

The Progeny

The Urth list — 10 messages, 7 voices, 28 Feb 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3867>

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MBS 808 — 28 Feb 2003, 15:50

GW has been producing excellent works for 30 years now and his writing has deserved the (minute) attention we give it.

Who, of the "younger" generation, might compare?

PS - a random rave months ago about Jeff Vandermeer on this list is much appreciated. He's great!

Any thoughts on Steven Erikson or Mary Gentle?

cilluff1 at optonline.net — 28 Feb 2003, 16:03 · follows MBS 808

VanderMeer is fantastic, Dradin, In Love and the rest of City of Saints and Madmen provides the most immersive, fully realized world I've found since TBOTNS.

I'm in the middle of Ted Chiang's Stories of Your Life and Others, a collection of all the author's published short stories, it's quite good. Jonathan Carroll is good too. Perdido Street Station, by China Mieville, I thought was mostly very interesting, detailed and enthralling, but in parts seemed to bite off more than it could chew (every once in a while it hit you over the head too much, I would think "now I know how he writes such large books so quickly, he doesn't edit").

Original Message:

From: MBS 808 mbs808 at yahoo.com

Date: Fri, 28 Feb 2003 07:50:00 -0800 (PST)

To: urth at urth.net

Subject: (urth) The Progeny

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Matthew Weber — 28 Feb 2003, 16:11 · follows cilluff1 at optonline.net

At 07:50 AM 2/28/03 -0800, you wrote:
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I'm reading Steven Erikson right now, and I'm having a great time with him,
but I wouldn't put him anywhere near GW's level as a writer. His world-building and plotting are
impressive, and the books are very engaging & entertaining, but when all's said & done they're
fairly standard epic fantasy (though with more moral ambiguity than your standard Tolkien
knockoff).

Matthew Weber
Curatorial Assistant
Music Library
University of California, Berkeley

Great men are not always wise.
The Holy Bible (The Old Testament): _The Book of Job_, chapter 32, verse 9

matthew.malthouse — 28 Feb 2003, 18:06 · follows Matthew Weber

On 28/02/2003 15:50:00 MBS 808 wrote:
Any thoughts on Steven Erikson or Mary Gentle?

I have just recently been enthralled by Erikson. So loved the four books of the Malazan Fallen
that I'm not in any state to be (Lit-) critical about them yet.

Long loved Mary Gentle's work. "Rat's and Gargoyles" is my favorite closely followed by "Ash".

What of Alastair Reynolds? "Revelation Space", "Chasm City", "Redemption Ark".

Matthew

matthew.malthouse — 28 Feb 2003, 18:09 · follows matthew.malthouse

On 28/02/2003 16:03:48 cilluff1 wrote:
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thought was mostly very interesting, detailed and enthralling, but in
parts
seemed to bite off more than it could chew (every once in a while it hit
you over the head too much, I would think "now I know how he writes such
large books so quickly, he doesn't edit").

I'd partially agree.

The sequel "The Scar" is slightly thinner. :-)

Matthew

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 28 Feb 2003, 18:25 · follows matthew.malthouse

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and his writing has deserved the (minute) attention we
give it.

Who, of the "younger" generation, might compare?

H'mmm. I guess some of this depends on what you mean by "younger generation." Many of the '60s/'70s "New Wave" writers are technically younger than Wolfe. I'll assume you mean someone who came along after, say, William Gibson. Unfortunately my chronology isn't that good, right through here, so you'll have to excuse me if I stumble on this.

Some names that might go into a reasonable hat -- people who, while not "imitation Wolfe" in any sense, share at least one or two of the virtues that I associate with Wolfe:

- o Karen Joy Fowler
- o Neil Gaiman
- o Peter Hamilton
- o China Miéville
- o Pat Murphy
- o Matt Ruff
- o Mary Doria Russell
- o Robert J. Sawyer
- o Connie Willis
- o David Zindell

Just some thoughts...

Phoebe Davis — 01 Mar 2003, 00:52 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Enjoy Gentle will track down Erickson. Jonathan Carroll is a treasure as is Dan Simmons and James Blaylock. I thought King Rat by Mieville was a better read if not as dense as Perdido St. Certainly Neal Gaiman, Pat Murphy, would include Sherri Tepper's early work.

The one writer that I've ever felt compares with Wolfe on several levels is Tim Powers. Powers is Roman Catholic, "Declare" is his latest and probably the most emblematic of that. I believe Nick mentions that book in his Washington Post article on GW. Powers' writing style while not identical to Wolfe is elegant and dense. When I owned my own SF bookstore, I must have sold 40 copies of "Last Call" in hardcover. Last Call was followed by Expiration Date and Earthquake Weather.

Phoebe

--- Dan'I Danehy-Oakes <ddanehy at siebel.com> wrote:
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Just some thoughts...

--Blattid

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Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 01 Mar 2003, 01:01 · follows Phoebe Davis

Phoebe wrote:

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Aaargh. I can't _believe_ I left Tim out of my list. I even had my copy of "Earthquake Weather" in my pocket when I was making it.

Last Call / Expiration Date / Earthquake Weather is undoubtedly Tim's masterpiece to date, but I'd suggest ON STRANGER TIDES as possibly the best starting place. It isn't quite as dense as the trilogy, but dense enough to challenge (well, at least to challenge anyone who doesn't swallow Wolfe neat), stands alone, and is a ripping good pirate story. (Surely there isn't anyone out there immune to the lure of the Pirates of the Caribbean...)

Of course if Tim is anyone's "progeny" it's Philip K. Dick's, but even that's too much to claim. He's definitely of his own making. And if he has a predecessor, it isn't Dick or Wolfe, but Charles Williams...

Josh Geller — 01 Mar 2003, 02:30 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Michael Swanwick is on the same level as Gene Wolfe.

Also on that level, or just slightly below it, is Patricia Anthony.

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matthew.malthouse — 10 Mar 2003, 10:49 · follows Josh Geller

On 28/02/2003 18:25:17 Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

o David Zindell

"Neverness" and "The Requiem for Homo Sapiens" trilogy both delighted me. One might say Lupine affinities.

However I've just read the first and started the second of his more recent "The Ea Cycle" - set in something akin to the classical fantasy-magic mould
- and find myself vastly underwhelmed.

Matthew