

# More Wolfe Blurbs

The Urth list — 5 messages, 4 voices, 16 May 2005

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4423>

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John Barach — 16 May 2005, 13:50

Urthers --

A while back, I asked about books Wolfe recommended or books for which he had written blurbs.

I've seen his blurbs on

- \* Orson Scott Card (whom Wolfe calls "Oar Scottson Curd"), *\_Ender's Game\_*
- \* Avram Davidson, *\_Treasury\_*
- \* Sharon Baker, *\_Journey to Memblar\_*

and someone mentioned that he has a blurb on

- \* Jennifer Stevenson, *Trash Sex Magic*

I've also discovered that this site gives a list of several (though it's far from complete). I can't say I'm familiar with any of the authors:

- \* Robert Nathan, *Portrait of Jennie* (1940)
- \* George Turner, *Drowning Towers* (1987)
- \* Robert Aickman, *The Model* (1987)
- \* David Zindell, *Neverness* (1988)
- \* Paul Park, *Coelestis* (1993)
- \* Terry McGarry, *Illumination* (2001)

Anyone read these?

John

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John Barach — 16 May 2005, 13:55 · in reply to John Barach

Oops!

When I wrote

I've also discovered that this site gives a list of several  
(though it's far from complete).

I meant to include the link: [http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/authors/Gene\\_Wolfe.htm](http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/authors/Gene_Wolfe.htm)

John

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pthwndxrclzp — 16 May 2005, 15:11 · in reply to John Barach

George Turner is an Australian SF author; his stuff is more interpersonal than intergalactic but very good. Drowning Towers may be the book with the Wolfe blurb, but I think Brain Child is his best work.

David Zindell hit mainstream SF with a smash with 1988's Neverness. It's a terrific book, overflowing with wonderful ideas, settings and situations. IIRC, Zindell had won a couple of awards for a short story entitled "Shanidar," and Neverness is an expansion of that story's world.

Neverness presents the coming of age story of one Mallory Ringess, a pilot in the ancient order of Mathematicians in the fabled city of Neverness on a barren ice planet who seeks to unravel a mystery from the dawn of time, the disappearance of the long-vanished Ieldra, the galaxy's first sentient race. At the same time, Ringess must find a way to stave off a wave of destruction that threatens to obliterate all that mankind has achieved. Filled with colorful aliens and mind-numbing meta-technologies, it is a masterful and satisfying exploration of man's ultimate evolution. Broken God is the first sequel, and unfortunately it is a bit of a disappointment. It picks up where Neverness leaves off and poses many more questions than it ever answers. It has that "middle of the series" feel, and one is left hoping that Zindell will tie up the myriad loose ends in a subsequent book. Unfortunately, The Wild is not that book -- it continues the quest tale of Danlo Ringess, Mallory's son, but still leaves us unsatisfyingly in the middle of things. 1998's The War in Heaven concluded the series but left much to be desired; all three sequels are very much in the shadow of the first book, Neverness.

On 5/16/05, John Barach <jbarach at telus.net> wrote:

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On Mon, 16 May 2005, John Barach wrote:

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Anyone read these?

Paul Park's Starbridge Chronicles have been compared to Wolfe in the past, esp for the use of language -- you are halfway through The Soldiers of Paradise (vol 1 of the trilogy) before realising "horses" are reptilian, and "petrol" is also edible...is was definitely influenced, I think, by BotNS, but goes it its' own way. Very stylish writing.

George Turner is the Australian who wrote a lot of "mainstream" novels before writing much interesting SF later in life (he was a long term fan). Themes are assorted disasters, truly new societies that often interact with leftovers from our times/mindsets, human engineering (social, genetic), realpolitik. Drowning Towers is global warming drowned, overpopulated Third-world Melbourne. I don't think of him as Wolfean in style.

Zindell is definitely worth reading -- another strong stylist, though the sequelae to Neverness are not as tight. I think Zindell's gods and technology are closer to Frank Herbert than Wolfe: his narrators are religious cum mathematical mystics, more lyric in tone than Wolfe (except in certain passages).

Robert Nathan was covered recently in NYRSF.

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Iorwerth Thomas — 17 May 2005, 03:42 · in reply to David Duffy

From: David Duffy <David.Duffy at qimr.edu.au>  
Reply-To: The Urth Mailing List <urth-urth.net at lists.urth.net>  
To: The Urth Mailing List <urth-urth.net at lists.urth.net>  
Subject: Re: (urth) More Wolfe Blurbs  
Date: Tue, 17 May 2005 08:50:45 +1000 (EST)

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I'll have to keep an eye out for those; I've only read 'Coelestis', which is similar in theme to 5HoC - namely, how colonialism messes up both the colonists and the natives. In this case, however, the natives have to be assimilated via drugs (so that they have a human worldview; originally they were all but catatonic, possibly observing a reality to which humans have no access) and plastic surgery. There are also the Coelestis, the original 'masters' of the natives, who may in fact be thoughtforms created by the natives in order to protect them from the invaders. The plot focuses around an ambassador from Earth, who is isolated by relativistic timelag from both the colonists and his home planet, and an unfortunate assimilated native, who is kidnapped by a militant (and human-run) native rights group. Whereupon her drugs begin to wear off.

It's very good; I'm not sure if that summary does it justice though. I can see why Wolfe likes it.

Iorwerth