



Tower of Glass

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Simeon Krug has a vision--and the vast wealth necessary to turn dream into reality. What he wishes is to communicate with the stars, to answer signals from deep space. The colossal tower he's constructing for this purpose soars above the Arctic tundra, and the seemingly perfect androids building it view Krug as their god. But, Krug is only flesh-and-blood, and when his androids discover the truth, their anger knows no bounds...and it threatens much more than the tower. "...a multi-levelled work of high adventure, considerable tension and social consciousness."--Harlan Ellison.

Tower of Glass Details

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From Reader Review Tower of Glass for online ebook

Kayıp Rhiem says

Simeon Krug bir i? adam?. O tipik zalim bir patron de?il. Zeki ve idealleri olan bir adam. Uzaydan gelmi? mesaj? tak?nt? haline getirmi? ve cevap? radyo dalgalar? gibi ?eylerle vererek 300 y?l beklemek yerine takyon ???nlar?yla çözmeyi planl?yor. Böylece muazzam Cam kulesi yükselmeye ba?l?yor. Bunun ilk ad?m?ndaysa i?levsiz buldu?u robotlar?n yerine androidleri getiriyor.

Androidler t?pk? Aldous Huxley'nin Cesur Yeni Dünya's'nda oldu?u gibi s?n?flara sahip. Bir insana denk alfalar, onlardan biraz daha geride kalan betalar ve tamamen alt s?n?f olan, sadece kol gücü için kullan?lan gamalar.

Ama olay bununla da bitmiyor. Çünkü Krug DNA dizilimlerinden üretti?i bu canl?lar? ne kadar insana benzerse benzesin “insan olmad?klar?n?” vurgulayacak ?ekilde üretmi?. Evet, onlar fiziksel aç?dan bir insandan daha mükemmeller ancak k?s?rlar. Tenleri k?z?l?ms? bir renk, gözleri metalik gri. Yani anlayaca??n?z, hepimizin çok a?ına oldu?u o ten rengi fark? burada da kendini gösteriyor. Oysa Cam Kule'nin geçti?i 23. yüzy?lda art?k insanlar birbirlerini ten renklerine göre ay?rm?yor. Art?k daha büyük bir ayr?m var: Rahimden Do?an ve Tanktan Do?an.

Milyonlarca androide göre Krug bir tanr?. Ve onlar bu dinin müritleri. Krug onlar? bir gün Rahimden Do?anlar'la ayn? düzeye getirecek bir gücün tezahürü. Androidler için iki Krug var: ?nsan Krug ve Tanr? Krug.

Kitap boyunca her karakterin benli?iyle bütünle?erek olaylara onlar?n gözünden bak?yoruz. Hem andoridlerin gözündeki Tanr? Krug'u, hem de kuleyi bir an önce bitirip mesaja cevap vermek için her ?eyi hiçe sayan ?nsan Krug'u görüyoruz.

Cam Kule, Silverberg'e yak??an ve her hayran?n?n be?enece?ini dü?ündü?üm bir eser. ?çten içe gözümdeki magnum opusu olan ?çeriden Ölmek ile k?yasl?yorum onu. Evet, bir ?çeriden Ölmek de?il. Ama bu onu kötü ya da yetersiz yapm?yor.

D??tan bak?ld???nda kli?e bir konuya sahip, fakat detaylar?nda yarad?l?? miti ve i?çi – i? veren s?n?f?yla olan çift ba?? sayesinde kendine has bir havaya sahip olan bir eser bu. Silverberg gibi bir ustan?n ellerinden ç?kmasa çok s?radan olabilecek bir kurgu, onun maharetli ellerinde sayfalar? y?rtarcas?na çevirmenize yol açan bir kitaba dönü?üyor.

Bu eseri dilimizde okuma ?ans?na eri?ti?im için Krug'a ?ükürler olsun.

- **Hazal ÇAMUR**

?ncelemenin tamam? için: <http://www.kayiprihim.org/portal/inc...>

Bob says

Summary: Mega-wealthy Simeon Krug, creator of the process that produces androids, learns of signals from

a distant star and uses his androids to build a tower of glass to communicate. Obsessed with distant life, he is woefully ignorant of the hopes and faith the life he has created place in him.

Robert Silverberg began publishing science fiction around the time I stopped reading it. I may have read a few of his short stories in anthologies, but that was a long time ago. Over time he was awarded five Hugo and five Nebula awards (yes, I know the cover image says four Hugos!). He is one of twenty-nine science fiction writers to receive the Grand Master Award of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America. Recently, Open Road Media has re-released a number of his books in e-book format, where I am discovering him for the first time.

Tower of Glass is set in the twenty-third century. It is premised on a relatively depopulated earth from previous wars. Simeon Krug has helped fill this population vacuum and become fabulously wealthy by perfecting the process to create android humans out of vats filled with the basic components of life. Three classes of androids exist in ascending intelligence from gammas to betas to alphas and Krug sells them to serve the remaining human population.

The novel begins with Krug setting out to build a 1500 meter glass tower in the Arctic permafrost to send tachyon signals to NGC 7293. Krug, whose previous efforts to discover life forms in nearby systems have all failed, has learned of cryptic signals in the form of number sequences coming from this ring nebula. He employs a vast work force of his androids under the leadership of his Alpha foreman, Thor Watchman, in an ever more frantic quest to complete the tower, oblivious to the increasing death toll this dangerous task entails. Simultaneously, in a Denver factory he is building a space ship to send more androids in suspended animation to NGC 7293.

While focused on the stars, he is more or less oblivious of intertwined undercurrents with his son, Manuel, and the androids. Like other sons of the fabulously wealthy Manuel is trying to find his own meaning in life beyond inheriting his father's enterprises. He is in an affair with an android woman, Lilith, while married to Clissa, who has yet to bear him a child. His quest leads him to "shunting" where he exchanges consciousness with five other friends, discovering their most intimate thoughts, emotions, and memories, as they do his.

Meanwhile, unbeknownst to any, including Simeon Krug, most of the androids, apart from a few political activists, have given themselves over to the religion of Krug. They have created a whole religious system centered around their "creator", in whom they lodge their hopes that after trials, they, the people of the Vat, will be full partners with the people of the Womb, enabled by their Creator Krug, who they venerate and pray to in secret services in "chapels" all over the world.

Redemption is slow in coming. When Manuel tours one of the factories that gives birth to androids and is deeply disturbed by what he sees, his lover, Lilith, and Thor Watchman see a chance to help their prayers for deliverance from servitude to their human masters. Manuel is cultivated as an android ally, finally learning the truth of their religious belief in his father.

As the tower nears completion, Manuel goes to his father to reveal the hidden religion and intercede for the androids. We approach this plot climax wondering whether any of this was such a good idea and how Simeon Krug will react to his god-hood.

Beyond the android religious rituals, I was struck with a couple other profound echoes of biblical religion. One was the idea of Krug's tower. Like the tower builders in Babel, Krug builds a tower to reach up to the heavens--literally. We watch a hubristic quest, an obsession really where pursuing a technological chimera that justifies mounting death tolls and sending a ship full of androids toward the blue giant at the center of

the nebula in a quest to communicate with life that could incinerate them.

We also see in Thor Watchman a kind of Moses figure concerned with the deliverance of his people from their servitude. Moses's initial attempt as a young man involved taking that deliverance into his own hands to no good end. I will leave you to discover the results of Thor Watchman's effort to take deliverance into his own hands.

We also cannot help but consider the implications of crossing the threshold of become "creators" of life, and what that does to both "creator" and "created". Our technologies are resulting in increasingly life-like and humanoid robots, and our cloning experiments have resulted in viable animal forms of life. This book explores the presumption of control by the creators. It also explores the consequences of what happens when such creations have "self-awareness" and with that longings both for worship and for self-realization. If anything, Silverberg's story speaks with greater prescience and relevance today than when first published 46 years ago, warning us of the dangers of our hubristic dreams.

[Parent advisory: This book does contain explicit descriptions of sexual intercourse as well as some violence.]

Oscar says

‘La torre de cristal’, escrita por Robert Silverberg en 1970, se ha convertido en todo un clásico con los años, y algunos de los temas que refleja todavía siguen estando de total vigencia en la ciencia ficción actual: religión, enfrentamiento entre humanidad y andróides, el contacto con entidades extraterrestres, teleportación, la similitud entre entidad sintética inteligente y ser humano, etc.

La historia narra la empresa en la que se embarca el multimillonario Simeon Krug tras recibirse una señal de una estrella lejana: construir una torre de 1500 metros de altura en la tundra ártica, utilizando tecnología de taquiones, para mandar una respuesta. Para ello, este megalomaniaco no dudará en utilizar a sus andróides, invento suyo, para terminar la torre a toda costa. Pero el argumento de la torre es un claro *mcguffin*, una mera excusa a través de la cual Silverberg puede hablarnos de los temas que realmente le interesan.

Como puntos a favor del libro, los temas mencionados anteriormente. Se trata de una novela que se lee bien, y además es breve, algo inédito en la literatura actual. Como puntos negativos, que son los que más peso tienen para mí, lo poco descriptivo de la parte tecnológica, y lo apresurado en la parte última de la trama, donde parece que Silverberg tenía prisa por terminar. No cabe duda de que es todo un clásico dentro de la extensísima obra de Silverberg, pero para mi gusto el autor tiene novelas mejores.

Leonardo says

This is my second novel by Silverberg and it will most definitely not be the last. I cannot believe how a book this good can be so overlooked these days.

The Gollancz blurb is a good plot introduction:

"Simeon Krug is a man with a vision and he has the vast wealth necessary to bring it into being. For Krug wishes to communicate with the stars, to answer signals from deep space.

The colossal glass tower that he is building for the purpose soars high above the Arctic tundra, a sparkling monument to his determination and obsession. The androids who are working on it are perfect synthetic creatures, created by Krug's own process in Krug's own factories, and their commitment to the project and their loyalty to Krug are beyond question. For they have made him their god and believe that through him they will become flesh and blood.

But Krug is not a god and when the androids learn the bitter truth their anger is terrible and uncontrollable and threatens much more than Krug's tower."

The book deals with a lot of things. It's incredible how Silverberg can tackle obsession, racism, class distinction, religious fever and what means to be human in a neat two hundred pages package.

Among various things, I enjoyed the fact that the book never quite made obvious what the story was about. Was it the tower and contacting the aliens? Was it ultimately about Krug's son, Manuel? Was it about the Androids and their struggle for equality? Was it about the religion the Androids created and how a frail, double sided blade it proved to be? Was it about slavery and how easily a leash can snap?

Ultimately, it was all of it and a bit more.

Highly recommended for any science fiction fan.

Kat Hooper says

ORIGINALLY POSTED AT Fantasy Literature.

"Some of them are looking for God, and some of them are looking for power, and some of them are just looking."

Simeon Krug, a brilliant inventor, has changed the world by creating synthetic humans in vats. They are so similar to humans that, to avoid confusion, Krug made their skin a reddish color and gave them no body hair. To these androids, Krug is God, but he doesn't realize it. He thinks of them as mere machines and he's set them the task of building a giant glass tower which will reach into the heavens to communicate with the aliens who have been sending messages to Earth. Krug's son, poised to take over the company when his father dies, doesn't share Krug's obsession with talking to aliens, and he is particularly disturbed when he discovers the android religion. What will happen when the androids find out that Krug is not their salvation?

There aren't any likeable characters here, and it's hard for me to relate to androids, but Tower of Glass made me think (most of Robert Silverberg's stories make me think). In Tower of Glass, Silverberg uses androids to explore a common science fiction theme: What makes us human? I've read dozens of stories which ask this question, but Tower of Glass will stick with me. Originally published in 1970, Tower of Glass has worn very well, probably because it deals with timeless human problems.

Krug's androids, who call themselves "vat-born" to distinguish themselves from the "womb-born," are constructed with human DNA which has been altered to give them a slightly alien look and to make them

hard-working faithful servants. What Krug didn't realize, perhaps, was that this human DNA would make them ambitious and would give them a desire to worship their creator. Under the leadership of Thor Watchman, the android who works as Krug's right-hand man in the tower project, they develop an entire religion around Krug. In their time off from building Krug's tower, they get involved in politics, build temples, write holy scriptures, hold worship services, conduct sacraments, chant and pray. Their chants and prayers consist of recitations of genetic code and their scriptures, modeled after the Christian Bible, speak of Krug's love for them and his plan to save them by transforming them, with genetic code, into full human beings after they die. It's understandable, then, that they'd be a little upset when they find out that their religion is false and that they're not going to be saved after all.

As usual with a novel by Robert Silverberg, you have to suffer through some unpleasant sex scenes (I find many of Silverberg's sex scenes to be disturbing), but there are fewer far-out tangents in *Tower of Glass* than in some of his other stories and at least here there is some purpose to them here. The pace moves quickly and Silverberg packs in a lot of ideas as he shows us a newly developing android society that is dealing with the same kinds of issues that humans have always dealt with — racism, caste systems, slavery, outcasts, ghettos, disease, drug abuse, political agitators, religious zealots, and the rise of an oppressed population. All the while Silverberg ratchets up the tension as the tower gets taller and Krug becomes more obsessed and noticeably less godlike.

I listened to Stefan Rudnicki narrate Audible Frontiers' version of *Tower of Glass*. Rudnicki always gives a great reading — he has a nice voice, he never overacts, and he always seems to “get” what he reads. *Tower of Glass* was nominated for the Nebula, Hugo, and Locus awards.

ORIGINALLY POSTED AT Fantasy Literature.

prcardi says

Storyline: 3/5

Characters: 3/5

Writing Style: 4/5

World: 4/5

Bait and switch.

That's what it was.... a bait and switch trick. *But Silverberg!* the bait and switch was totally unnecessary! Granted, you hooked me with the first contact story, but I would happily have signed on to a story about android civil rights. The only thing, Mr. Silverberg, is that I wanted you to develop and finish the stories. All you had to do was call, and I would have helped you narrow down the options. You could a) write one book, on *either* Krug's quest to reach out to the stars *or* a human-android relations book. On the other hand, with option b) you would get to write two books! (the enthusiasm in my voice would let you know that this was really the only true option): one exploring 2-4-1 2-5-1 3-1 and the other on the AEP politics. You could even have set these in the same future! Yeah, seductive, huh? The whole "it's not really a sequel, but it is set in the same fictional universe" bit. That would have worked, and I would have loved it so much more. What?... option c) you would have asked. Well, I wouldn't have brought it up myself, but if you really wanted a third option I would have begrudgingly told you that you could combine the two, but.... *But!* - this is an important *but* - you have to make it a tome. 208 pages is not going to be enough for you to play with aliens, meglomania, shunting, space travel, megaprojects, robot politics, liberation theology, and civil rights. If you

take on both stories and insist on your wonderful, glossy worldbuilding, the result is going to be a tentative, shiny novel that promises grandeur and disappoints when it delivers only intrigue. If you again pen your truly engrossing first person omniscient views, the intimidating biological hard science details, and the thought experiments on future oppression - but insist on keeping it short - then you won't be able to satisfy us. 400 pages? 600 pages? I would have read it, and it would have been great. As it was, it was simply good. Next time, just call; I'll be happy to help.

Sandy says

Released in 1970, "Tower of Glass" was Robert Silverberg's 42nd sci-fi novel...his 18th since 1967 alone! The amazingly prolific author had embarked on a more mature phase of his writing career in '67, with an emphasis on ideas and a distinct literary quality, and "Tower of Glass" is yet another superior novel in this remarkable streak. Justifiably nominated for both the Hugo and Nebula awards (but "losing," respectively, to Ursula K. LeGuin's "The Left Hand of Darkness" and Larry Niven's "Ringworld"), it demonstrates that Silverberg, at this stage, was truly one of the very best in the sci-fi field.

In the book, the reader encounters an obsessed, 60-year-old magnate named Simeon Krug. One of the world's wealthiest men, in the year 2218, by dint of his discovery of a process to create synthetic, humanoid androids out of vat-processed DNA, Krug now sets himself a new challenge: erecting a 1,500-meter-tall (!) tower in the Canadian tundra, using android laborers, to house the communication apparatus that will enable him to "talk to the stars." It seems that signals have been picked up from the planetary nebula NGC 7293, which Silverberg tells us is 300 light-years distant, and Krug is determined to utilize his billions to communicate with the star people, using a faster-than-light tachyon transmitter. In addition to its fascinating central plot, "Tower of Glass" gives the reader several exciting subplots, as well. We learn of Krug's son, Manuel, who is having a love affair with an upper-caste android woman. We read of the Android Equality Party, comprised of synthetic humans who are trying to gain full civil rights in the World Congress. We learn of the android religion, how it is in conflict with the tactics of the A.E.P., and of how Thor Watchman, Krug's most trusted android foreman at the construction site, is torn between the two factions....

"Tower of Glass," besides its interesting story lines, is just loaded with fascinating detail and colorful description, in Silverberg's best manner. The reader is treated to a tour of Krug's main android factory in Duluth, where, thanks to a bit of hard sci-fi pedagogy, we learn how his synthetic humans are created. We see several demonstrations of a "shunt room," where the wealthy can go to swap egos and live inside one another's head space for a while. We visit Krug's upper-crust restaurant in the Pacific's Challenger Deep, 30,000 feet underwater; are given a look at the lower-caste android underground in Stockholm; and observe an android religious meeting. Taking advantage of the recently loosened sexual constraints in science fiction, the author gives us a scene featuring copulation between Manuel and his android lover Lilith Meson, and a sex scene involving two androids, Lilith and Thor. "Tower of Glass" is a novel that really does move, and that sense of movement is primarily due to the fact that it takes place in a society that has perfected the use of "transmats." Remember how, in Alfred Bester's 1956 classic "The Stars My Destination" (STILL this reader's favorite sci-fi novel, after all these years), characters are able to flit from one geographic location to another by a process called "jaunting"? Well, here, the transmats serve a similar function, allowing, say, Krug to travel from Uganda to Canada instantaneously, and on to Duluth, and then Colorado and New York City. (Oh, to live in a world with transmats!!!) The net effect of this rapid hopping about (and yes, Silverberg DOES discuss the ramifications of such a lifestyle in depth) is a feeling of tremendous narrative energy and drive; as I said, this novel really does move! Silverberg, something of a genuine prose stylist at this point, alternates his writing methods to suit each particular chapter. Some chapters feature hard science, others

well-written expository dialogue, while others give us snippets of the android Bible, and still others (such as the scenes in the shunt room and the Stockholm underground) are written almost Impressionistically, with shorthand, psychedelic imagery. The book is marvelously entertaining and almost overwhelmingly imaginative, with every page boasting some curious touch, unexpected development, unique character or colorful locale. Truly, modern sci-fi at its very best.

I would set down only one quibble that I had with Silverberg's book, and it is that statement of NGC 7293 being 300 light-years distant. Perhaps, back in 1970, when Silverberg wrote his novel, this was the accepted figure, but today, it seems to be fairly well recognized that NGC 7293 is more on the order of 715 light-years away from planet Earth. Still, as I say, this is a mere quibble. The bottom line is that "Tower of Glass" is still another wonderfully gripping, intelligent piece of sci-fi from Robert Silverberg. And now, just one question for the author: Where can I purchase a "tesseract divan" for my own living room?

Lyn says

Tower of Glass is Robert Silverberg's most Phillip K. Dickian novel.

If this were a film I would want it directed, of course, by Wes Anderson or maybe Alex Proyas, he did a good job with I, Robot and The Crow and I would cast it with Albert Finney, Kevin Spacey, Hugh Laurie and ... Will Ferrell?

Was that humor I detected? Subtle, certainly, potentially a black comedy if at all, but isn't Absurdist Theater only a first cousin of speculative fiction? Are Eugene Ionesco and Samuel Beckett that far removed from Arthur C. Clarke and Isaac Asimov? Stuff is being made up, situations are created to produce an effect, a message is being presented not on its face but peripherally, as metaphor and hyperbole.

Silverberg's 1970 publication (during his almost superhuman period of prolific writing) is about, among other things, androids. Thus the PKD reference? Not just that. There is also his absurdist setting, the abstract theme and the almost Jungian vision of the leading protagonist. There is misdirected theology, there is mind altering processes and drugs, there is sex, lots of wild sex, and a bacchanal of global proportions.

This also reminded me of Alfred Bester's The Stars My Destination as teleportation has shrunk the world economy and made the global community one of accessible proximity.

Finally, the plight of the Android civil rights movement can be a metaphor for the equal rights struggle of the 60s.

Guy Haley says

Brilliant, multilayered work by one of the genre's best. A playful SF take on the tower of Babel. I wish I wrote as well as Robert Silverberg.

Stephen says

5.0 stars. This is an outstanding novel. Robert Silverberg writes serious, adult science fiction stories that usually address deep emotional and psychological issues. There are times that his books, while well-written, are a bit too dry to keep my attention throughout. That is DEFINITELY NOT THE CASE WITH THIS BOOK. I loved this story from the opening page all the way through.

Simoen Krug, billionaire industrialist of a future Earth, is a man obsessed with pushing mankind forward. Toward that end, he is constructing a 1500 Meter high "Tower of Glass" in the Arctic tundra in order to respond to messages recently received from an alien intelligence (the first ever encountered). Krug is not evil, but he is singularly obsessed with completing his goal. He reminded me a lot of a darker version of Dr Vannevar Morgan from Arthur C. Clarke's The Fountains of Paradise.

Building the tower for Krug are androids created by Krug's company who worship him as a god (literally). Their fervent (and secret) hope is that Krug will free them and grant them equality with humans. In charge of the construction is Thor Watchman, an Alpha android who secretly runs the android prayer groups that worship Krug.

The conflict that arises when the religious ideals of the androids and the obsession of their creator come together is absolutely superb. This novel deals with issues of obsession, racism, religious fervor, population control, class distinction and what it means to be human. This is powerful stuff that is handled very well by Silverberg.

I also have to mention that, in addition to tackling some very serious issues, there are some great "ideas" developed by the author. Two of my favorites were (1) "shunting" which allows two or more people to actually share their consciousness for a few hours, learning everything about the other and (2) the "Nemo Club", a restaurant built 15,000 feet below the water in the Challenger Deep.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!!!

Nominee: Hugo Award for Best Novel

Nominee: Nebula Award for Best Novel

Nominee: Locus Award for Best Novel

Tom LA says

I have written a few reviews of Silverberg's books on here that fully qualify as "raving". I passionately love this author's work. I think he's one of the most exciting writers I have ever read, and one of the top 5 science fiction authors. For the power of his original ideas and his ability to transcend any specific genre, he's been called the "Philip Roth of science fiction", which sounds pretty good to me even if I still haven't read a Philip Roth book.

The reason why Robert Silverberg isn't more popular than he is is simply because his work is too smart and sophisticated to be popular. Only really, really, really dumb stories have that "magic something" to become global blockbusters. If Silverberg wrote crap like Star Wars, everyone would know his name.

But let's talk about this book. Another gigantic masterwork. In the early seventies, when it was published, it came second at the Hugo's (most prestigious SF award) losing to "Ringworld" by Larry Niven, which I never liked that much.

The plot revolves around Simeon Krug, one of the richest men on Earth in the first decades of the 23rd century.

Krug has invented a way to create life in the laboratory, and he's become the first designer of androids, living simulacra that appear human except for the red skin and for some physical improvements.

It's on the backs of his androids that Krug is building his tower, a modern-day wonder of the world—a tower of glass that will stretch over a thousand and five hundred meters into the Arctic sky, a communications tower that will be one of the greatest human achievements.

A mysterious signal is being broadcast from deep space, which a few scientists understand to be from another intelligent species. Krug wants to use his tower as a massive communication device to reply to that message - "Here we are", Krug will announce from his tower, "We are humans, we are worthy, we are not alone, come and speak unto us. Thus Krug has decreed. Thus shall it be."

Krug sees his androids as "things", although they are very much alive individuals with feelings and a conscience. They live a hard life of constant servitude and yearn to be free, but while a few of them advocate for political action, the majority of them have secretly organized in a religion, praying every night to Simon Krug the Creator for redemption (even though Krug knows nothing about this).

As part of this religion, they believe they're being tested by their dedication and hard work for Krug to see if they are worthy, until the moment when he will finally set them free.

The way Silverberg describes this religion is a provocation in itself, as the androids use passages taken directly from the Bible to express their faith in Krug.

Of all the directions this novel might have taken, the author decided to focus on the "social struggle" aspect, to work on the concept of equality, and as the chapters fly by, that becomes the core of this complex novel.

The writing is typical Silverberg - so polished and tight and essential. He doesn't waste a word.

He's also great at mastering the overall structure, and at keeping the tension high despite all the layers of narration.

In other words, he is a real pro. Someone who got to this point in the only way possible: by writing A LOT.

Here is an excerpt from a 2000 interview with Silverberg:

"I think there's a lot of terribly-written material being published today, and neither writers nor editors nor readers seem aware of that. [AMEN! Even more today in 2018!!] Thus the premium on literary accomplishment, which carried such writers as Bradbury and Sturgeon and Leiber to fame, has been devalued: if no one can tell junk from gold these days, gold is worth no more than junk. But we've always had bad writing, and it hasn't mattered in the case of really powerful storytellers -- van Vogt, say. What really bothers me is the eagerness of people to buy huge quantities of books patched together out of dumb or recycled ideas, or out of stale concepts translated from mediocre Hollywood products that have lowest-

common-denominator audience goals.”

Mass-produced, money-driven art has always existed in history, but NEVER in the shocking quantity that we see today. Quality still exists, but it’s swamped under this tsunami of Mockingbird and Star Wars and YA shit.

If you, like me, don’t have the time to go in search of true quality in today’s publishing world, and have no faith in book recommendations, don’t think twice and go back to classics like Silverberg, Asimov, Sturgeon, Clarke. Those guys knew how to write a damn good story.

LindaJ^ says

This book was first published in 1970 and concerns the world of the 2218. Simeon Krug has pulled himself up by his own bootstraps to be the most powerful man in the world. He is building a 1500m tower because messages sent from its highest reaches will travel faster to the world from which messages are now being detected. To accomplish the building of the tower, Krug is using what he calls androids - creatures he created using DNA. There are three classes of androids (all grown in vats) - alphas, betas, and gammas. The alphas are superior to just about everyone, android or human. The betas know how to get a job done and the gammas are the working stiff.

But this book is not so much about making contact with creatures on another world. Instead its primary topic is equality for the androids. Lots of interesting ideas here.

Cristina says

Este livro enganou-me. Quem diria que ao começar a ler sobre uma mensagem vinda das estrelas, de uma nebulosa inabitável, com níveis de radiação e temperaturas absolutamente impossíveis de suportar por um ser vivo que caiba na nossa imaginação, a 300 anos luz da terra, acabaria a ler sobre a ainda, mas cada vez menos, especulativa relação entre o ser humano e o andróide ... Fantástico. Gostei principalmente da exploração do sexo e da religião entre os andróides, que ao longo do livro se foram tornando mais humanos, ou talvez sempre o tenham sido....

A visão do futuro que a ficção científica do fim dos anos 60 nos oferece, claro, é sempre um grande bónus.

Esma Tezgi says

Cam Kule'de gerçek dünyam?za paralel bir çok özellik var, robotlar?, bilim kurguyu sevmesiniz bile bu paralellik sizi roman?n içine çekiyor ve sayfalar?n nas?l akt???n? anlam?yorsunuz. Kitab?n tek güzel yönü dünyam?zla olan paralelli?i de?ildi tabii ki, dili, karakterleri ve kurgusu da güzeldi. Yazar?n fazla uzatmadan vermek istedi?i mesaj? vererek roman? bitirmesinden de gayet ho?land?m, tad? dama???n?zda kal?yor ancak uzun anlat?mlarla da s?km?yor.

?nsano?luna birde yirmiiüçüncü yüzy?ldan Silverberg kaleminden göz atmak istiyorsan?z hiç durmay?n derim. :)

Ayr?nt?l? yorum için; <http://yorumatolyesi.blogspot.com/201...>

Stuart says

This is another of Robert Silverberg's ambitious novels from his most prolific period in the late 60s/early 70s. In those he was churning out several books each year that were intelligent, thematically challenging, beautifully written stories that explored identity, sexuality, telepathy, alien contact, religion and consciousness. At his best, he produced some masterpieces like *Downward to the Earth* and *Dying Inside*, as well as some dreadful books like *Up the Line*, but his unfettered imagination and prolific energy was undeniable.

Unfortunately, a wealth of ideas can sometimes overwhelm even the best books, and I think *Tower of Glass* is a perfect example. It is the story of Simeon Krug, a brilliant genetic engineer and industrialist who develops androids with human-like intelligence who he nevertheless considers mere tools to serve human interests. Krug's driving ambition is to build a massive tower of glass in the Canadian tundra that will extend into space and allow FTL tachyon communications with NGC-7293, a nebula which has been emitting intelligent alien signals.

At all costs, Krug wishes to establish contact with these alien beings, and assigns his top engineer android, Alpha Thor Watchmen, to oversee the construction. Meanwhile, his decadent and unambitious son Manuel uses the "transmat" matter transporters to shunt people across the world to enjoy a global 24-hour party. Manuel has a love affair with a beautiful android named Lilith Meson, who wants to enlist his support for the growing android rights movement. Unbeknownst to Krug, the androids have formed an elaborate religion built around Krug the Creator, and expect to receive salvation from Krug sometime in the future. They have actually created an Android Bible and complete set of rituals, services, etc. As the story develops, Krug gets increasingly obsessed with building the tower even at the price of android lives lost in the construction. When an android-rights activist is killed accidentally, he shows little sympathy.

The book introduces enough ideas for at least 5 or 6 full-length novels, so it's inevitable that each story line doesn't get full shrift. For example, the technology of instant teleportation around the world recalls the great SF classic *The Stars My Destination* (1954) by Alfred Bester, but there aren't enough pages devoted to exploring the implications since the entire book is 194 pages long. There is also the technology of shunting, which allows the swapping of identities (machine-assisted telepathic exchange) for a period. This sharing of minds was more fully explored in *Dying Inside* and *A Time of Changes*, but gets only passing mention until the end of the novel.

There is also a very lightly-sketched sub-plot about Krug's other side-project to build a generational starship to visit NGC-7293, which would be manned by androids. In yet another side-plot, Silverberg explores the social problems encountered by the three tiers of android society (mirroring Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*), broken down into alphas (the most intelligent), betas (the middle caste), and gammas (the lower proletarian class of androids). The main characters visit a gamma ghetto, which resembles an ethnic ghetto in a major city, complete with crime, drug abuse, discontent, and resentment. Finally, Silverberg devotes a great deal of time to exploring the religious conflicts of the androids' religion of salvation via Krug. There are quotes from their Android Bible that sound just as fully developed as the human Bible. The painful irony is that Krug himself dismisses the android's worship of him, and he has contempt for their misplaced aspirations.

The story reaches a climax when Krug and his android engineering chief Thor Watchman share a telepathic

link in which Watchman discovers Krug's contempt for the androids, crushing his religious belief and his faith in the merit of Krug's Tower of Glass. There are all kinds of metaphors involves, the most obvious being the Tower of Babel, as well as the conflicted relationship of creator and creation, which we see in the confrontation between replicant Roy Batty and Dr. Eldon Tyrell in Blade Runner (1982). Though the android religion is the most fully-explored of themes in Tower of Glass, it is battling for space with all the other ideas.

In the end, I felt like Tower of Glass simply had too many good ideas to be properly explored in under 200 pages. Normally I really appreciate the brevity of SF novels from the 1960s/70s, this is a rare case where Silverberg should have cut down on the number of ideas or devoted full novels to them instead. Nowadays, Tower of Glass would probably warrant a 1,000 page door-stopper, but Silverberg's real genius was in creating fully-developed novels with exciting ideas and lyrical writing in a tight, fast-moving story. Unfortunately, this novel is a case of too much of a good thing.

Do?ukan ??k says

Gece Kanatlar?'ndan sonra çok farklı geldi. Sanki başka bir yazardan kitap okuyormuş gibi hissettim. Tabii bu muhteşem oldu?u gerçe?ini de?i?tirmiyor. Konu, karakterler ve dü?üncelerin aktar?lması kusursuzdu.

Ali Berk Çetinbudaklar says

4,5/5

Silverberg'den çok güzel bir kitap daha.

Frankenstein kadar zihin aç?ıcı olmasa da yine yarat?ıcı-yarat?ılan üzerine süper bir kitap. Distopya temelleri üstüne oturtulması ve bunu sıradanlıkтан uzak bir anlat?ımla i?lenmesi de cabası.

Barışcan Bozkurt says

Kitap son kısımlara kadar gerek bilim-kurgu olarak gerek edindi?i konular?ı sorgulamalar?yla iyi gidiyordu ama sonunu be?enmedim, hem de hiç. Ben plot twist beklerken fail'e denk geldim.

Spoiler

Manuel zaten dü?üncesiz, ona bir şey demiyorum. Peki ya Krug? Sen servetini, hırsların ve umudunu bir kule için harca, sonra Thor ile dü?ünce takası yap. Thor senin tanrı olma konusunda tüm dü?ünce ve hislerini görsün, fakat sen Thor'un bunu öğrendi?indeki hislerini, konumunun önemini, aklından geçebilecek devrim dü?üncelerini göreme, üstüne üstlük bir tane insan "dünyanın en önemli yapıtın"ı yok?lmasına engel olabilecek seviyede olmasın. Normalde Krug gibi kat?ı ve net dü?üncelere sahip bir karakterin %10-15'lik gibi bir tehdidi bırak %1'lik bile tehdit gördü?ünde onu ortadan kald?ırması gerek.

Murat S. Dural says

Okuduğum en iyi bilimkurgu eserlerinden. Türün seveniyseniz asla kaçırmayın. Bambaşka bir bakış açısı.

Amanda says

The book presents a fascinating possible future that is marred by the rampant misuse of the term android and the length of time spent on the “android” religion.

I loved the idea of this book, and I love books about ai/androids/robots. I thus was horrified when within the first chapter we discover that the “androids” are, in fact, clones. They’re not machines at all. They are genetically engineered humans, created in vats, and whose genetic code is changed enough to give them plasticine skin so that humans can tell themselves apart from them. I like the concept of GMO humans vs non-GMO humans. I like the idea of the vat versus the womb. I cannot, however, tolerate the fact that everyone calls these folks androids. That is not what an android is! It really put a sour note on the whole book for me, and the misnomer is never explained. Did Krug just call them androids to make people think of them as robots when they actually aren’t? If that’s the case, he himself would not think of them as androids. But he does. He calls them machines. What scientist would genetically manipulate humans and then call the outcome machines? It just makes no sense, and in a scifi book, it’s something I can’t look past.

The plot is a bit of a bait-and-switch. The reader thinks it’s going to be about the tower, the possible aliens, etc... In fact this is the backdrop to the story of the “androids” fighting to have their humanity recognized. I liked that the book was ultimately not the Tower of Babel retelling I originally thought it was going to be, but potential readers might want to know that the “androids” and their fight for human rights are actually the focus of the book.

Readers should also be ready to have every minute detail of the “android” religion worshiping Krug outlined for them. While that type of scifi book definitely has its audience, it might be different from the one expecting the tower story. The one aspect of the telling of the “android” religion that I found incredibly annoying was how they recite their DNA strands as prayer. Think of it as like a Catholic person saying the rosary. Only instead of words, it’s series like “AAA-ABA-ACA-CCC-BBB-AAA,” and it goes on for a very long time. Perhaps this is less annoying to read in print than to hear in an audiobook, but going on for such long stretches of time each time an “android” prays seems unnecessary.

The characters are all fairly well-rounded. There is Krug, his son, a high-ranking “android,” Krug’s son’s “android” mistress, a couple of “android” politicians, and more. There are enough characters to support the complex plot, and it’s fairly easy to get to know all of them. The “androids” are also given the same amount of characterization as the humans.

Overall, the book presents an interesting world of GMO humans worshiping their creator and seeking freedom while he is entirely focused on the project of communicating with the stars. The misuse of the term “android” throughout the book will likely bother most scifi readers. Some readers may find some aspects of the “android” religion a bit dull. Recommended to scifi readers more interested in the presentation of future religions than in contacting deep space or hard science.

Check out my full review, including a review of the audiobook narration.

