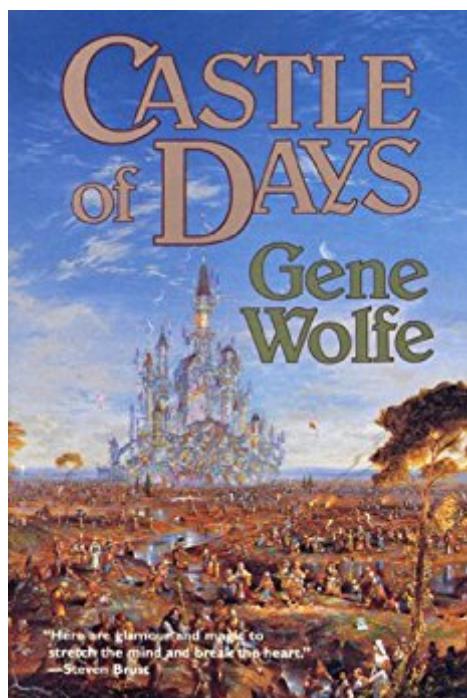


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Castle Of Days: Short Fiction And Essays



Synopsis

The Washington Post has called Gene Wolfe "the finest writer the science fiction world has yet produced." This volume joins together two of his rarest and most sought after works--Gene Wolfe's Book of Days and The Castle of the Otter--and add thirty-nine short essays collected here for the first time, to fashion a rich and engrossing architecture of wonder. At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

Book Information

File Size: 1189 KB

Print Length: 450 pages

Publisher: Tor Books; Reprint edition (March 15, 1995)

Publication Date: March 15, 1995

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B008VK1H9O

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #427,040 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #524 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Short Stories #830 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Anthologies & Short Stories #1317 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Anthologies

Customer Reviews

If you have not read Gene Wolfe then go get a copy of the "Book of the New Sun" and be prepared to be blown away. but read it first before reading the second part of this book because it contains spoilers for the "Book of the New Sun". Gene Wolfe is not just a good Sci-Fi author. He is one of the greatest writers of the 20th century in ANY genre, it just happens that his genre is sci-fi. Even better Gene is not dead yet! And is still writing incredibly good books! This book is really two books. The first half being the collection of short stories called the "Book of Days". A small hint read the introduction Gene Wolfe has something in it that you would miss out on if you don't read it. The

second part called "The Castle of the Otter" is a bunch of essays on his own writing. Much of it about the Book of the New Sun. It provides a lot of explanation and insight into the five book series. It also includes a lot of information about books by his contemporary authors that you may never have heard of and provides a great resource to books by famous authors that you may not of heard of before.

This book is half non-fiction, half fiction. For those who love Wolfe's Book of the New Sun series, the latter half of Castle of Days is just for you. There are several pieces about the writing of those books, the characters, its obscure words, its publishing schedule and many other things. Other than New Sun related items, there are many letters Wolfe wrote to other writers and vice-versa, and some writing advice articles written by Wolfe. The fiction half of the book is a collection of short stories arranged around several holidays. Most of these stories are really first-rate Wolfe, my favorites being: "Forlesen", "The Changeling", "Many Mansions", and "Melting". This collection is a must have for Wolfe fans, and a great insight into his writing process. Great.

Gene Wolfe's collection CASTLE OF DAYS is a must for fans, especially those who enjoyed his four-volume great work the Book of the New Sun. It consists of three parts, "Gene Wolfe's Book of Days", "The Castle of the Otter", and "Castle of Days." "Gene Wolfe's Book of Days" is a collection of some of Wolfe's short stories, each representing a particular holiday. While these pieces are generally lighter and less substantial than Wolfe's other short stories of the late 70's and earlier 80's, there are several stories that are highly worthy. "Forlesen", representing Labor Day, is a clever jab at life in a corporation and it shows that the Dilbertesque workplace is nothing new. "The Changeling" represents Homecoming Day. A chilling and haunting piece, it takes place in the same town as Wolfe's early novel PEACE and illuminates a cryptic reference made there. This story alone makes CASTLE OF DAYS worth getting for fans of PEACE. The second part of the book is "Castle of the Otter", named in jest after the mispelling of THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH which appeared in a 1982 issue of Locus. Subtitled "a book about the Book of the New Sun", it is a collection of essays about Wolfe's best-known work and can greatly expand one's knowledge of that world. "Words Weird and Wonderful", for example, defines all the archaic words in THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER. "These Are the Jokes" is a collection of witty jokes, each told by a different character from the Book of the New Sun. "Onomastics" explains the names of many characters. "Castle of the Otter" was written when two of the four volumes of the series had been published, so it is a bit light on detail from THE CITADEL OF THE AUTARCH. Nonetheless, if you loved the Book

of the New Sun, this part makes CASTLE OF DAYS the next Wolfe work worth getting. The final section is "Castle of Days", which is a collection of diverse essays from the late 1980's. I found this the least interesting section, as much deals with science fiction fandom and a few pieces are rather quaint. However, there is the highly interesting essay "The Secret of the Greeks" which explains some of Wolfe's work on the Soldier series and why classical languages and literature are a worthwhile pastime. All in all, CASTLE OF DAYS is an essential purchase for fans of Gene Wolfe. I didn't pick it up until six years after I read and was fascinated by the Book of the New Sun, and I instantly regretted missing out on such an illuminating collection. I can't recommend this collection enough.

Gene Wolfe gives an interesting account and further insight into his most famous work. Highly recommended.

This is a collection of essays/ruminations. The first section deals with holiday-related stories/topics. The second deals with themes in some of his fiction. The third deals with writers, the art of writing, and topics related to publishing and the sci-fi/fantasy genres. An indispensable book for people who would like to sample the full range of Gene Wolfe's talents and diverse threads of thought. The book appeared in a timely fashion, and in the advertised condition. I would favorably recommend this merchant.

I bought this book mostly for "The Castle of the Otter", and that was worth it. A fascinating insight into "The Book of the New Sun". I recommend it for all fans of Wolfe who are interested in learning more about the process of writing his magnum opus.

Insight into the motivations of the author and into his best known works. In particular, the conversational tone helps close the gap between the author and his readers. Would love to have read this as a teenager, when I struggled with the Book of the New Sun for the first time. Still all these years later I am very glad someone thought to combine these essays and short stories into a single volume.

This book was really fun to read. For me, a few parts were sort of boring, hence the four star rating. The pieces are so varied though, that there is something for everyone. If you loved the Book of the New Sun, then this collection is worth a few bucks.

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