

Other authors

The Urth list — 8 messages, 8 voices, 13 Apr 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3929>

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Jason Ingram — 13 Apr 2003, 07:49

Perennial favorite 'other' author on the list seems to be John Crowley

Jonathan Carroll's last two novels (White Apples and The Wooden Sea) are worth checking out.

I'm not sure I would call Jack Vance "brilliant," but he fits your other criteria. However, some people seem to have heard of him . . .

Another thought, albeit out-of-genre, is Lawrence Durrell's Alexandria Quartet; but only if you have considerable patience.

Best,

Sepia

On Saturday, April 12, 2003, at 11:28 PM, Steve Case wrote:
I want to buy a book no one's ever heard of that is incredibly good. So I'm coming to you. I know lots of Wolfe-like authors have been discussed on the list before. Tell me what book I should buy. (And by something like Wolfe I mean something well-written, thought-provoking, brilliant, and relatively clean.)

silk tree — 13 Apr 2003, 16:06 · follows Jason Ingram

Richard Powers. Here is an interview:

<http://eserver.org/clogic/2-2/williams.html>

I think my favorite is Gold Bug Variations, but it is very hard to decide.

First thing I read by John Crowley was Little, Big. It is linked in my mind with Mark Helprin's New York book, Winter's Tale (maybe it's the New York setting and the strange magic). Mark Helprin is another author I will read on sight.

This page recommends John Crowley, and even though it hasn't been update in a while, I appreciate the page for also recommending some other authors. <http://home.att.net/~Storytellers/jcrowley.html> and then back up to <http://home.att.net/~Storytellers/autpicks.html> (describes Winter's Tale as "a brilliant failure" :))

There is this fantasy writer that wrote Virconium, but I haven't finished it and don't remember his name. He is someone I don't hear people talk about a lot. google will pull up more info for you.

Oh, for some reason I am thinking of Russel Hoban because of Riddley Walker. It is because I recently saw a web page where people were talking about how much better his other books were in comparison and that one just blew me away.

Thomas Disch too.

I'm getting off topic thought. I think for Wolfean intricacy that Richard Powers is one to recommend. I am assuming you will find reviews and skim the books before buying them, due to the vaguely out of genre experience they would cause.

mimosa

William Ansley — 13 Apr 2003, 16:55 · follows silk tree

First thing I read by John Crowley was Little, Big. It is linked in my mind with Mark Helprin's New York book, Winter's Tale (maybe it's the New York setting and the strange magic). Mark Helprin is another author I will read on sight.

How interesting. LB and WT are linked in my mind as well, probably for the same reasons. I don't know if I will ever read anything else by Helprin, but I would definitely recommend Crowley, especially LB.

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M. John Harrison is the name and I didn't even need Google for this one. <g>

William Ansley

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Roy C. Lackey — 13 Apr 2003, 22:16 · follows William Ansley

William Ansley, first quoting mimosa:

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Interesting, indeed: I thought it was just me. The books share similar geography (NYC and a mysterious, rural, upstate New York) and almost identical time periods (late 19th - very early 21st centuries). They are also easily each author's best book. LITTLE, BIG is the best fantasy novel I've ever read and WINTER'S TALE is the best novel I've ever read -- period --regardless of genre, "classic" or otherwise. William, you should read Helprin's other novels; they are well

worth it.

-Roy

James Wynn — 14 Apr 2003, 12:31 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Walter Wangerin's "Book of the Dun Cow" sits on my shelves near to Wolfe's books. It consists of a Wolfean mixture of myth and theology (Wangerin is, or was, a Lutheran minister) in an "Animal Farm" stew.

James Tiptree Jr.'s short story, "A Momentary Taste of Being" takes on the Wolfean theme of identity in a sci-fi story about the purpose of life and space travel.

I add my endorsement of Helprin's "Winter's Tale". Like Wolfe (and Wangerin and Tiptree) Helprin's works are as worthwhile for their beautiful writing as for the story. Incidentally, Helprin was enlisted as Bob Dole's speech writer during the summer of the 1996 Presidential campaign. He wrote the "this is where I touch ground" speech that reinvigorated the Dole campaign. He shortly quit however because he got disgusted with Dole's insistence on editing his speeches until they sounded like the speeches Dole was giving before they hired him. Then the Dole campaign returned to its drifting death by mediocrity.

Outgoing mail is certified Virus Free.

Jonathan Laidlow — 15 Apr 2003, 09:36 · follows James Wynn

From: Malco <nastler at yahoo.dk>

Subject: Re: (urth) RE: Digest from urth at urth.net

Lanark by Alasdair Gray

Can I just second this? and third it? An amazing book by a little-known Scottish author. I also recommend his 'Poor Things'. Both are illustrated by the author and available to all via amazon.co.uk

Jonathan Laidlow
www.ultan.co.uk

Malco — 15 Apr 2003, 09:43 · follows Jonathan Laidlow

Breathlessly mounting his hobby horse Malco adds;
And please also consider "Unlikely stories, mostly"
EVERYONE should own a copy of "The book of prefaces"

--- Jonathan Laidlow <ultan01 at yahoo.co.uk> wrote: > >

From: Malco <nastler at yahoo.dk>

Subject: Re: (urth) RE: Digest from urth at urth.net

Lanark by Alasdair Gray

Can I just second this? and third it? An amazing book by a little-known Scottish author. I also recommend his 'Poor Things'. Both are illustrated by the author and available to all via amazon.co.uk

Jonathan Laidlow
www.ultan.co.uk

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Ed Cooke — 19 Apr 2003, 10:38 · follows Malco

Good to see Goethe and Iain M. Banks cropping up in this thread. To complete the triangle, I've always assumed Banks took the title of 'Against A Dark Background' from the following passage of Goethe:

"Spring had come in all its glory. An untimely storm that had been looming all day thundered down from the mountains, rain swept across the landscape, the sun returned and a rainbow shone forth from the greyness. Wilhelm rode towards it and was deeply moved. "Oh!" he said to himself. "Do life's most beautiful colours only make themselves clear to us against a dark background? Must raindrops fall for our delight? A clear day is no different from a cloudy one, if we look at it unmoved, and what can move us but the silent hope that our hearts' natural inclination will not go unrequited? We are moved by the account of a good deed, the contemplation of an aesthetic object; they make us feel as though we are not complete strangers here, and give us intimations of a homeland towards which our highest and innermost feelings impatiently strive." --'Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre', Bk VII Ch I

TBotNS is the best Bildungsroman I've ever read, mainly because it ends satisfactorily. Wieland spent thirty years rewriting his 'Agathon', eventually resorting to a further argument between the eponymous hero and the Sophist Hippias in the afterlife, and Goethe churned out a sequel in his dotage that loaded the characters with so much symbolism that no-one could really care about them anymore; but Wolfe ties up enough loose ends for a sense of closure but not so many as to preclude another two novel cycles. Bravo!