

Casting Call

The Urth list — 17 messages, 11 voices, 12 May 1998

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Alice Turner — 12 May 1998, 21:00

Okay, we've got lots of serious subjects cooking. How about a frivolous one? Surely all of us have an occasional fantasy of a dream production of these books. Who would you cast? Because we're all of different ages (I presume), let's say that the actor doesn't have to be his or her current age--usually, that would mean that s/he would be a younger version. I'd start with:

Severian: Daniel Day-Lewis

Dorcas: Sissy Spacek. Claire Danes might do as a younger version.

Dr. Talos: Dustin Hoffman

Baldanders: that guy who's in the Billy Crystal movie, though it could be a computer-enhanced Arnold, I guess. The Autarch: Alec Guinness. If you want to go younger, Kevin Spacey (who could also do Talos). Vodalus: Willem DaFoe Thecla: Most of you are probably too young to have seen Vanessa Redgrave as drop-dead in -Morgan- or -Blow-Up-, but she would have been divine. Sigourney would have been pretty terrific too. Jolenta: Well, Marilyn, but can we think of someone still alive? Agia: I draw a blank, but it should be somebody pretty vibrant.

Okay, that's a start. Please disagree, and add. This would also be fun with the whorl list.

-alga-

William H. Ansley — 13 May 1998, 00:46 · follows Alice Turner

Okay, we've got lots of serious subjects cooking. How about a frivolous one? Surely all of us have an occasional fantasy of a dream production of these books. Who would you cast? Because we're all of different ages (I presume), let's say that the actor doesn't have to be his or her current age--usually, that would mean that s/he would be a younger version. I'd start with:

This sounds like fun, but I think guessing who Hollywood might actually cast, but who would be totally wrong for the part, is more fun. The problem is there are so many to choose from! <g> (Please note, I don't think most of the people on my list are bad actors, I just think that they would be very wrong for the role I have given them.)

My Worst Case Scenerio BotNS Cast

Severian: Keanu Reeves

Dorcas: Kate Winslet

Dr. Talos: Wallace Shawn

Baldanders: Computer animation or guy in costume with voice of James Earl Jones The Autarch:

David Bowie Vodalus: Billy Zane Thecla: Geena Davis Jolenta: Dolly Parton Agia: Demi Moore

Thea: Uma Thurman

William Ansley

Robert King — 13 May 1998, 01:21 · follows William H. Ansley

Oh, and I could see Karen Allen (circa Raiders of the Lost Ark) as Agia.

Bob, writing for I swear the last time today

Robert King — 13 May 1998, 01:17 · follows Robert King

And in honor of the all the Last Episode hooplah, we could have the Seinfeld version, with Jerry as Severian, of course. The others could be:

Jonas: George

Dorcas: Elaine

Dr. Talos: Kramer

Baldanders: Newman

Vodalus: The Soup Nazi

Thecla: "Mulva"

The Autarch: J. Peterman

Father Inire: The Maestro

Abdiesus: George Steinbrenner

I think I'll stop there.

Only slightly more seriously, I've been inspired by this list to reread TBOTNS in its entirety for the first time in 15 years (a truly unsettling experience I'll go into more on later), and the only thing close to any Hollywood casting is that I hear Richard Dreyfus' voice whenever Dr. Talos speaks. Don't ask me why.

Bob

Robert King — 13 May 1998, 01:20 · follows Robert King

What? No theme song by Celine Dion?

On Wed, 13 May 1998, William H. Ansley wrote:
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Thea: Uma Thurman

William Ansley

Peter Stephenson — 13 May 1998, 08:45 · follows Robert King

"Alice Turner" wrote:

Agia: I draw a blank, but it should be somebody pretty vibrant.

I can imagine Miranda Richardson ('Dance with a Stranger', 'That Film about the First Mrs Eliot' (not the real title), Queen Elizabeth in 'Blackadder II') getting the pent up evil and Machiavellian qualities. I can also imagine a hundred villainesses from second rate television programmes hamming it up horribly.

pws

Alice Turner — 13 May 1998, 08:07 · follows Peter Stephenson

LOL (more than once) on Worst Case and Kramer casting. I like Miranda Richardson better than Karen Allen as Agia. Please don't stop!

-alga-

Dan Parmenter — 13 May 1998, 07:39 · follows Alice Turner

From: "Alice Turner" <al at interport.net>

Dorcas: Sissy Spacek. Claire Danes might do as a younger version.

Agreed, though maybe Mia Farrow would work too.

Baldanders: that guy who's in the Billy Crystal movie, though it could be a computer-enhanced Arnold, I guess.

Nah, how about Arnold as Piaton and the head of Yul Brynner for Typhon?

Jolenta: Well, Marilyn, but can we think of someone still alive?

The Marilyn fit is awfully good, and given that you've allowed us to walk the corridors of time in search of the right cast at the right time in their lives, why not her? The Marilyn thing runs deep in our culture. Just last week I came across a copy of the classic PLAYBOY Marilyn nude that I had totally forgotten about tucked away in amongst some other posters and prints. It was like finding buried treasure!

From: "William H. Ansley" <wansley at warwick.net>

My Worst Case Scenerio BotNS Cast

Dr. Talos: Wallace Shawn

Well actually that wouldn't be bad at all.

From: Robert King <bobking at gate.net>

Oh, and I could see Karen Allen (circa Raiders of the Lost Ark) as Agia.

Bingo!

Okay, so these are the ones I agree with from other people.

God, if Charlton Heston were a little taller. I mean let's face it, this movie would have to be pretty much an epic on the scale of BEN-HUR. And about 12 hours long! If I were to play devil's advocate, I'd call it unfilmable, just for its length, but I've heard that some brave soul is putting together a new production of LORD OF THE RINGS in New Zealand, so one never knows these days. Back when there seemed to be a less-than-remote chance that WATCHMEN might be made into a film I vehemently argued against, arguing that it was far too tied into the comic book form and that indeed, its plot was almost secondary to the subtle mechanics of its manipulation of the syntax of comics. This is one of the reasons that I think BOTNS is unfilmable: it's too tied into the literary form itself and indeed, seems to almost comment on it. In a sense, Gene Wolfe has given us the perfect SF story: time travel, spaceships, robots, giant bugs (Hethor's), scantily-clad girls, the works, but to simply present these elements in the usual Hollywood way might leave the less imaginative members of the audience scratching their

heads.

I wouldn't mind seeing an animated version of it.

D

Kieran Cleary — 13 May 1998, 14:38 · follows Dan Parmenter

lol @ bad casting. Of course, you'd need an absurdly deep-throated and portentous trailer intro:

"In the Far Far Future, The Sun is Dying...The Fate of Humanity lies with the Destiny of One Man. To Protect Our Future, He Must Destroy Our World!"

btw Charlotte Rampling would make a good Thecla (in a serious version).

kieran

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Mark Andersen — 13 May 1998, 09:59 · follows Kieran Cleary

"Alice Turner" <al at interport.net>:

Severian: Daniel Day-Lewis

Dorcas: Sissy Spacek. Claire Danes might do as a younger version.

Dr. Talos: Dustin Hoffman

Baldanders: that guy who's in the Billy Crystal movie, though it could be a computer-enhanced Arnold, I guess.

The Autarch: Alec Guinness. If you want to go younger, Kevin Spacey (who could also do Talos).

Vodulus: Willem DaFoe

Thecla: Most of you are probably too young to have seen Vanessa Redgrave as drop-dead in -Morgan- or -Blow-Up-, but she would have been divine.

Sigourney would have been pretty terrific too.

Jolenta: Well, Marilyn, but can we think of someone still alive?

How about Cindy Crawford, or even better, Anna Nicole Smith? Limited acting ability would not be a handicap for the part of Jolenta.

Agia: I draw a blank, but it should be somebody pretty vibrant.

How about Phoebe Cates? (Although she'd make a good Valeria too, I think).

Some additions:

Hildegrin: Brian Dennehy

Master Palaemon: John Gielgud

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Paul C Duggan — 13 May 1998, 13:26 · follows Mark Andersen

Some of you beat me to these, but...

Terry Gilliam should direct

Severian Antonio Banderas
Dorcas: Wynona Ryder
Baldanders: Andre The Giant
Dr. Talos: Gilbert Gottfried
Jolenta Anna Nicole Smith
Agia: Signourney Weaver
Hethor: Jack Nicholson
Gunnie: Claudia Christianson

Patera Silk: Nicholas Cage

"I am an impure thinker. I am hurt, swayed, shaken, | paul + | + elated, disillusioned, shocked, comforted, and I | --|-- have to transmit my mental experiences lest I die." | + | +
-- Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy | pduggan at world.std.com

sph1635 — 13 May 1998, 12:46 · follows Paul C Duggan

In participation to this enjoyable fancy, I visualize the Old Autarch as a Woody Allen type of person. Other than that though, I am at a loss.
Xury

Robert Borski — 13 May 1998, 14:22 · follows sph1635

Haven't been to a movie in years and don't own a television (I'm hearing-impaired and loathe close-captioning), so I'm a little out of touch when it comes to current actors and actresses, but I still bear an enormous fondness for the BBC production of "I, Claudius."

Indeed, if anyone could break down the Book of the New Sun into manageable episodes, I believe it would be the late Jack Pulman, screenwriter for the I,C series.

I also believe that most of the I,C cast would be appropriate in one way or another for roles in any cinematic version of New Sun. To wit:

Severian -- Patrick Stewart
Baldanders or Typhon -- Brian Blessed
Agia -- Sian Phillips
Appian, the old autarch -- Sir Derek Jacobi
Dr. Talos -- John Hurt
Jolenta -- Sheila White

Of course, given the influence of Robert Graves on New Sun, perhaps it's only natural to find correspondences between the paired works, fictive and cinematic, even if one half of the latter will likely never be.

Then again, after an earlier production of I, Claudius starring Charles Laughton and Merle

Oberon failed, Robert Graves himself, citing the possibly hostile spirit of the original Claudius, opined his work might not be filmable--so who knows?

Robert Borski

William H. Ansley — 13 May 1998, 22:32 · follows Robert Borski

From Dan Parmenter:

From: "William H. Ansley" <wansley at warwick.net>

My Worst Case Scenerio BotNS Cast

Dr. Talos: Wallace Shawn

Well actually that wouldn't be bad at all.

Yeah, I hesitated over him quite a bit as not being inappropriate enough. Oh wait. I've got it!!!!

Dr. Talos: Paul Williams

Yes!!! Really bad, and he'd picked because he's short and he was in that sci-fi planet of the apes movie (attempt at Hollywood thought process).

William Ansley

William H. Ansley — 13 May 1998, 23:31 · follows William H. Ansley

From: Mark Andersen

How about Cindy Crawford, or even better, Anna Nicole Smith? Limited acting ability would not be a handicap for the part of Jolenta.

Wait! I want Anna Nicole for my WCS cast! Please!

William Ansley

Robert King — 13 May 1998, 23:46 · follows William H. Ansley

How about Kim Basinger?

On Wed, 13 May 1998, William H. Ansley wrote:

From: Mark Andersen

How about Cindy Crawford, or even better, Anna Nicole Smith? Limited acting ability would not be a handicap for the part of Jolenta.

Wait! I want Anna Nicole for my WCS cast! Please!

William Ansley

J. Schultz — 18 May 1998, 16:06 · follows Robert King

Hello everyone,

Back from vacation. Catching up and biting my tongue until the end so I don't repeat everyone else. But... Have to respond to this one, I was going to ask it a while back but held off... didn't want to seem silly. But now that it's been broached...

Obviously any adaptation, Even a 5 part miniseries done by those "Merlin" people :) would be an absolute disaster.

Baldanders would have to be played by Andre the Giant from the "Princess Bride" Everytime B. enters the story I can only picture all 400 lbs of the late pro wrestling star. As a matter of fact, everyone should go out and rent "Princess Bride" I believe the whole cast for Urth can be found there. While the movie may be considered 'cute' it has always been one of my favorites. Takes a satirical look at traditional fantasy, nicely done.

Dr. Talos: I see a Willy Wonka as played by Gene Wilder. Showmanship with a hint of the maniacal.

Charleton Heston will surely play Jonas to Inire's Dr Zaeis

Or for those of you with TV leanings

Severian: Ritchie Cunningham

Roche: Ralph Malph

Drotte: Pottsie

Eata: Chachi

M. Palaemon: Al (the oriental one, more wisdom)

M. Gureloes: Al (the later, 'white' Al, ... He's a replacement and a fake) Agia: Pinky Tuskedero (you had to be a serious fan to know about her) Baldanders: Mr. C (hey, he was nice but could get REAL angry) Matachin Tower: Al's diner Strange Machines on top Floor of Tower: Jukebox

Voudalus: The Fonz, (had a gang and was bad until Ritchie turned him to good.) Voudalus' Ziggurat: Fonzie's Bathroom Dorcas: Joanie "Cupcake" Cunningham (young, innocent, AND related!)

Thecla: Mary Beth (Ritchie's girl, later wife) Tonite on "Happy Days:"

The Fonz tries to find Ritchie to beat him up but ends up having his bike unknowingly stolen by Ritchie who has gotten a letter in class from Mary Beth telling him to meet her at Makeout Point. Ritchie finds out that Pinky has set him up and forged the letter. Ritchie and Pinky learn a valuable lesson about forgiveness. OR:

Ritchie, Patsy, Ralph and Chachi stay out way too late and end up getting locked out. Later that day Ritchie stops a fight that The Fonz is about to get into. They learn a valuable lesson about friendship. OR:

Ritchie finds out he's been sleeping with his sister. Eats his dead girlfriend. Is fired by Al for not killing the customers. Gets in a fist fight with Mr. C. Kills the Fonz... Ok, maybe it doesn't fit everything.

Good to be back, and Thanks for all the reading suggestions, FunkMonkey