

Jeff VanderMeer

The Urth list — 7 messages, 7 voices, 11 May 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5604>

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JBarach at aol.com — 11 May 2010, 22:32

URTHers --

I glanced at a copy of Jeff VanderMeer's recent novel, *Shriek -- An Afterword*, and discovered that it has a blurb by Gene Wolfe:

"Here is a desert island book, a tale you can lose yourself in for days, a novel of character in which the setting -- the magnificently gritty city-state named Ambergris -- proves as the light fails to be the finest character of all."

[_http://www.amazon.com/Shriek-Afterword-Jeff-VanderMeer/dp/0765314665_](http://www.amazon.com/Shriek-Afterword-Jeff-VanderMeer/dp/0765314665_)
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I wish someone were keeping track of all the books Wolfe has blurbed....

John

Mo Holkar / UKG — 12 May 2010, 07:27 · in reply to JBarach at aol.com

At 23:32 11/05/2010, John wrote:

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Maybe someone would like to start off such a page on the wiki?

best,

Mo

~ # ~

WolfeWiki -- a wiki about Gene Wolfe

<http://www.wolfewiki.com/pmwiki/>

Mike Myers — 12 May 2010, 12:49 · in reply to JBarach at aol.com

Shriek is a great book, one of my all time favorites.

--- On Tue, 5/11/10, JBarach at aol.com <JBarach at aol.com> wrote:

From: JBarach at aol.com <JBarach at aol.com>

Subject: (urth) Jeff VanderMeer

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Date: Tuesday, May 11, 2010, 3:32 PM

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Craig Brewer — 12 May 2010, 13:12 · in reply to Mike Myers

I know this isn't the place for Vandermeer discussion...but for those interested, I'd have to say that *_Shriek_* is the least successful of Vandermeer's three Ambergris novels. The premise is a blast (a missing brother has left behind a book, found by his sister, who decides to write an afterward to it explaining their lives...but the sister is now missing and the brother has found the book and is now commenting on her afterward by inserting notes as she tells it). But the execution becomes bogged down a bit halfway through once we basically know the whole story. And the character examination to me became a bit repetitive rather than illuminating at the same point.

The book that introduces the city of Ambergris, *_City of Saints and Madmen_*, though would I think be plenty interesting to Wolfe (and Crowley) fans for its variety of styles/mysteries/histories/wonders.

Jordon Flato — 15 May 2010, 00:24 · in reply to Craig Brewer

Huh...I found it to be the most compelling of the three. I found *FINCH* to be the most underwhelming, mostly because it felt like a well written China Meville story: nice and pretty but with not as much, what, soul? to it?

On Wed, May 12, 2010 at 6:12 AM, Craig Brewer <cnbrewer at yahoo.com> wrote:

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From: Mike Myers <mimyerspdt at yahoo.com>
To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>
Sent: Wed, May 12, 2010 7:49:25 AM
Subject: Re: (urth) Jeff VanderMeer

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Robert Thornton — 15 May 2010, 00:32 · in reply to Jordon Flato

I am in mid-Finch and right now I agree with Jordan for somewhat different reasons. As I read Finch, Ambergris seems pretty dreary and doesn't fascinate me as it did in the other books.

Rob

On May 14, 2010, at 8:24 PM, Jordon Flato wrote:
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James Crossley — 15 May 2010, 03:39 · in reply to Jordon Flato

City of Saints and Madmen is certainly the flashiest of the three, with its myriad styles. It leaves a lot to the imagination, in the best possible way, and is probably the most purely enjoyable book in the Ambergris cycle.

Shriek is also very rewarding, and I think the most accomplished of the set. The depth of characterization in the book is beyond almost anything else in genre. It's quite different from its predecessor, which I find refreshing, although I can see where it wouldn't push a reader's buttons in the same way as *CoS&M*.

Finch is yet another departure, a successful one in my opinion, but again not necessarily a likeable one. In many ways, it wraps up the mysteries that the previous books set up, which I think lends to the deflating feeling that some have described.

James

On 5/14/10 5:24 PM, "Jordon Flato" <jordonflato at gmail.com> wrote:
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