quite feel that way. I agree, pretty much, about Castlevue. My problem with the Soldier series is just that it's unfinished. The books so far seem quite satisfying to me, but the open-ended status of the story makes it hard to have an overall opinion. I'd love to see more books in that series.

I do like There Are Doors. I think Gene's description of it is fair: it's a book about "falling in love" and what it does to you. People don't like the alternate universe aspect, I guess, because they feel that the other universe is not sufficiently different from ours. That doesn't bother me too much because the changes seem to fit the overall theme, and I'm willing to take the (admittedly somewhat ad hoc) explanation offered in the book for why the worlds are in fact so similar.

Pandora is harder for me to find much significance in, though I enjoyed the ride when I was reading it.

One major reason, of course, for all of these books (and Free Live Free and others) to receive less attention is that they don't fit into some large framework as the various Sun books do. Because they don't, there are far fewer details to discuss and unravel, and so we discuss them less.

Fernando

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Sattinger's Law:

It works better if you plug it in.

Nigel Price — 14 Apr 2002, 11:02 · follows Fernando Gouvea

Oh, ages ago, David DiGiacomo wrote:

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Strange, isn't it? I really like "Pandora by Holly Hollander" - it's charming, witty, and well executed - and thought "There are Doors" was quite brilliant, if decidedly odd.

Is "Castlevue" really incomprehensible? The narrative seems radically compressed, certainly, and there are what may be signs of haste in the composition, but essentially it is GW doing a sort of late twentieth century, midwestern Charles Williams, and as such is excellent fun.

For the record, I rate the "Soldier" books very highly indeed and am constantly surprised that we don't discuss them on the list more often. Personally, I would love to see "Soldier of Sidon" (or whatever it might be called) published.

Nigel (who is slowly reading his way through two weeks' worth of accumulated Urth lists, having

been away on holiday, and has now read Fernando Q. Gouvea's response to David DiGiacomo's posting...he agrees with Fernando and probably wouldn't have bothered to type out the above if he'd read that message first!)