

Unhappiness with fantasy writing

The Urth list — 9 messages, 7 voices, 15 Jun 2006

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4654>

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PMorris33 at aol.com — 15 Jun 2006, 02:39

I've long been an admirer of Gwyneth Jones. Her first science fiction book "Divine Endurance" was a perfect gem. And her book of criticism, "Deconstructing The Starships" is simply the best science fiction criticism I've ever read, pace Kingley Amis and John Clute.

But I'm having trouble with her fantasy series "Bold As Love". What's happened to that beautiful Englishwoman? She's gone dead on the page.

Is anyone else in the group a reader of Gwen Jones?

I'd be interested in hearing your opinion.

Thanks to all of you
Pip

James Crossley — 15 Jun 2006, 05:27 · in reply to PMorris33 at aol.com

I don't know her work well, but I very much enjoyed <Life>. More fiction of science than science fiction, if that makes any sense. It somehow reminded me of Byatt's <Possession>.

What I've heard about this new series isn't great.

James

On 6/14/06 7:39 PM, "PMorris33 at aol.com" <PMorris33 at aol.com> wrote:
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Los Arboles Del Frio — 15 Jun 2006, 16:39 · in reply to James Crossley

Have you watched Miyazaki's movie 'Howl's Moving Castle'? It's a cartoon adaptation of one of Jones's books. Miyazaki is very well know for movies such as My Neighbour Totoro, Spirited Away or Princess Mononoke.

Los Arboles Del Frio — 15 Jun 2006, 16:41 · in reply to Los Arboles Del Frio

Oops. That was actually Diana Wynne Jones. Still, a nice original movie I 'd recomend to any lover of fantasy.

On 6/15/06, Los Arboles Del Frio <losarbolesdelfrio at gmail.com> wrote:

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pthwndxrclzp — 15 Jun 2006, 16:44 · in reply to PMorris33 at aol.com

Sorry to begin by hijacking your post...but I am similarly dismayed by what I see as both Charles Stross' and John C. Wright's almost simultaneous shift from deft and enthralling sf to clunky, contrived, half-hearted fantasy. Their sf is terrific, though.

Back to the original topic, as for Ms. Jones, wow, I'm heading to the bookstore tomorrow <grin>. Thanks!

And to try to keep things on-topic for the group at large, I'm surprised I haven't heard mention of either David Herter or Alexander Jablokov, both of whom strike me as being quite favorably Wolfean in their style, erudition, and recurrent bouts of playfully deliberate obscurity....

On 6/14/06, PMorris33 at aol.com <PMorris33 at aol.com> wrote:

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Rob Thornton — 15 Jun 2006, 17:45 · follows pthwndxrclzp

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Did someone say Alexander Jablokov? I strongly recommend his first novel "Carve the Sky" and now that Wolfe is invoked, I can see some connections. For example, "Sky" has a very involving worldscape and Jablokov takes some relish in tossing you in medias res and continously stirring in information rather than habitually using SFnal "infodumps."
Unfortunately, none of his later efforts really matched "Carve the Sky" but I strongly

recommend "Sky"

Now who is this Herter fellow? Actually, I haven't heard of him....

back to the lurk,

rob t.

pthwndxrc1zp — 15 Jun 2006, 17:50 · in reply to Rob Thornton

Herter's first novel, "Ceres Storm," came out in 2000. Dense, compelling, definitely Wolfean in approach, as noted. Link to Amazon listing for the book:

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0312874936/sr=8-3/qid=1150393596/ref=sr_1_3/104-4115854-4295931?%5Fencoding=UTF8

Interestingly, Herter's next book (2002) was a fantasy, "Evening's Empire."

Haven't read it yet, but I'm not surprised to see the Amazon.com review page name-checking Gene Wolfe on the book.

See

http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0312870345/sr=8-2/qid=1150393596/ref=sr_1_2/104-4115854-4295931?%5Fencoding=UTF8

On 6/15/06, Rob Thornton <oblate777 at speakeasy.net> wrote:

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Transient — 15 Jun 2006, 18:12 · in reply to Rob Thornton

On Jun 15, 2006, at 1:45 PM, Rob Thornton wrote:

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I rather thought A Deeper Sea and Nimbus were quite excellent. The former was a fun little story on the surface, but carried an allegory to the fall of the ancient world through it which continually jumped back up in surprising new forms, and the latter I thought was just an excellent, edgy sf-mystery-thriller.

Kate Savage — 16 Jun 2006, 16:02 · follows Transient

Re: (urth) Unhappiness with fantasy writing

pthwndxrc1zp <aquastor at gmail.com> wrote on Thu, 15 Jun 2006 09:44

Sorry to begin by hijacking your post...but I am similarly dismayed by what I see as both Charles Stross' and John C. Wright's almost simultaneous shift from deft and enthralling sf to clunky, contrived, half-hearted fantasy.

Their sf is terrific, though

My understanding is that Stross' agent told him that if he wanted to improve sales, he needed to shift from hard sf to fantasy. The problem with hard sf is the bottom line - fantasies and paranormal romances marketed to the fantasy community seem to be bringing in the most money these days. Look at the sale of ARCs on eBay - writers like Wolfe do not bring top dollar but Robert Jordan will.

I have been having trouble with my Yahoo account. Please try my work email or call me if I don't return email in a timely fashion.