



The Flux

Ferrett Steinmetz

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Love something enough, and your obsession will punch holes through the laws of physics. That devotion creates unique magics: videogamemancers. Origamimancers. Culinomancers.

But when ‘mancers battle, cities tremble...

ALIYAH TSABO-DAWSON: The world’s most dangerous eight-year-old girl. Burned by a terrorist’s magic, gifted strange powers beyond measure. She’s furious that she has to hide her abilities from her friends, her teachers, even her mother – and her temper tantrums can kill.

PAUL TSABO: Bureaucromancer. Magical drug-dealer. Desperate father. He’s gone toe-to-toe with the government’s conscription squads of brain-burned Unimancers, and he’ll lie to anyone to keep Aliyah out of their hands – whether Aliyah likes it or not.

THE KING OF NEW YORK: The mysterious power player hell-bent on capturing the two of them. A man packing a private army of illegal ‘mancers.

Paul’s family is the key to keep the King’s crumbling empire afloat. But offering them paradise is the catalyst that inflames Aliyah’s deadly rebellious streak...

File Under: **Urban Fantasy**

The Flux Details

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Author : Ferrett Steinmetz

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From Reader Review The Flux for online ebook

Karin says

I loved this sequel to Flex. It continues the fun of 'mancy, obsession based magic, and throws in characters with real lives and family problems.

Bradley says

[The first rule: You don't talk about FLUX. The second rule: You DO NOT talk about FLUX. Third rule: If someone says "stop" or goes limp, taps out the FLUX is over. (hide spoiler)]

Bibliotropic says

(Full review here: <https://bibliotropic.net/2016/09/07/t...>)

I'm in love with the world that Steinmetz has created, and the characters within it, and the overarching story in this series so far is pulling me along at breakneck speed and I don't want to stop. It's a wonderfully creative take on magic, has a weird and varied cast of characters, and I can't wait to dive into Fix to continue the story!

Lynn Williams says

<http://lynns-books.com/2015/10/11/the...>

I recently read and reviewed The Flux by Ferrett Steinmetz over at The Speculative Herald (below is a condensed version). My review of Flex is here). Basically: I love both these books and can't wait for No.3.

Be aware that, whilst I try to avoid spoilers, this review may contain spoilers for Flex so if you haven't yet started this series probably best to stop reading now!

The Flux starts a short while after the conclusion of Flex. Aliyah is now 8 years old and her mancy powers make her something of a handful to manage. Her parents have divorced and Paul, following his heroics at the conclusion of Flex, heads up the task force who track mancers. Of course, being a mancer, and not wishing to be caught (or brainwashed) he uses every trick in the book to fail. His lack of success is starting to attract attention!

As the book begins we have Paul and Valentine cooking up a batch of flex (a powerful drug that is created using magic). Unfortunately, following a tip off from the mysterious King of New York, the task force have honed in on their location and are about to try and apprehend the pair. And that's when the magic really kicks off.

I went into this story with raised expectations and wondered if the author could sustain the level of enthusiasm I felt for Flex. I'm pleased to say he managed to do just that. In a rather cunning ploy FS brings not only all sorts of game references and characters into play but also creates something of a film geek fest

and in fact uses the love of films to create a different sort of mancy. I love the concept here and think FS has given himself massive scope to create all sorts of different magical abilities and super obsessed evil baddies.

The characters. Firstly Paul, his magic seems tame compared with most of the others but it's actually subtly ingenious. Perhaps not the explosion of fireworks that Aliyah creates or the fun game worlds that Valentine pulls out of the hat but in a world where most people leave a paper trail, bureaucromacy is very effective. Valentine is an amazing character. She's so full of passion for what she does and who she is that she's a force of nature waiting to happen. She loves Paul and Aliyah and is protective of their small unit. On top of that she's about to gain a love interest. Then of course we have the maniacs of the piece. One of them very obvious and one of them not as immediately apparent.

I don't really have any criticisms. You could say that after the dramatic and horror filled start of *Flex*, *The Flux* has something of a tamer start but I think it's appropriate and allows you to stop and gain a feel for the characters. That isn't to say the action is in short supply but the author takes the time to show you how Aliyah feels and how she's dealing with the traumas she's already suffered. Paul also suffers unimaginable guilt and will go to great lengths to secure his daughter's happiness (almost forgetting to be a parent in the process). Valentine is also desperate to retain the friendship and closeness she values but needs something more in her life. They all have things to lose and for a while these fears drive a wedge between them.

In a nutshell – this is a great story. It expands on the possibilities created in *Flex*, has a great plot, excellent writing, action, heartbreak and loss, tempered with fun and laugh out loud moments. Highly entertaining with an addictive comic book/super hero feel. I have no hesitation in recommending. Explosively good fun.

Jeff Raymond says

Closer to a 4.5.

So *Flex* is great, and if you've read it, you know that already. *The Flux* is absolutely in the same universe, but it's a very different book. That's not a bad thing, but it also means that there are parts that stumble and there's some attention to detail that needs to be done by the reader for things to truly pay off.

Overall, we're past the point of *Flex* and now Paul is inside the machine. But if the first book was about saving his daughter by any means necessary, *The Flux*, in a sense, is about Paul trying to save his daughter from herself. It's an interesting dynamic in the story in that there are things we can control and things we can't, and this story is largely about both of those things as a result, as Aliyah is torn between what's right and what's true. And she's eight. And there are good guys and bad guys, but a significant amount of grey to go along with it.

Yeah, it's that kind of book.

There's a lot of balls in the air here, and what Steinmetz does well is keep them in the air while not losing the sense of the overall. Sometimes there's an imbalance between the action and the story, sometimes things are a little longer than they need to be, but the key point is that the story *works*. The beginning is a crazy adventure, and the end is just an enjoyable boss battle in every way, including a part that both got me visibly excited and emotionally upset - I tend to be a stoic reader, so that's worth praise in and of itself.

Ferrett Steinmetz is a longtime internet friend/acquaintance, and so knowing some of the things that inform this book definitely has a director's cut feel as a result. I might have actually enjoyed this more if I didn't know some of what he's shared over the years, and that's a testament to how good this book is on a whole.

Overall? A worthy sequel, even if it doesn't reach those heights. Read *Flex* first, obviously, but give this series a shot. It's some of the more unique and enjoyable urban fantasy I've read as of late.

Stephanie Swint says

Steinmetz second book in the Mancer Series is perfectly enjoyable. Valentine, Aaliyah, and Paul come back to us. Paul Tsabo, the world's most unlikeliest hero, takes us through the fine back alleyways between right and wrong, mancer's vs. mundanes, faith vs. antagonism. How nice it would be if the world was black and white. Instead it is many murky shades of grey where the meek become powerful. Mancer's are created from intense passion. Intense passion, obsession, is usually born of loss and sadness. So, the world is left in the hands of Paul, a lanky man of Greek heritage missing a foot who is a bureaucromancer; Valentine, an overweight/voluptuous twenty-something female videogamemancer; and Aaliyah, Paul's baydly burned, mixed race, nine year-old daughter. If the bookiemancer we meet in this book were to place a bet on these three I doubt it would be in their favor.

Paul Tsabo is in charge of the New York police force hunting mancer's. Who would be better for the job than the only mundane man to take one down? Well, its complicated, Paul isn't mundane is he? He's carefully hidden his bureaucramancy. He is legitimately trying to find other mancer's, but he doesn't have any intention of capturing them if they are not a threat. Paul hopes to find others like him, Valentine, and his daughter.

Paul's second job is brewing the drug Flex for a criminal entity. Unfortunately, his first job and his daughter keep getting in the way -resulting in him owing larger and larger sums to his Oscar. K-Dash and Quaysean are Oscar's employees tasked with supporting Paul. Paul has amazing talent and skill but no one – not his daughter, not Valentine, not Oscar, or some other characters we meet, have any faith that Paul can/will protect himself. His faith in his fellow man, mancer or mundane, leaves him at risk. So, their attempts to protect him, while sometimes positive, usually result in highly dysfunctional trainwrecks.

While brewing Flex, his daughter steps in to protect her daddy when his own police force tracks him to his laboratory. He might have been able to compensate for one variable but both result in the total loss of the Flex, millions of dollars he will now owe Oscar, and the loss of his job with the police. The usual upbeat Paul is forced to slink back on his belly to Samaritan Mutual, the Insurance Company, he used to work for. The information he will find working there about the King of New York, a Police Informant whose always one step ahead of him, and about other mancers in New York takes his life in very unexpected directions. Paul and Valentine are forced to suffer terrible indignities in the name of doing what appears to be best for Aaliyah in this book. Eventually, we learn all that looks righteous and good isn't and entities that appear criminal and wrong aren't either. I told you this book was murky and grey.

We did meet some new mancers in this book. I wasn't particularly fond of some of them. I get that Steinmetz mancy is based off of obsession but I had a hard time with the plushomancer. Everything about that just seems downright wrong.

A wonderful component of Steinmetz' Mancer series is the complex characters. They are flawed well-intentioned underdogs. Most books present their heroes as fit ideals. They are the epitome of what society says is desirable – wealthy, attractive, and clever. Things come to them easy. We rarely know how they learned their skill set. They just intuit how to use a sword, naturally lead through charisma, and save the day with their unwavering confidence they are right. They have crisis of faith and challenges, but they start the game with advantages. Steinmetz characters aren't like that. You only have to look at Valentine to see this. She turned to gaming because it offered her an escape from her life. The obsession became magic, but that

magic came with Flux/backlash. She can't care about anyone because they die. She lives in her car – her magic getting her evicted regularly. She has sex with random people met online because it's the only way she can connect with someone without fear of the Flux taking them. She eats horribly, but hell carbohydrates make you feel good and in the midst of so much terrible in life a girl should get to have carbohydrates if nothing else. While this book has focus on Aaliyah; what Paul, Valentine, and her mother believes are the right things for her; there is also added focus on Valentine. I enjoyed this insight. K-Dash and Quaysean's characters are also developed. They are two of my favorite supporting characters in a book. For gangsters, who can wreak a high level of havoc and pain, they are kind loving men. This book stands on its story, writing, and characters, but it also presents diversity in an intelligent realistic way.

I read and listened to the audio version of this book. Peter Brooke narrates the series. He does a wonderful job. He grasped Steinmetz humor. He also handled the range of emotion and characters well. This is definitely a book you can enjoy listening to. Fair warning: you might laugh out loud. So, if you are at work listening to this, potentially in violation of work policy, be aware.

It's clear I enjoyed this book and respect Steinmetz. I encourage you to read/listen to it. It's geared to a fantasy audience, but I will say it should appeal to comic book lovers and dystopian fans too.

I received this from Netgalley and Angry Robot in return for an honest review.

Michelle says

The only time I had heard about **The Flux**, was on another blog discussing the covers of several releases. When I was contacted about reviewing an audiobook I read the synopsis that was provided and quickly replied with a yes. After a few technical glitches I was able to get the credit to download this from audible. It was that moment that I realised that **The Flux** was the second book in a series, one where I had not read or listened to the first one.

When I began listening to **The Flux** I was hooked, I love this world that Ferrett Steinmetz has created. I love the different 'mancy, how something you are skilled at can be used as a form of 'mancy, enabling you to do a lot of things that are physically impossible, like turning dressing yourself in you favourite game outfit to fight in a battle, using Pokeballs to capture people.

The Flux has some amazing action sequences, with lots of brutal fight scenes and it does not hold out on the gore factor either, but I loved it. The attention to detail was truly outstanding, and it really made things come to life even more. I love the cover of this audiobook, and after getting to know the characters I like seeing who it portrays. The characters themselves have a way of standing out and making sure they are memorable. I love the interaction between the primary characters and how they work so well together. The 'mancy itself sounds amazing, but also scary. Wanting something so much that your 'mancy can make it happen, but one shift in that feeling of need can backlash, and can have dire effects, from turning a minor crash into a fatal one, from a safe place becoming unsafe fast, and from life to death.

The plot behind the book was fantastic, and while it initially started out easy to follow, as it progressed I did feel like I was missing important events that occurred in the previous book. The author has done a good job to fill in most of the blanks and explain things, but to me because I knew I had missed out I couldn't help but see the glaring gaps, this did affect me somewhat in my enjoyment, but it just makes me more determined to pick up the previous book so I can enjoy this book again as a whole series so far.

Narration

The narrator, Peter Brooke, has done a great job of telling this story. He made it easy to distinguish which character was who with slight differentiation in his voice. He helped the story draw you in even more than you already had been, and want to keep listening.

Final Verdict

The Flux was an amazing audiobook, and I have problem with listening to this all over again once I pick up the previous book in the series.

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

4 of 5 stars at The BiblioSanctum <http://bibliosanctum.com/2015/12/12/a...>

Let me start my review of The Flux the same way I started my review of the first book Flex. There was some of this:

And then some of this:

And this:

As well as this:

And even...this:

By the way, if you haven't read Flex yet, I highly recommend picking it up first because you'll definitely want the complete 'Mancer experience. If nothing else, getting the full rundown of the magic system will be worth it, because this series features some of the most intricate and unique concepts I've ever seen.

Imagine a world where magic is based around obsession. Love something hard enough—whether it be cats, cooking, or donuts—and it might just actually become your special power, giving you the ability to shape reality to your vision. As you can imagine, the possibilities are virtually limitless. For instance, protagonist Paul Tsabo (he loves paperwork, God help him) is a bureaucromancer, and his friend and partner in crime Valentine is a videogamemancer (three guesses what her favorite hobby is?)

In The Flux, a third 'mancer character also rises to prominence—Paul's own daughter Aliyah Tsabo-Dawson. The events at the end of Flex might have turned her into the world's most dangerous eight-year-old, but to Paul she'll always be his little girl. It's now up to him to hide Aliyah's secret and protect her from those who will want to use her or do her harm. But Paul is living a double life himself, hunting rogue 'mancers for the government by day and brewing magical drugs by night. To make matters worse, there's now a new power-player in town called "The King of New York" and he's got Paul and Valentine in his

sights.

Like its predecessor, *The Flux* was pure geek escapism. In general I still think *Flex* was the better book, though I liked certain aspects of this sequel more. For one thing, Valentine plays a much bigger role. I remember being so excited when I realized that was her on the cover. She's my favorite character in this series, and not just because she has great taste in video games. I am totally in love her offbeat personality, and her confidence also makes her a force to be reckoned with. Because of her, the plot is also heavier on videogamemancy. Needless to say, I was right where I wanted to be. We're talking loads more gaming references, which to me was one of the best things about *Flex*. Gamers will no doubt experience multiple nerdgasms while reading this series, though in truth, I think anyone can appreciate the humor and action in these books.

Speaking of which, *The Flux* also introduces Valentine's new friend Tyler Durden, whom I hope we'll be seeing again soon in some way, shape or form. Yes, I said Tyler Durden. Didn't I say the possibilities were limitless?

Okay, so maybe this book went just a tad overboard with the pop culture references. Which is why I'm thankful for the story's focus on family again, especially the father-daughter bond between Paul and Aliyah. In this book, Paul faces the challenges of raising an angry and traumatized little girl, while Aliyah realizes that her father doesn't have all the answers. If it weren't for the emotional hurdles, 'Mancer might have been just another entertaining yet hollow urban fantasy series, but the emphasis on relationship dynamics gives both the characters and story much needed depth.

Final thoughts on the audiobook: I started the series in this format, so I decided to continue in this format, and I am quite happy with my decision. Peter Brooke is fantastic with voices (especially with his New Yorker accent) and in my opinion the only character he faltered with was Aliyah. Granted, this probably has something to do with her written dialogue itself, which I didn't find convincing. Still, there's a very good chance I'll do the third book in audio too. All in all, well worth the listen!

Jasper says

originally posted at: <http://thebookplank.blogspot.com/2015...>

Ferret Steinmetz surprised a lot of people earlier this year with *Flex* the first book in the 'Mancer series published by Angry Robot. *Flex* for me was a book that brought something completely refreshing to the Urban Fantasy genre. The concept of "mancy" is just sheer brilliance. Of course a concept doesn't solely make a book, it takes more and also in this field Ferret Steinmetz didn't fail to deliver. Writing a set of solid set of characters to show the concept by. One thing that I hate about series is when they take ages to show the sequel. I don't know if Angry Robot pushes it's authors but they have a good schedule, I personally hadn't expected to see the sequel this Fall, but you don't hear me complain.

The Flux picks up after the events of *Flex*, though sometime has passed. Aliyah, Paul's daughter has slowly grown to the age of eight years old and Paul is currently leading the anti mancer task force in New York. Everything seems to be going rather smoothly. I forgot to mention that Paul is still a bureaucromancer, he has the power of paperwork, now it might not sound very exciting but trust me it is. Already in the first few pages of the book Ferret Steinmetz readily accelerates the story to a breakneck speed, showing the goodness of Mancy. Paul and Valentine, a videogamemancer have somethings to pay and one of the best ways to do it is to make *Flex*. Which the strongest drug out there, and loved and more over needed by many, because it grants powers. However one power known as The King of New York doesn't fully agree with what Paul is

doing. A small spoiler. Paul has been running the Mancer Task Force, their job is to catch Mancer but Paul of course does everything not to get caught himself, because you know... Anyway The King of New York finds that it is time for Paul to get caught. And the Task Force gets an anonymous tip on Paul's location. Just as when Paul and Valentine think they are done, certain things hit the fan... And thus they both have to use their Mancer powers to save the day. It all works to a certain degree, as Aliyah, makes things slightly more difficult... Now things start to get complicated. Paul was in charge of the Task Force but well things start to get to the surface due to the King and in order to keep himself and his family safe Paul has to track down the King and get rid of him. But with the powers that the King has these things are easier said than done. A true test of powers.

i have been thinking about this a lot. This book is called The Flux and if you know the flex system of magic, you know what flux is, the negative feedback that makes you very sick and unable to do anything. If you take this into account the story makes a lot more sense. Paul has been living a steady life able to manipulate a lot of things with his bureaucromancy, but in the end things have to give... And this is comparable to the flux feedback. Quite brilliant if I say so.

Of course The Flux shines in the magic department, I wouldn't have though otherwise. The magic system that Ferret Steinmetz has developed is awesome, if you love something enough, things might happen. However just having a cool sounding magic system won't cut it, it also takes utilization. And this utilization is precisely what Ferret Steinmetz does. You get truly drawn into the whole Mancer system and what it takes to be a Mancer. It is not only just having fun.

Sequels can be a tricky thing. They shouldn't stall, postpone or drag the story to a halt. Ferret Steinmetz circumvented this by creating on one hand an action packed plotline with Paul trying to get to the King of New York and on the other hand delving deeper into the characters. By letting The Flux take place a few years after Flex there is a lot of time to catch up and this is one side that is told, the other that Ferret Steinmetz shows more of some of the character relationships as well. Like how Paul and Imani think and not think alike about Aliyah. Flex already brought with it some hints but they do get fully shown in The Flux, all to my pleasure. This complicates the story in a very good way. This somewhat more emotional track gives a nice balance towards the action packed other track that is steam-waltzing through The Flux.

Just as with Flex, I can only say good things about The Flux. Storywise it is definitely one of the coolest things that I read in a long time. Ferret Steinmetz shows a lot of creativity with the whole Mancer magic system that he has devised. Delving deeper into what it takes to be a Mancer, he doesn't shy away from showing the bad and the ugly as well. I will be definitely checking out The Fix next year. If you need your fix in the meantime make sure you get the Mancer series. Good stuff I tell you.

Jennifer Stoy says

I love these characters so much and I buy their weaknesses without feeling like they are shit. That is 5 stars for me.

Lisa says

Full Review at Tenacious Reader: <http://www.tenaciousreader.com/2015/1...>

The Flux was definitely an enjoyable read, I still love the concept of magic that spawns from people's

obsessions, and we get to see more of that in this book. I also really enjoyed finding out what has become of Paul, Aliyah and Valentine since the last book. There's definitely some adjustments being made! Especially in terms of Aliyah. It is definitely fun seeing how she is growing up and handling the world around her (as well as how the world around her responds to her as well).

But unfortunately I can't say *The Flux* worked on the same level for me as *Flex*. Perhaps it is just more of a second book thing, where the novelty of the magic and world are already established so I miss that initial excitement I had from the introduction to it in book 1. Maybe it is because I listened to this one as an audiobook rather than reading it. Don't take that as a negative towards the audiobook, I actually felt like the narration was well done. The problem for me, I think, is that the narrator's choice of emphasis and level of drama associated with Valentine did not mesh with how I read her in the first book.

I also felt like the ending came on a bit strong. Suddenly too many things were wrapped up in pretty little bows. Don't get me wrong, not everything is happy, happy, perfect, perfect. And it's not like I want everything to be all dismal, but for me, this ending just felt like the author tried to give all the characters their own personal happy endings. At least to some degree. And while we all know Valentine and her eager and vigorous sexual exploits is going to be all for happy endings, it just felt a bit forced.

Despite all of my negativity, I do think this is still a good book and I suspect other readers will respond more positively to it than I did myself. I think the odds are very good I will still read book 3, I will just make sure to return to the print version for it.

Tonya says

Ferrett has done it again. This one is just as good as the first and just as hard to put down. Unfortunately, I'd had less time to read so it took me far longer than it should have! I'm not great at writing reviews, but Ferrett sure is great at writing books I want to read! I can't wait for the next installment! And I'll miss all of these characters until it gets here! :)

Carly says

"I Am Become Mario, Destroyer of Worlds"

TL;DR: If you're looking for some truly original urban fantasy, particularly if you're a gamer, you *need* to try this series. *The Flux* was good I read it twice. It is the sequel to the equally awesome *Flex*, which you should probably read first.

****WARNING: I tried to minimize spoilers of the previous book, but it's not entirely possible.****

I absolutely loved *The Flux*. It's incredibly difficult to follow an awesome first book, but this book actually surpasses the first. *The Flux* continues the story of Paul, a bureaucromancer, whose belief in the power of rules is so strong that it actually bends the fabric of reality, granting him 'mancy. I adore Paul, and I'm slightly disturbed by how well I understand his perspective. He copes with stress by making lists, including lists of all the certain deaths facing him. He's hilariously uptight, sees the universe in terms of rules, and believes that *"Paperwork was what made the universe fair."*

All of the characters flawed and vibrant people. I loved how Steinmetz managed to create a character like

Valentine a goth videogamemancer who is very sexually demonstrative and comfortable in her body, without ever objectifying her. Part of that comes from Paul's narrative perspective, as Paul finds Valentine to be equal parts embarrassing and bemusing. I absolutely adored their dynamics. They argue constantly--as much as Paul is capable of arguing--and then "hug it out later." Standard dynamics:

"You come up with half a plan, then expect me to pull a miracle out of my ass?"

"...can't you?"

"Of *course* I can, but you shouldn't *expect* that!"

Or:

"Oh, God," he muttered. "This is such a mistake."

"That's how you *always* say yes!" Valentine squealed, and tackle-hugged him.

This book also solved one of my (few) issues with the previous book. While Imani was simply a two-dimensional nagging ex in *Flex*, in *The Flux*, she comes into her own. I'm not exactly sure I like her, but the exploration of her personality and motivations humanized her to the extent that I think I want to. I also enjoyed the addition of Oscar the hyper-organized mob boss and K-Dash and Quaysean, the donut-bearing gangsters.

And then there's the 'mancy. This book is dominated by videogamemancy, but we also encounter a Fight-Club-mancer (he insists he's a Palahniuk'mancer), but there's also plenty of bureaucromancy, pyromancy, and origamimancy to add a bit of spice. While this book will be more fun if you're a fan of videogames or *Fight Club*, the first time I read through, I caught precisely none of the pop culture references and still loved it. (When I reread, I employed a bit of Googlemancy and once I understood what Tyler Durden, Alex Mercer, and JRPGs referred to, the book was infinitely funnier.)

Like its predecessor, while this book may be a little slow to get started, when the story picks up momentum, it's utterly un-put-down-able. Sure, there's plenty of mancy and mayhem, but it's also about family and children and the pangs of growing up. It's about a little girl who discovers that Daddy isn't superman and good doesn't always triumph. It's about how learning that have value only through the efforts taken to achieve them. It's about the struggle to raise a child, the balancing act to protect her while still letting her grow through the consequences of her actions. It's about the terrible pangs of being a parent:

"If you give up everything for your children's happiness, Paul, you can't teach them how to be happy."

It's about how seeing others around us as human is part of what gives us our humanity.

And all of that is packed into a thoroughly entertaining, engrossing story told within a thoroughly fascinating world.(view spoiler)

And while the ending is utterly, utterly satisfying, I can't wait for the next book.

~~I received this ebook through Netgalley from the publisher, Angry Robot Books, in exchange for my honest review. Quotes are taken from an advanced reader copy and while they may not reflect the final phrasing, I believe they speak to the spirit of the novel as a whole.~~

Michael Underwood says

Ferrett's first novel, FLEX, was hilarious and heartbreaking, inventive and intense.

THE FLUX is all of that and more - it digs deeper in every way - character, concept, and plotting, to deliver another phenomenal ride.

Frank Errington says

Review copy

After twenty years of wandering desolate as a writer, Ferrett Steinmetz attended the Clarion Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers' Workshop in 2008 and was rejuvenated. Since then, he's sold stories to numerous publications and in March of 2014, Ferrett saw his first novel, Flex, released by Angry Robot Books. He lives in Cleveland with his wife, and a friendly ghost.

First a bit of background. Flex is distilled magic in crystallized form, gifted to ordinary people by 'mancers. Along with Flex, and the powers it bestows, comes The Flux. Think Newton's Third Law, "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction."

In this worthy sequel, Paul Tsabo is now the chief of the New York Task Force For 'Mancer Control. No one on the team knows Paul is a 'mancer himself, a bureaucromancer, which means he's adept at manipulating paperwork to perform his unique brand of magic. Both his daughter, Aliyah, and best friend, Valentine, are videogamemancer's.

The world Ferrett Steinmetz has created is wildly imaginative and his writing style is somewhat reminiscent of Richard Kadrey's Butcher Bird and Sandman Slim novels. Needless to say, both Flex and The Flux are wild rides which take the reader to places they've never been before, and beyond.

All of the characters are fully developed, the banter is clever, and the writing is filled with pop-culture references. If you've already read Flex, (and I do recommend that, even though The Flux reads well as a stand alone novel), The Flux is somewhat darker overall.

If you're a gamer, you're going to love the ending to this book and good news, there are plans for a third and final book in the series.

Both Flex and The Flux are available in a wide array of formats from Angry Robot Books.

If you like your reads to be "out there", this series may be just what you're looking for. Recommended.
