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Jack Williamson , James E. Gunn

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It was the greatest empire of them all, spanning light-years, gathering in the stars with a golden net. World after world - start after star - all were snared together in a web of shimmering, golden tracery. Each gleaming strand was a tube, the communications that turned the harsh, metallic planet of Eron into the Empire, a bridge between the stars, flung across the wide, dark rivers of space....

Star Bridge Details

Date : Published January 1977 by Berkley Medallion (first published 1955)

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Author : Jack Williamson , James E. Gunn

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From Reader Review Star Bridge for online ebook

Giulio Prisco says

Star Bridge, by Jack Williamson and James E. Gunn (1955), is a solid, entertaining and well written vintage space opera. Of course the book shows its age, but like old wine, not like an old gadget. Highly recommended. This book is a great classic of science fiction, with galactic empires, super science, future societies, intrigue and mystery, and cosmic vistas full of stars.

See full review:

<http://skefia.com/2013/11/17/star-bri...>

John says

with James E Gunn

1978 no grade

2017 grade C+/B-

An odd book in a couple of ways. But it was good enough that I wanted to finish it. I won't read it again though.

First it is a bit overwritten but that is mainly because of its age. There is quite a bit of dissertation on made up science and quite a lot of descriptive material. Both sections are discrete enough that they are easy to spot and speed through. But they do need to be read for continuity.

Second, the story and the characters are much bigger than life making them unreal. The protagonist is basically a barbarian soldier hired to do a hit. The reader finds out later the hit is more than simple. The vast majority of people in this empire of many planets are slaves or barbarians at one level or another. The hit is on one of the tiny minority who control the empire via the faster than light tube travel.

To sum it up, it reminded me of an elite barbarian gladiator (and the rest of the oppressed people) taking on the royalty despite being killed off in droves. As I said, it was interesting enough that I wanted to find out what happens. And what happens turns out to be rather complex.

Micah Krabill says

Meh. Slow beginning, long middle, weak end. There were some neat moments, but the characters were not nuanced and the "romance" especially felt like it was written like a 12 year old boy. I read it after good reviews from a few people, but I can't agree with them. I think this was probably a better book in the fifties to eighties, but didn't hold up for me now.

Amber Hill says

A very well paced and quick novel, not long but very satisfying with memorable characters, a unique faster than light travel, and has managed to age very well despite being older than even my parents.

Ghoule says

Dans « Le pont sur les étoiles », Jack Williamson présente une bonne idée - les tubes qui permettent de voyager entre les mondes - qui sera souvent reprise en littérature et au cinéma, par la suite.

Il aborde aussi, du même souffle, plusieurs notions liées à la liberté et à la gouvernance des peuples.

Malheureusement, ces éléments sont noyés dans une narration aussi lourde qu'inefficace. Je n'ai pas lu les autres livres de M. Williamson, mais dans celui-ci, son écriture souffre de plusieurs tics :

1. Description trop longues : une seule action de quelques minutes peut s'étirer des dizaines de pages, alors que l'auteur philosophe et déblatère sur des notions sociopolitiques floues et contextualisées dans un univers que nous connaissons peu... que Williamson essaie malgré tout de nous expliquer à travers le reste.

2. Actions précipitées ou résumées : lorsque des actions importantes ont lieu, l'auteur se contente souvent de les résumer ou de les condenser pour éviter de les décrire. C'est curieux car, autant il utilise la violence pour faire avancer ses propos, autant il répugne à la décrire de long en large.

3. Dialogues improbables : les principaux protagonistes n'ont aucune gêne à monologuer longuement, élaborant des théories sociopolitiques devant un auditoire érudit ou attentif qui ne manque pas de relancer le sujet. Même dans un contexte universitaire, je doute que des conversations aussi élaborées soient possibles. Il serait plus probable qu'elles eussent appartenues à des écrits réfléchis et transmis au fil du temps.

En résumé : additionnez de bonnes idées à de longues descriptions, des actions précipitées et des dialogues improbables et vous obtenez un récit aussi intéressant que difficile à lire. C'est sans doute une source d'inspiration importante pour des auteurs d'aujourd'hui, du moins en ce qui concerne le contenu, et non le contenant.

Nawfal says

The storyline is interesting. The ruminations about individuals and society along with the ethical questions make this a somewhat deeper read than it would otherwise be. Really, a novel about the many poor vs. the few empowered. Only real complaint: descriptions of technical/mechanical/setting is quite rocky. Hard to follow and choppy.

Bob Rust says

Star Bridge (1955) shows through a sometimes pixillated intricacy of plotting the mark of its senior collaborator's grasp of the nature of good space opera. Everyone it turns out is being manipulated for the salvation of mankind by an immortal Chinese with a parrot.

Adrian Puente says

If you love Asimov's Foundation series you will love this book. I am not big fan so I struggle a little bit to finish it (because I hate to start a book and not finish it). When it comes to science fiction I don't felt that that Tube technology can stand by itself. I mean, yeah is cool how the planets are interconnected to the planets poles and they have a way to keep up with the planet turn but does not mentions anything about how it deals with the orbit and the expansion of the universe so that is a killer for me. Then it tries to be very philosophical but it seems that the characters has the same voice and ideas so it felt very plain. Overall I found the book very shallow on the social, economical and technological subjects but the ending is good, unexpected and leaves you with a "WTF happened next?" kind of feeling. So, if you a are a hardcore old school science fiction lover this is your book.

Lew says

This story started out ok but then got bogged down with a lot of philosophizing and not much action. Boring! It was funny that it belittled the main woman character so much. This book will never win any points with the Feminist.

Eros Fratini says

Premetto che non sono mai stato un fan della space opera in generale, ma qui purtroppo siamo di fronte ad un esempio piuttosto scadente del genere...

Si comincia come un western: il protagonista, un duro, è in fuga dalle truppe imperiali. Si salva per un soffio e da qui, una Terra ormai pianeta di confine di nessuna importanza strategica, inizia la sua rocambolesca avventura fatta di colpi di scena, fughe, ancora colpi di scena, e ancora fughe.

Tutto già visto, ormai troppe volte. Capisco che il romanzo sia datato, ma anche per gli standard dell'epoca (il 1955) si trattava di un polpettone stantio, pieno di clichè vecchi di almeno vent'anni.

Devo ammettere di aver faticato ad arrivare al finale, delusissimo, tra l'altro, perchè è esattamente quello che si inizia ad intuire fin dalle prime venti pagine.

Ulteriore nota dolente: la parte "tecnologica" è completamente trascurata. Il funzionamento dei tubi di trasporto non è spiegato e per dirla tutta la loro stessa presenza trascende completamente la fantascienza e sfocia nel fantastico più puro.

Fredrick Danysh says

The Eron Company controls the Star Bridge that connects worlds. Horn is hired by a mysterious person to kill the company's director. Along the way he must deal with the ancient Wu and his diamond eating bird Lil as well as the director's daughter.

Cindy says

I took a genre challenge two years ago. I chose science fiction and discovered the golden age stories written

in the 50's and 60's. Star Bridge is one of those golden age stories. It had an interesting story line. The planet Eron had complete control of the tube system. The tube system was the bridge to the stars. Everything went through the tubes, supplies, space ships and messages.

The opening paragraph reminded me of a western. The outlaw being chased across the desert with a posse behind him. That is where you meet Horn. He was a drifter, hired to assassinate one of the board of directors. While in the desert he met Wu and his shape shifting parrot, Lil. At first I thought Wu and Lil were funny. Then I became suspicious. They showed up with too much information.

The moral of the story should be absolute power corrupts. Eron and its board of directors were not popular, especially in the lower classes. It was a little predictable because unhappy people revolt. In the middle of the revolt there is a love story.

The writing style was different. You get short sentences like this, space, cold, dark. It worked for the story, just took awhile to get used to it.

I would recommend this book. I had no idea what to expect. It was an interesting story that kept me interested.

Daestwen says

Nothing quite sells a book to me like 'a woman wants a man that makes her feel like a woman'.

Bart Hill says

The Golden Age of science fiction is still the best. This fast-paced novel has it all. Romance, intrigue, guns blazing, a daring escape, and time travel. The only downside was the last 30 pages where the characters resort more to philosophizing, rather than just saving the universe and moving on.

Grikdog says

Horn goes to Sunport to assassinate Garth Kohlner, meets Wu and Lil and Kohlner's daughter, Wendre. A simple soldier of fortune plot on the boy loses girl model, but a strong read, hard to put down. The characters Wu, an old fat Chinese, and Lil, a shapeshifting Martian mathematician masquerading as Wu's parrot, stand out as two of the most memorable sci fi characters from the Fifties. Hard to find, except at used bookstores.
