

Uther Uthers

The Urth list — 5 messages, 5 voices, 14 Apr 2003

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Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 14 Apr 2003, 17:09

First, I want to chime in agreement for the Ted Chiang collection. Reading it was like having my head blown off several times with small weapons fire. Astonishing writing about crazed events.

Second ... If you care to look backwards in time a bit, you might try James Branch Cabell. His writing is just a wee bit more mannered than Wolfe's, but quite good, and he was playing with timewalkers and the logical and illogical consequences thereof before science fiction even had a name or independent existence. Not all his books are brilliant, but anything you're likely to come across without haunting antiquarian shops will be good. A quick scope of Amazon.com shows that his two -- not necessarily "best" but sort of foundational books -- are both in print from Dover, and available as a twosome deal from Amazon. Oh, yeah. The titles are FIGURES OF EARTH and JURGEN, the latter of which got Cabell temporary fame as a cause celebre when it was tried for obscenity around 1920, and caused him grief forever after because everything he wrote from then on was compared to it.

Gareth Jelley — 14 Apr 2003, 19:07 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

From: "Dan'I Danehy-Oakes" <katbarx at hotmail.com>

First, I want to chime in agreement for the Ted Chiang collection.

Reading it was like having my head blown off several times with small weapons fire. Astonishing writing about crazed events.

Great comments - I've got this collection on my to-read pile...

Best,

G.

Alice K. Turner — 14 Apr 2003, 23:12 · follows Gareth Jelley

I haven't read the Chiang collection, but everything I've run into individually of his has been first-rate and highly original. But some negatives: I did not like Mark Helprin's -Winter's Tale-. I wanted to; it seemed like the sort of book I would like, but it droned on and on and I simply got bored by it. I did not really like -The Book of the Dun Cow- either; too elaborated and conceited. And I don't think Wolfe is a very good short story writer, by and large. Some of his fables are marvelous in a -Just-So- kind of way, and a few of the longer stories, novellas really, are very good. But if you're pinching pennies, skipping a Wolfe collection is not unwise.

-alga

Timothy Reilly — 15 Apr 2003, 23:37 · follows Alice K. Turner

alga wrote:

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I entirely agree, and am surprised I can't recall this point having been made before on this list. Wolfe obviously likes writing short stories, but I don't think he's particularly good at it. And it's not because I don't like short stories - I think Chekhov is marvellous. But I can't think of a single Wolfe short story that is truly impressive (except perhaps the Detective of Dreams, but even then...). His novellas and novels are a different matter of course!

Tim

cilluff1 at optonline.net — 16 Apr 2003, 21:00 · follows Timothy Reilly

I agree completely. His short stories are well written but nothing special, reminding me of the old saw about competence versus talent. Which is odd, because his longer work is so creative. But in fairness I've only read one short story collection by Wolfe and it wasn't the much ballyhooed IODDAOSAOS.

Original Message:

From: Timothy Reilly treilly at ozemail.com.au

Date: Wed, 16 Apr 2003 09:37:55 +1000

To: urth at urth.net

Subject: Re: (urth) Uther Uthers

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Tim

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