

mora and hyacinth

The Urth list — 66 messages, 17 voices, 30 Dec 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5865>

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Lee Berman — 30 Dec 2010, 16:17

Marc Aramini:

Second point: I believe James Wynn has hinted Mora is Hyacinth (or maybe someone who will become Kypris, not sure)...

I am not nearly as familiar with Long/Short Sun as with BotNS and don't feel ready with answers for this question. But I did mention to James on the subject, that Vadsig is possessed by both Mora and Fava. Somehow this seems important in answering the question and I thought I'd mention it here also.

I have a question for everyone regarding the first part of Marc's question though. Horn (perhaps Horn+) is running around in Silk's body the whole Short Sun story. And Silk has lost an eye. (is there any chance Oreb ate it after Silk died?). But at the end, this SilkHorn character gives an eye

to Pig. So...is this character blind at the end? Also did Maytera Marble ever get her replacement eye?

There is surely more to Mucor than meets the eye (heh). What is her true significance?

Well, a lot of questions but, no time like the present for seeking answers.

Marc Aramini — 30 Dec 2010, 16:28 · in reply to Lee Berman

He just gives up one eye, so Pig can upload Silk to Mainframe or back to Silk's body, who still has an eye left.

that's how Horn gets Silk back, I think, now that I consider the 3rd person sections of IGJ and Rttw as being stories of Horn (ie- the man on green in IGJ, because Horn left the building at the end of OBW except for scant fragments that Silk is trying to keep alive)

--- On Thu, 12/30/10, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:

From: Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com>

Subject: (urth) mora and hyacinth

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Date: Thursday, December 30, 2010, 8:17 AM

Marc Aramini:

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Lee Berman — 30 Dec 2010, 17:00 · follows Marc Aramini

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That's a little confusing but...I seem to remember now..SilkHorn, at the end, looks more like Horn, shorter, stockier etc. Perhaps that's it? He is no longer in the Silk body which has given up both eyes? (Pig does get a blue eye, iirc).

James Wynn — 30 Dec 2010, 17:17 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 12/30/2010 11:00 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

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He only gives up one eye. he has one left.

António Pedro Marques — 30 Dec 2010, 17:43 · in reply to James Wynn

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Lee Berman — 30 Dec 2010, 18:00 · follows António Pedro Marques

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But perhaps after that perhaps he does not stay in Silk's body? Confusing. To me anyway.

Jordon Flato — 30 Dec 2010, 18:05 · in reply to Lee Berman

It must have been a while since you've read these Lee! ;)

Silks' body lost one on the Whorl, giving it to pig. He was then spirited away from the Whorl to become the Rajan, who is who you see on the cover of IGJ. That picture is from AFTER he comes BACK from the Whorl. Silk never returns to the Whorl. He never left it. Horn's spirt(or hell a Neighbor's spirit merged with Horn for some folks) leaves Green, enters Silk (the Return to the Whorl of the title), Silk gives an eye to Pig, and then gets taken to Blue, Horn in Silks body, and becomes the Rajan, and 75% of the book takes place after that.

On Thu, Dec 30, 2010 at 10:00 AM, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com>wrote:

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Jordon Flato — 30 Dec 2010, 18:06 · in reply to Jordon Flato

And for the record, there is no matter of interpretation or puzzle pieces here. You're just wrong! Ha! ;)

On Thu, Dec 30, 2010 at 10:05 AM, Jordon Flato <jordonflatourth at gmail.com>wrote:

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James Wynn — 30 Dec 2010, 18:09 · in reply to Jordon Flato

Right, Jordan.

When OBW starts 1) Horn has died in the pit and been resurrected, 2) traveled to Parajuco and boarded a ship to Green, 2) Died on Green and had his "spirit" transmuted to Silk, 3) Wondered all around the Whorl

4) met Pig, and 5) been carried to Gaon to become Rajan.

All the battle sequences in iGJ, the astral-travels to Green to defeat the inhum, the astral-travel to Urth, the battle with the inhum on Blue, the killing of Jahlee-- all this occurs after the Rajan has escaped from Gaon and after the events on the Whorl recorded in RttW.

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James Wynn — 30 Dec 2010, 18:10 · in reply to Jordon Flato

Jordon Flato -

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It's so comforting when something like this happens.

u+16b9

Stuart Hamm — 30 Dec 2010, 18:11 · in reply to James Wynn

whew.....

???????? ? ?

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Skype? stuart.hamm

? ??

--- On Thu, 12/30/10, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) mora and hyacinth

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Date: Thursday, December 30, 2010, 10:09 AM

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Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net

Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

-----Inline Attachment Follows-----

Gerry Quinn — 30 Dec 2010, 18:21 · in reply to Lee Berman

From: "Lee Berman" <severiansola at hotmail.com>

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Wolfe didn't paint the cover. Granted the covers are pretty literal, but I don't think we can take the artist's rendition as tremendously authoritative. (Also, is Horn described as walking through Green's jungles side by side with a Neighbour? I don't recall such an incident. And when did Horn qua Horn ever lose an eye?)

The artist is conflating Silk and Horn at different periods. The picture is clearly of Green, as we can see Blue in the sky - but Silk was never on Green.

- Gerry Quinn

James Wynn — 30 Dec 2010, 18:43 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

The artist is conflating Silk and Horn at different periods. The
picture is clearly of Green, as we can see Blue in the sky - but Silk
was never on Green.

Not physically. Only in astral-travel to visit Sinew and drive out the inhum and their human slaves.

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António Pedro Marques — 30 Dec 2010, 19:08 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman wrote (30-12-2010 18:00):

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I think you're being tricked by your memory. The order of telling of events is not their order of occurrence.

Fancies aside, the chronology is as follows:

- Horn departs from Lizard
- Horn goes to Green on a lander
- Horn is about to die on Green and is taken to Silk's body, who has both eyes
- An eye of Silk's body is given to Pig
- RtW events take place on the Whorl
- Silk/Horn travels to Blue, God knows how
- Silk/Horn rules Gaon
- Silk/Horn goes to Bianco
- Silk/Horn starts dream traveling to a lot of places
- Silk/Horn goes to Dorp

So, only one eye lost. To tell the truth, I don't think my cover of iGJ shows any eyepatch. Though as mentioned, the scene depicted need not be pre-Silk Horn's.

The possibility that the Rajan is a dream traveling Silk/Horn is interesting, what with the amount of food he (don't) eats being constantly discussed, but it does bring a lot of problems with it - unless it points to how dream travel works in the first place: since the Rajan is the source of it, maybe he's not subject to the same rules as everyone else.

James Wynn — 30 Dec 2010, 19:21 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

BTW

The cover of Home Fires is pretty boring, but at least its better than the 4th grade Photoshop cover from The Sorcerer's House.

Wolfe recently said something about the covers on The Book of the New Sun. He said he has always been happy with the original cover of Shadow of the Torturer. No one expected the sales to be a big deal so they let him and the editor do what they wanted. But with each volume the expectations for the sales of the next volume increased. Consequently, with each release the Art Director became more involved and exercised more control, so that with each release, the quality of the artwork deteriorated. I don't know who the Art Director was a Tor at the time. He shouldn't put Gene Wolfe as a reference on his C.V.

u+16b9

David Stockhoff — 31 Dec 2010, 19:09 · in reply to James Wynn

Art directors can be a timid breed. They are sensitive to backlash and blame, because that's what they are hired to prevent.

On 12/30/2010 2:21 PM, James Wynn wrote:

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Daniel Petersen — 01 Jan 2011, 16:51 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Finally! So good to hear someone complain about the ATROCIOUS covers Wolfe gets landed with. I literally have to hide them from family and friends when I'm reading them so they won't

(justifiably) judge a book by its cover.

They couldn't be more incongruous with the fine literary craftsmanship of their contents. I long for the day when they will reissue his entire output in something with a design quality worthy of the artistic merit of the writing.

DOJP

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Gerry Quinn — 01 Jan 2011, 17:00 · in reply to Daniel Petersen

On the other hand, people have objected to the Short Sun covers - but are they not, essentially, very faithful and literal representations of the contents of the books?

- Gerry Quinn

----- Original Message -----

From: Daniel Petersen

To: The Urth Mailing List

Sent: Saturday, January 01, 2011 4:51 PM

Subject: Re: (urth) Wolfe covers

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with. I literally have to hide them from family and friends when I'm reading them so they won't (justifiably) judge a book by its cover. They couldn't be more incongruous with the fine literary craftsmanship of their contents. I long for the day when they will reissue his entire output in something with a design quality worthy of the artistic merit of the writing.

Daniel Petersen — 01 Jan 2011, 17:30 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

On the other hand, people have objected to the Short Sun covers - but are they not, essentially, very faithful and literal representations of the contents of the books?

Em, not so sure about that. Is Seawrack's hair colour wrong? Horn's hair doesn't look balding at all. Babbie and the Neighbour would require much speculation on the part of the artist and these are not particularly impressive. And the godling looks more giant than I remember him being described when he's holding Silk-Horn.

But that aside, even if they depict accurate content from the stories, they are terrible 'unicorns and rainbows' fantasy drawing styles, not particularly skillful or tasteful or interesting. They're some of the worst and most embarrassing fantasy kitsch I've ever seen. (RttW is not as painful as the others - OBW is the worst.) Is it even a good idea to try to depict some of the most pulp-fantastic elements of Wolfe's stories on his covers? That can be so susceptible to misapprehending the literary excellence and subtlety of the writing that simultaneously celebrates, subverts, and transfigures the subgenre(s) Wolfe is drawing from (alongside his 'mainstream' influences). Why not try something more subtle or quite clearly 'beautiful'? If it has to be straightforward representational figurative paintings of events in the stories, then AT LEAST GET AN ARTIST WHO HAS A CLUE ABOUT GOOD REALISTIC PAINTING.

These paperback covers for The Knight: <http://www.waterstones.com/waterstonesweb/products/gene+wolfe/the+knight+28ebook29/6515022/>

and The Wizard:

<http://www.waterstones.com/waterstonesweb/products/gene+wolfe/the+wizard/5596395/>

are just the worst! Looks like they would be the Twilight of heroic fantasy! Yech!

DOJP

On Sat, Jan 1, 2011 at 5:00 PM, Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

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- Gerry Quinn

----- Original Message -----

From: Daniel Petersen <danielottojackpetersen at gmail.com>

Jordon Flato — 01 Jan 2011, 17:38 · in reply to Daniel Petersen

Oh my god i'm going to their up. Those are awful...

On Jan 1, 2011 9:30 AM, "Daniel Petersen" <danielottojackpetersen at gmail.com> wrote:

Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

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- Gerry Quinn

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From: Daniel Petersen

To: The Ur...

Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net...

Gerry Quinn — 01 Jan 2011, 18:09 · in reply to Daniel Petersen

I think IGJ is the one I would be most embarrassed to be seen reading on the train - I'd sooner have a sexy mermaid on the cover than that ridiculous Neighbour falling over his feet! RTTW is fine IMO. The Knight/Wizard covers are at least fairly monotone and don't jump out.

I admit I would also prefer something more abstract or less exotic.

Still, I think it's an interesting point that we are apt to consider these images terribly naff in visual form and yet they are pretty much exactly what is described in the text. Perhaps we should not be so precious about them.

Anyway, embarrassment at SF covers has a long and honourable history, though perhaps the

advent of e-readers will before long bring it to an end...

- Gerry Quinn

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From: Daniel Petersen

To: The Urth Mailing List

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Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

Still, I think it's an interesting point that we are apt to consider these images terribly naff in visual form and yet they are pretty much exactly what is described in the text.

No, no, that's the whole point. They are not at all 'exactly what is described in the text'. To do that you would need a rather genius, innovative, subtle, knowledgeable artist who knows the history of 'fantasy painting' as it were and visually 'describes' these scenes in a way that does justice to the way Wolfe treats traditional fantastic material. His prose is seriously some of the very best anyone is ever going to read, his ideas and twisting of ideas are so thought-provoking. The covers should bring at least *something* of that out - or at the very least not point in the exact opposite direction so that people expect... not just 'standard fare' but *sub*standard fantasy tripe and trash! I am utterly mortified to be seen reading a book with the cover of OBW!

I mean, if one of Wolfe's biggest fans, Neil Gaiman, can have tasteful, well-designed, stylish covers, why can't Wolfe?

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DOJP

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- Gerry Quinn

----- Original Message -----

From: Daniel Petersen <danielottojackpetersen at gmail.com>

Tony Ellis — 01 Jan 2011, 18:50 · follows Daniel Petersen

Hi Daniel,
are you familiar with the bewitching covers Bruce Pennington did for the first British paperback edition of the New Sun tetralogy?

If not, these clumsy, long-ago scans I did should give you taste:

<http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~ajellis/WolfeArt.htm>

The cover for Shadow, in particular, pretty much defines what I see in my head when I think of Urth.

Daniel Petersen — 01 Jan 2011, 19:03 · in reply to Tony Ellis

Ah, great, thanks, Tony. I'd only seen the Shadow one - yes, these at least are like (say) Moorcock covers and are not bad (still not quite doing justice for me though). Did you by any chance get and/or read these versions when they came out in the (I presume) 80s? I just wonder if that helps give a certain sentimental/nostalgic value (which I would completely understand).

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The cover for Shadow, in particular, pretty much defines what I see in my head when I think of Urth.

Matthew Keeley — 01 Jan 2011, 19:16 · in reply to Daniel Petersen

The UK paperback covers for TWK are indeed awful, though at least they have newly commissioned artwork, unlike Gollancz's one-volume New Sun, titled "Severian of the Guild" and bearing the exact same mediocre cover artwork as the older SF Masterworks edition of The Fifth Head of Cerberus! Not that that cover looked any better on Fifth Head, but still the laziness is appalling. <http://forbiddenplanet.com/60435-sf-masterworks-the-fifth-head-of-cerberus/>
<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Severian-Guild-Torturer-Conciliator-Gollancz/dp/0575081309>

And then there's the *other* SF masterworks Fifth Head cover:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Fifth-Head-Cerberus-S-F-Masterworks/dp/1857988175>

Anyone know if this alternate cover of AEG ever saw release anywhere? I quite like it, even if it's not necessarily a perfect fit for the book it's supposed to represent.

<http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/w/gene-wolfe/evil-guest.htm>

-Matt

Gerry Quinn — 01 Jan 2011, 19:24 · in reply to Matthew Keeley

I quite like that cover on Fifth Head. At least it passes the train test. (The colours in the image you link to are horribly washed out compared to the version I have - it's as if the were photoshopped to convert night to day or something...)

- Gerry Quinn

----- Original Message -----

From: Matthew Keeley

To: The Urth Mailing List

Sent: Saturday, January 01, 2011 7:16 PM

Subject: Re: (urth) Wolfe covers

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-Matt

Matthew Keeley — 01 Jan 2011, 19:26 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

I believe there's been a rebrand on the SF masterworks; the new printings have slightly different spines and markings and that washed-out look. Or so I understand.

-Matt

On Sat, Jan 1, 2011 at 2:24 PM, Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

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-Matt

Son of Witz — 01 Jan 2011, 19:32 · in reply to Daniel Petersen

The Long Sun 2 volume edition covers are brilliantly executed in all the ways you seem to be asking for. They seem like rich historical paintings and not cheap SF scenes. The individual Long Sun covers not so much.

I have many issues with the Short Sun covers. The most complicated books get the most simplistic covers. Though, less would be even more here.

The first Don Maitz Shadow cover is excellent. I suspect Wolfe wrote in a detail based on a design 'error' of Maitz's. The journeyman is depicted with a multi-coloured brocade on the inside of the cloak. This is so wrong. Yet, when Severian is jailed in UotNS and lays the basis of the New Sun myth, he is wearing a fuligin cloak with a 'particlored brocade' interior. So, the guild cloaks are inspired by this cloak Sev chose seemingly because it reminded him of his guild cloak. Great stuff.

The best New Sun covers are by Bruce Pennington. They are remarkable, and would be a very saleable choice for Tor to use if they repackage the books any time soon. They are excellent illustrations.

I've got lots of design sketches for New Sun covers. Someday I'll realize them. I'd also like a crack at The Wizard Knight covers. I have sympathy for anyone trying to tackle Wolfe in illustration, it's not easy to nail things down with certainty.

~sonofwitz

On Jan 1, 2011, at 10:26 AM, Daniel Petersen <danielottojackpetersen at gmail.com> wrote:

Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

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No, no, that's the whole point. They are not at all 'exactly what is described in the text'. To do that you would need a rather genius, innovative, subtle, knowledgeable artist who knows the history of 'fantasy painting' as it were and visually 'describes' these scenes in a way that does justice to the way Wolfe treats traditional fantastic material. His prose is seriously some of the very best anyone is ever going to read, his ideas and twisting of ideas are so thought-provoking. The covers should bring at least *something* of that out - or at the very least not point in the exact opposite direction so that people expect... not just 'standard fare' but *sub*standard fantasy tripe and trash! I am utterly mortified to be seen reading a book with the cover of OBW!

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From: Daniel Petersen

Daniel Petersen — 01 Jan 2011, 19:50 · in reply to Son of Witz

Matthew Keeley to Urth

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<http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/w/gene-wolfe/evil-guest.htm>

Yes, I like that one too. Wish it were the main one sold everywhere. I never heard whether an edition actually came out with this cover.

Son of Witz to Urth

The Long Sun 2 volume edition covers are brilliantly executed in all the ways you seem to be asking for. They seem like rich historical paintings and not cheap SF scenes.

Yeah, those are the ones I have - they're decent.

DOJP

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From: Daniel Petersen <danielottojackpetersen at gmail.com>

Marc Aramini — 01 Jan 2011, 20:15 · in reply to Daniel Petersen

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The French covers are just too French for me. Je suis une femme. Je suis un homme. Zut alors!? Je suis tous deux!

Never cared for the Pennington covers, I prefer the american tor/orb ones, more focus on lighting and Severian and I really like the loss of pieces of his suit as his moral progression matures and the increase of light.

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From: Daniel Petersen <danielottojackpetersen at gmail.com> Subject: Re: (urth) Wolfe covers
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net> Date: Saturday, January 1, 2011, 11:03 AM

Ah, great, thanks, Tony. "I'd only seen the Shadow one - yes, these at least are like (say) Moorcock covers and are not bad (still not quite doing justice for me though). ?Did you by any chance get and/or read these versions when they came out in the (I presume) 80s" ?I just wonder if that helps give a certain sentimental/nostalgic value (which I would completely understand). ?

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The cover for Shadow, in particular, pretty much defines what I see in my head when I think of Urth.

-----Inline Attachment Follows-----

Son of Witz — 01 Jan 2011, 20:38 · in reply to Marc Aramini

This Devil in a Forest cover is excellent. The sort of thing I'd like for The Knight.
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/hoofandhide/4154273310/>

~Mike

On Jan 1, 2011, at 12:15 PM, Marc Aramini <marcaramini at yahoo.com> wrote:

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Lee Berman — 01 Jan 2011, 21:28 · follows Son of Witz

A couple years ago on the Sun Series Book Club somebody contributed a series of Romanian covers which were all kinda good. Maybe Witz and Jane remember?

I think Lake of the Long sun was the best.

http://images4.okr.ro/auctions.v3/700_700/2010/08/02/0/f/246814074-4417335-700_700.jpg

Is that Kypris in the sacred window? Is she wearing a headset mic? If so, I just love it. Also the chiaroscuro rendition of the Vironese crowd.

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Daniel Petersen wrote:

Did you by any chance get and/or read these versions when they came out in the (I presume) 80s? ?I just wonder if that helps give a certain sentimental/nostalgic value (which I would completely understand).

Yes and yes, definitely. I couldn't be objective about them if I tried. It was a very exciting time to be young and reading SF: here were these superlative-laden covers cropping up in various British magazines, and you could turn to a review of Claw or Lictor in the same issue telling you that the next volume of this mysterious masterpiece was now on its way across the Atlantic.

And then to *own* them, and read them over and over... Wolfe writes in Castle of Days: "There was a time when I could put the palm of my hand flat on the front of a tattered paperback called The Dying Earth and feel the magic seeping through the cardboard..." and I know *exactly* what he means.

Thanks for the photostream: many covers there I've never seen before, and a few are outstanding. The 5HoC covers are physically painful.

António Pedro Marques — 02 Jan 2011, 03:34 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman wrote:

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I like the title. I don't think 'of the ... Sun' can get translated well into Romance save for that 'Soarelui ...'. I'm not keen on 'Cartea', but probaly none of the 'Scris-' words would do.

Stuart Hamm — 02 Jan 2011, 18:30 · in reply to Jordon Flato

I don't know..Dsiri looks pretty hot, but I've always had a thing for her....disturbing to say the least!

???????? ? ?

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STUHAMM.COM
FACEBOOK/STUARTHAMM
myspace.com/stuhamm
Skype? stuart.hamm
? ??

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On Jan 1, 2011 9:30 AM, "Daniel Petersen" <danielottojackpetersen at gmail.com> wrote:

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On the other hand, people have objected to the Short Sun covers - but are they not, essentially...Em, not so sure about that. "Is Seawrack's hair colour wrong" ?Horn's hair doesn't look balding at all. ?Babbie and the Neighbour would require much speculation on the part of the artist and these are not particularly impressive. ?And the godling looks more giant than I remember him being described when he's holding Silk-Horn.

But that aside, even if they depict accurate content from the stories, they are terrible 'unicorns and rainbows' fantasy drawing styles, not particularly skillful or tasteful or interesting. "They're some of the worst and most embarrassing fantasy kitsch I've ever seen. ?(RttW is not as painful as the others - OBW is the worst.) ??Is it even a good idea to try to depict some of the most pulp-fantastic elements of Wolfe's stories on his covers" "That can be so susceptible to misapprehending the literary excellence and subtlety of the writing that simultaneously celebrates, subverts, and transfigures the subgenre(s) Wolfe is drawing from (alongside his 'mainstream' influences). ?Why not try something more subtle or quite clearly 'beautiful'" ?If it has to be straightforward representational figurative paintings of events in the stories, then AT LEAST GET AN ARTIST WHO HAS A CLUE ABOUT GOOD REALISTIC PAINTING.

These paperback covers for The Knight: ?<http://www.waterstones.com/waterstonesweb/products/gene+wolfe/the+knight+28ebook29/6515022/>

and The Wizard:

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are just the worst! ?Looks like they would be the Twilight of heroic fantasy! ?Yech! DOJP

On Sat, Jan 1, 2011 at 5:00 PM, Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

On the other hand, people ...

- Gerry Quinn

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From: Daniel Petersen

To: The Ur...> _____
Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net...

Urth Mailing List

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Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

-----Inline Attachment Follows-----

David Stockhoff — 02 Jan 2011, 19:47 · in reply to Jordon Flato

These look like YA covers. In that light, not as bad as I expected. Plainly there is little attempt at any kind of realism.

But Disiri's face is kinda crooked.

On 1/1/2011 12:38 PM, Jordon Flato wrote:

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>

>

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>

>>

>> ----- Original Message -----

>> From: Daniel Petersen

>> To: The Ur...

> _____

David Stockhoff — 02 Jan 2011, 19:57 · in reply to Tony Ellis

Those have a feel similar to that of some of the late 1960s Lord of the Rings covers: highly stylized, colorful, and slightly "off," but brilliant and reminiscent of the The Dying Earth. Seems Urth should be darker....

I don't know the artist but I'd know the covers when I see them. They appear here as edition #2:

<http://mysite.verizon.net/aznirb/mtr/oop-lotr.html>

I happen to like the "cheap" paperback covers of #1. Although they do not do justice to the contents, they have their own visual style, and as Gerry says, sci-fi art---oops, SF art---has a long tradition of awfulness. LOTR copvers have gotten better but also perhaps more pompous (excepting the movie version!) as their contents have become more profitable and more prestigious.

On 1/1/2011 1:50 PM, Tony Ellis wrote:

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The cover for Shadow, in particular, pretty much defines what I see in my head when I think of Urth.

David Stockhoff — 02 Jan 2011, 20:11 · in reply to Matthew Keeley

I like the FHOC cover. But not on BOTNS!

I enjoy the depiction of Mr Million....

On 1/1/2011 2:16 PM, Matthew Keeley wrote:

The UK paperback covers for TWK are indeed awful, though at least they have newly commissioned artwork, unlike Gollancz's one-volume New Sun, titled "Severian of the Guild" and bearing the exact same mediocre cover artwork as the older SF Masterworks edition of The Fifth Head of

Cerberus! Not that that cover looked any better on Fifth Head, but still the laziness is appalling.

<http://forbiddenplanet.com/60435-sf-masterworks-the-fifth-head-of-cerberus/>

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Severian-Guild-Torturer-Conciliator-Gollancz/dp/0575081309>

And then there's the *other* SF masterworks Fifth Head cover:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Fifth-Head-Cerberus-S-F-Masterworks/dp/1857988175>

Anyone know if this alternate cover of AEG ever saw release anywhere?

I quite like it, even if it's not necessarily a perfect fit for the book it's supposed to represent.

<http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/w/gene-wolfe/evil-guest.htm>

-Matt

David Stockhoff — 02 Jan 2011, 20:13 · in reply to Marc Aramini

yes!

On 1/1/2011 3:15 PM, Marc Aramini wrote:

Never cared for the Pennington covers, I prefer the american tor/orb ones, more focus on lighting and Severian and I really like the loss of pieces of his suit as his moral progression matures and the increase of light.

Jerry Friedman — 02 Jan 2011, 21:16 · in reply to Tony Ellis

From: Tony Ellis <tonyellis69 at btopenworld.com>

Hi Daniel,

are you familiar with the bewitching covers Bruce Pennington did for the first British paperback edition of the New Sun tetralogy?

If not, these clumsy, long-ago scans I did should give you taste:

<http://easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~ajellis/WolfeArt.htm>

The cover for Shadow, in particular, pretty much defines what I see in my head when I think of Urth.

Oh, goodness, not me, though I like them far better than the covers of the old Timescape paperbacks I have. But of course that's one of the problems--people see books so differently that no illustrator could match everybody's imaginations.

It's been customary for decades for fantasy covers to depict the hero shirtless, even when he shouldn't be (as on the cover of my old copy of Hrolf Kraki's Saga, by Poul Anderson). Has anyone EVER done this for Severian?

Jerry Friedman

Craig Brewer — 02 Jan 2011, 21:34 · in reply to David Stockhoff

I have a very general question that I hope people don't mind me just throwing out there. I've finally gotten around to reading Neil Gaiman (Sandman and his non-comics stuff) after years of only knowing him by reputation/summary. But the mutual praise between Wolfe and Gaiman always made me think that he had to be more interesting than I suspected he might be. So now, after reading quite a bit, I can say that I enjoy his stuff, but it's such a different experience

from Wolfe that I really wonder why these two so often link themselves with each other.

I think the main thing that amazes me is that, while both deal with a kind of "deep mythology" attitude toward sf/fantasy, Gaiman's procedure is very straightforward and fable-like while Wolfe's is so much more oblique. Of course, they don't have to be doing the same thing to respect each other...but I just feel like I see many more differences than similarities when I read Gaiman.

So am I dense? Does anyone else have some better insight into their relationship (personal, professional, stylistic, thematic, or otherwise) or have a more articulate (and interesting) way to compare them? I think this is probably a situation where I want to see what Wolfe sees in Gaiman, but I'm not entirely sure that I do.

Son of Witz — 02 Jan 2011, 21:36 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

I LOVE the Pennington covers, though they do not match my idea of Urth. His divergance into an expressionistic pyschedelic landscape is very welcome. They read like awesome paintings inspired by BotNS, but not illustrations of it. This is often better, because often an illustration is limited to a single moment or scene.

Re: Shirtless. Don Maitz's cover painting for the hardcover BotNS SF Book Club Edition shows his chest, in shadow. Mostly you don't notice it, the cloak dominates. It's a nice enough painting, but TE is held out like a throbbing hardon, and Severian is framed by a huge full moon, which just seems like inapporopriate symbolic framing for the novel. I just picked up a copy of this. Nice to have it in one volume.

On Jan 2, 2011, at 1:16 PM, Jerry Friedman <jerry_friedman at yahoo.com> wrote:
From: Tony Ellis <tonyellis69 at btopenworld.com>

Hi Daniel,
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Jerry Friedman

Stuart Hamm — 02 Jan 2011, 22:15 · in reply to Craig Brewer

Maybe he likes Gaiman's sense of humor...Have you read "A Walking Tour Of The Shambles: It's pretty funny.....

??????? ? ?

STUHAMM.COM
FACEBOOK/STUARTHAMM
myspace.com/stuhamm
Skype? stuart.hamm
? ??

--- On Sun, 1/2/11, Craig Brewer <cnbrewer at yahoo.com> wrote:

From: Craig Brewer <cnbrewer at yahoo.com>
Subject: (urth) Wolfe and Gaiman
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
Date: Sunday, January 2, 2011, 1:34 PM

I have a very general question that I hope people don't mind me just throwing out there. I've finally gotten around to reading Neil Gaiman (Sandman and his non-comics stuff) after years of only knowing him by reputation/summary. But the mutual praise between Wolfe and Gaiman always made me think that he had to be more interesting than I suspected he might be. So now, after reading quite a bit, I can say that I enjoy his stuff, but it's such a different experience from Wolfe that I really wonder why these two so often link themselves with each other.

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? ? ?

Adam Thornton — 02 Jan 2011, 23:09 · in reply to Stuart Hamm

On 01/02/2011 04:15 PM, Stuart Hamm wrote:
Maybe he likes Gaiman's sense of humor...Have you read "A Walking Tour
Of The Shambles: It's pretty funny.....

Preserve us from the House Of Clocks!

Adam

Jerry Friedman — 02 Jan 2011, 23:25 · in reply to Son of Witz

From: Son of Witz <Sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>
Re: Shirtless. Don Maitz's cover painting for the hardcover BotNS SF Book Club
Edition shows
his chest, in shadow. Mostly you don't notice it, the cloak dominates.

Not a bad way to handle it, I think.

It's a nice enough painting, but TE is held out like a throbbing hardon,

I though you might be exaggerating till I looked at the picture.

<http://www.amazon.com/Book-New-Sun-Gene-Wolfe/dp/1568658079>

and Severian is framed by a huge full moon,

(Which is insufficiently green. And where's the red sunlight?)

which just seems like inappropriate symbolic framing for the novel.

...

I agree. And aha! My copies of *The Road to Corlay* and *A Tapestry of Time*, the first and third volumes of Richard Cowper's mostly delightful trilogy *The White Bird of Kinship*, have white circles around the central characters' heads.

<http://www.librarything.com/work/49009>

The circles match nothing in the story, though the characters are sort of saints. Those covers too are by Don Maitz.

Jerry Friedman

On Jan 2, 2011, at 1:16 PM, Jerry Friedman <jerry_friedman at yahoo.com> wrote:

From: Tony Ellis <tonyellis69 at btopenworld.com>

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It's been customary for decades for fantasy covers to depict the hero shirtless, even when he shouldn't be (as on the cover of my old copy of *Hrolf Kraki's Saga*, by Poul Anderson). Has anyone EVER done this for *Severian*?

Jerry Friedman

Daniel Petersen — 02 Jan 2011, 23:29 · in reply to Adam Thornton

I think Gaiman is just a huge Wolfe fan like the rest of us and Wolfe is nice enough to return the compliment to a certain degree. But I can easily see how Gaiman is influenced by Wolfe's handling of ancient gods and heroism. Gaiman has his own take on these themes in his *American Gods* and *Anansi Boys*. Gaiman is very much the lesser writer and I think he'd probably acknowledge it. Gaiman is great. Wolfe is genius.

Incidentally, you can see the same asymmetric relationship between Gaiman and his other genius hero, R. A. Lafferty. Interesting that two lesser known but critically acclaimed Catholic authors have had such a profound and even 'fan-boy' influence on perhaps the most popular

contemporary fantasy author (who is himself some sort of religious pluralist?).

DOJP

On Sun, Jan 2, 2011 at 11:09 PM, Adam Thornton <adam at io.com> wrote:
On 01/02/2011 04:15 PM, Stuart Hamm wrote:

Maybe he likes Gaiman's sense of humor...Have you read "A Walking Tour
Of The Shambles: It's pretty funny.....

Preserve us from the House Of Clocks!

Adam

Jeff Wilson — 03 Jan 2011, 01:51 · in reply to Daniel Petersen

On 1/2/2011 5:29 PM, Daniel Petersen wrote:

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Born Jewish, raised Scientologist, schooled Anglican, currently mentions being Jewish but is otherwise unobservant judging by his blog.

Neil used to be part of the Wolfe topic on the old pre-internet GENie network where Mantiss and I hung out and was one of the first IIRC to work out Number Five's name.

I would say that a typical Gaiman story is shorter and about 75% less cryptic than a typical Wolfe story; within those constraints, they are otherwise often similar to my eye.

You might be interested to follow Neil's testimony on his creative process from recent litigation, it is not entirely unlike Wolfe's:

<http://www.maggiethompson.com/2010/06/june-15-in-madison-with-neil-gaiman.html>

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

Jeff Wilson — 03 Jan 2011, 02:18 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

On 1/2/2011 5:25 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:

From: Son of Witz <Sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

**

> Re: Shirtless. Don Maitz's cover painting for the hardcover BotNS SF
Book Club Edition shows

> his chest, in shadow. Mostly you don't notice it, the cloak dominates.

Not a bad way to handle it, I think.

> It's a nice enough painting, but TE is held out like a throbbing hardon,

I though you might be exaggerating till I looked at the picture.

<http://www.amazon.com/Book-New-Sun-Gene-Wolfe/dp/1568658079>

> and Severian is framed by a huge full moon,

(Which is insufficiently green. And where's the red sunlight?)

?? The red sunlight is rather prominent at the lower left. If you mean the grazing reflection from Lune, it's accurate if you agree with my hypothesis that it's glassed over like the Botanic Gardens.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

Jerry Friedman — 03 Jan 2011, 02:52 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

On 1/2/2011 5:25 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:

From: Son of Witz <Sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

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Re: Shirtless. Don Maitz's cover painting for the hardcover BotNS SF Book Club Edition shows

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That's sunlight? Maybe I have no idea what the cover is supposed to show, beside Severian and Lune.

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hypothesis that it's glassed over like the Botanic Gardens.

It certainly seems reasonable, but the glass shouldn't interfere with the green that Severian mentions seeing, and a glassed sphere would just have one highlight from the sun, I think.

Jerry Friedman

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

Jeff Wilson — 03 Jan 2011, 04:00 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

On 1/2/2011 8:52 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

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On 1/2/2011 5:25 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:

>> *From:* Son of Witz <Sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org

<mailto:Sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>>

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Not a single glass sphere, lots of domes. The color is accurate; the same sun shines on green
Lune, green Gyoll, and the greenery in the Botanical Gardens, even while it looks red when
viewed directly.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com

Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana

< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

Jerry Friedman — 03 Jan 2011, 05:00 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

On 1/2/2011 8:52 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

**

On 1/2/2011 5:25 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:

[cover painting]

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Even more reasonable. But in any case, Lune has to look green.

The color is accurate; the same sun shines on green Lune, green Gyll, and the greenery in the Botanical Gardens, even while it looks red when viewed directly.

Maybe it's my partial color blindness. Just out of curiosity, what color is Lune in that picture? It looks mostly pale blue to me.

Bigger version:

http://www.amazon.com/gp/customer-media/product-gallery/1568658079/ref=cm_ciu_pdp_images_all

(I can see the red better there, though it's still not working for me.)

Jerry Friedman

Jeff Wilson — 03 Jan 2011, 06:21 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

On 1/2/2011 11:00 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:
From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>
**On 1/2/2011 8:52 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:
>> *From:* Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com <mailto:jwilson at io.com>>
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> On 1/2/2011 5:25 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:

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>> have one highlight from the sun, I think.
>
> Not a single glass sphere, lots of domes.

Even more reasonable. But in any case, Lune has to look green.

No reason it can't; the greenery in the Botanic Gardens looks green through its glass as well.

> The color is accurate; the
> same sun shines on green Lune, green Gyll, and the greenery in the
> Botanical Gardens, even while it looks red when viewed directly.

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II

(I can see the red better there, though it's still not working for me.)

There is a lot blue among the green splotches, but that's to be expected in a new moon near sunset / waning moon at sunrise, the worst seeing conditions for color viewing. The moon is largely lit by reflected Urthlight, plus any local overhead lighting in the domes, seen through the greatest thickness of atmosphere and the greatest amount of smog and haze, with the least amount of direct sunlight short of an eclipse.

The huge moon is an interesting take; it's almost five times larger than the sun in subtended angle, implying a cozy 17,000 leagues distance. Of course, I'm of the opinion that absent-minded old Rudesinde is mistaken about it being closer, it's actually moving further off as always.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

Jerry Friedman — 03 Jan 2011, 17:41 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

On 1/2/2011 11:00 PM, Jerry Friedman wrote:
From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>
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Thanks. I would never have concluded that that yellowish ball by Severian's legs is the sun or that that pale, almost uniform moon is new. If it were important, I'd try to figure out where we're looking from and what angle to the vertical Severian is standing at.

Jerry Friedman

Son of Witz — 03 Jan 2011, 20:00 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

On Jan 3, 2011, at 9:41 AM, Jerry Friedman <jerry_friedman at yahoo.com> wrote:
From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

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Jerry Friedman

Man, you guys crack me up. You think that Don Maitz is thinking about subtended angles and how many miles away the moon is, at least in a way that can be calculated. Ha!

Jeff Wilson — 04 Jan 2011, 02:29 · in reply to Son of Witz

On 1/3/2011 2:00 PM, Son of Witz wrote:

On Jan 3, 2011, at 9:41 AM, Jerry Friedman <jerry_friedman at yahoo.com <mailto:jerry_friedman at yahoo.com>> wrote:

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Jerry Friedman

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He ought to, the sun and moon have proportions just like the human body does. Which is not to say that artists must be true to human proportions, but they need to be aware of what it is they are choosing to distort and why. Van Gogh's "Starry Night", for example includes accurate star positions, though they are about 90 degrees out of alignment with the landscape below, for composition reasons. In a book with specific details on sky features, I don't think it's more vain to hope for than any other detail.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

António Pedro Marques — 04 Jan 2011, 15:52 · in reply to Craig Brewer

Gaiman is, IMO, a superior comics author. Those are not so easy to come by. Of course comics are seen as a lesser art compared to proper Literature. Gaiman of course doesn't claim to be on the same league, even in his non-comics stuff. Nonetheless, I think more people know Gaiman than Wolfe. And I don't think any one's praise for the other is inappropriate or insincere.

Lee Berman — 04 Jan 2011, 16:18 · follows António Pedro Marques

Gaiman is, IMO, a superior comics author. Those are not so easy to come by. Of course comics are seen as a lesser art compared to proper Literature. Gaiman of course doesn't claim to be on the same league, even in his non-comics stuff.

I'd like to suggest the adjective "comics" be changed to "visual arts" or something like that. Neil has had more than one of his works transferred (through an obviously very expensive process) to the big screen. After 40 years we may need to accept that Wolfe's work just isn't seen as amenable to this process.

I think it would be quite a mistake to think that Wolfe looks down his nose at authorial work which translates well to visual.

António Pedro Marques — 04 Jan 2011, 16:22 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman wrote (04-01-2011 16:18):

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'Irregardless', that's how it's seen, a minor form of art.

Son of Witz — 04 Jan 2011, 17:52 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On Jan 4, 2011, at 7:52 AM, António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com> wrote:
Gaiman is, IMO, a superior comics author. Those are not so easy to come by. Of course comics are seen as a lesser art compared to proper Literature. Gaiman of course doesn't claim to be on the same league, even in his non-comics stuff. Nonetheless, I think more people know Gaiman than Wolfe. And I don't think any one's praise for the other is inappropriate or insincere.

Lane Haygood — 04 Jan 2011, 17:54 · in reply to Son of Witz

Gaiman's novels are hit-or-miss. "Neverwhere" is decent enough, but way too much of a "faerie story" for me, just like "Stardust." "American Gods," however, is a damn fine novel.

I think Gaiman and Wolfe are part of a small group of authors that treat sf as an actual literary movement instead of a genre, something that provides them a chance to explore literature. LeGuin, Mieville, Moorcock, etc., also fit within this group of authors... pretty much anyone that appears on the blurbs on the back of Wolfe books talking about how spectacular they are.

LH

On Tue, Jan 4, 2011 at 11:52 AM, Son of Witz <Sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

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Son of Witz — 04 Jan 2011, 18:03 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

I don't want to start ranting about comics, but calling him a "comics author" is very appropriate in that it highlights the particular problems of the craft. Comics are a distinct visual art form, with problems and solutions that are specific to its form. The problems of a painter, a film maker, or a novelist are very very different than the problems facing someone trying to tell a story in a serial juxtaposition of images into a complicated arrangement of sub-compositions. I've made a lot of comics pages, let me tell you that it busts my brain as much or more than

trying to do computer programming. It can be very simple if your form and content work that way, sure, but to do something complicated...

On Jan 4, 2011, at 8:22 AM, António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com> wrote:
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António Pedro Marques — 04 Jan 2011, 18:29 · in reply to Son of Witz

Son of Witz wrote (04-01-2011 18:03):

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I think Lee's objection was to the term itself in not being dignified enough. And I think that comics present a different set of challenges from other 'visual arts', not only from textual literature.

Lee Berman — 04 Jan 2011, 18:56 · follows António Pedro Marques

Antonio: I think Lee's objection was to the term itself in not being dignified enough.

Quite the contrary! I unfortunately trend toward the mission of puncturing pomposity and elitism in the arts. A bit of artistic dignity is fine but as it increases it gradually morphs into those two balloons I always want to pop. I apologize and try to keep this failing of mine under control.

My objection was only in breadth not elitism of terms. Visual accessibility is just a general way I would characterize the differences between Wolfe's and Gaiman's work.

As Witz suggests, even the more prosaic aspects of Wolfe's work can be difficult to render in visual form. So how do you convey the idea of immaterial or indeterminate elements like Neighbors or

Yesod or Brook Madregot or Whorl Gods? I mean, c'mon, the Naviscaput would end up looking awfully silly no matter who drew him...

Marc Aramini — 04 Jan 2011, 19:14 · in reply to Lee Berman

And every work of Wolfe brings its own different form of ambiguity - in New Sun, ambiguous descriptions like "he was the smallest of those dead" just can't be captured in film without taking a firm interpretive side without some really questionable filming techniques.

In Long Sun, the ambiguity about who and what is being addressed in dialogue might be offputting in a screen play. Cassie's changing house number and inconsistencies in description of her apartment - does this imply changes in reality and in where she lives or what? You would have to make a firm overt choice to depict the changes in film or to ignore them. Still waiting for this Death of Doctor Island movie.

Descriptive contradictions are particularly troubling in Wolfe - does it mean anything? Did he just write it quickly or is it intentional??(Crime and Punishment, the police building changes from a four story one to a smaller one - no big deal in Dostoevsky, but possibly the seat of a disjunction in reality allowing murderous possession in a Wolfe novel).

That's why when I write Short Sun word for word Piere Menard/Don Quixote style, none of the words will change, but Green will be Urth.

--- On Tue, 1/4/11, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:

"So how do you convey the idea of immaterial or indeterminate elements like Neighbors or Yesod or Brook Madregot or Whorl Gods" I mean, c'mon, the Naviscaput would end up looking awfully silly
no matter who drew him... ??? ???????? ?????? ??? ?

Lee Berman — 04 Jan 2011, 20:34 · follows Marc Aramini

Marc Aramini: That's why when I write Short Sun word for word Piere Menard/Don Quixote style, none of the words will change, but Green will be Urth.

:-). Go for it!

Jeff Wilson — 05 Jan 2011, 02:26 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 1/4/2011 12:56 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

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no matter who drew him...

A naviscaput needn't look any sillier than any other scary ship plying the waves; the key would be to avoid the anthropic elements like giant hands and shoulders and concentrate on the the ship-like structure above the waterline, the deformation of the waves and currents from the sheer bulk of the creature, and conceal the exact appearance of any limbs with muck, trash,

and accumulated wreckage. Now that I think of it, several Miyazaki films have very unsilly execution of similar giant baddies.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com

Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana

< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >