

Kai Lung (was Re: (urth) Major new Wolfe story online)

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 09 May 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3246>

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.

Adam Stephanides — 09 May 2002, 18:20

on 5/7/02 6:35 PM, Josh Geller at dclxvi at dclxvi.best.vwh.net wrote:

On Tue, 7 May 2002, Matthew Davis wrote:

"Adam Stephanides" <adamsteph at earthlink.net> writes:

So Wolfe is a Kai Lung fan. I had no idea.

The Kai Lung stories were an early-20th-century series of fantasy stories set in China, written by Ernest Bramah. The characters in them always talk in the flowery, ultra-polite idiom of the Chinese princess in "Under Hill," so I assumed that Wolfe was pastiching Kai Lung. But he might have been pastiching Vance, I suppose.

The two volumes reprinted by Ballantine in the 70s (KAI LUNG'S GOLDEN HOURS and KAI LUNG UNROLLS HIS MAT) are well worth seeking out, imo.

--Adam

Phoebe Davis — 09 May 2002, 19:32 · follows Adam Stephanides

I thought of Kai Lung immediately upon reading Underhill, but not Vance at all. Not saying that a Vance influence is not there of course. The tongue in cheek use of overly ornate language is one similarity, but Underhill and Kai Lung also share wit, and an anachronistically satirical theme. The exchange btw the merchant and the knight bent on extorting money is very reminiscent of Bramah. Sadly, I've only been able to find Kai Lung Unrolls his Mat in my years of collecting but I continue to look. Both Golden Hours and Mat were reprinted as part of Lin Carter's excellent Adult Fantasy series for Ballantine. Imo, any book in that series is worth finding and reading.

Phoebe

--- Adam Stephanides <adamsteph at earthlink.net> wrote:

on 5/7/02 6:35 PM, Josh Geller at dclxvi at dclxvi.best.vwh.net wrote:

On Tue, 7 May 2002, Matthew Davis wrote:

"Adam Stephanides" <adamsteph at earthlink.net> writes:

So Wolfe is a Kai Lung fan. I had no idea.

The Kai Lung stories were an early-20th-century series of fantasy stories set in China, written by Ernest Bramah. The characters in them always talk in the flowery, ultra-polite idiom of the Chinese princess in "Under Hill," so I assumed that Wolfe was pastiching Kai Lung. But he might have been pastiching Vance, I suppose.

The two volumes reprinted by Ballantine in the 70s (KAI LUNG'S GOLDEN HOURS and KAI LUNG UNROLLS HIS MAT) are well worth seeking out, imo.

--Adam

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 10 May 2002, 16:55 · follows Phoebe Davis

Phoebe observed:

Both *Golden Hours* and *Mat* were reprinted as part of Lin Carter's excellent Adult Fantasy series for Ballantine. Imo, any book in that series is worth finding and reading.

While that's a good generalization, I'd like to point out that the BAF series was also the originating point of Kurtz's *_Deryni_* books, and leave it at that.

Michael Straight — 13 May 2002, 18:57 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

On Thu, 9 May 2002, Adam Stephanides wrote:

The Kai Lung stories were an early-20th-century series of fantasy stories set in China, written by Ernest Bramah. The characters in them always talk in the flowery, ultra-polite idiom of the Chinese princess in "Under Hill," so I assumed that Wolfe was pastiching Kai Lung. But he might have been pastiching Vance, I suppose.

When I read the story, I thought Wolfe might be pastiching Barry Hughart's *_Bridge of Birds_* (which is possibly the most wonderful fantasy novel I've ever read, Wolfe's works included).

-Rostrum