

Life On Mars

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PRIESTIAN & PROUSTIAN KNOTS

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/lifeonmars/>

It was the final episode last night.

I loved it.

Brilliant concept about pre-PC 1973 in Manchester.

The main concept re the 'time travel' conundrum can, I feel, be explained by Christopher Priest's 1981 novel entitled 'The Affirmation'. This novel explains much that at first appears mysterious in the TV series.

I have also just noted that 'The Affirmation' finishes with a 'switch-off' similar to that of the Test Card girl.

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Here is an interesting article on 'The Affirmation' by Christopher Priest and how, reading between the lines, it can shed some light on 'Life on Mars'.

http://www.waggish.org/2006/07/christopher_priest_the_affirmation.html

This is just my reading of it.

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As an aside-in-retrospection, I suppose another book that interests me vis a vis 'Life on Mars' is Marcel Proust's 'Remembrance of Things Past' (aka 'In Search Of Lost Time') with its treatment of memory, separate 'selves' of the same person and a narrative of a narrative etc.

My comparison, btw, with 'The Affirmation', was made in brief on the TTA 'Interaction' forum seven minutes after the end of LoMs final episode which clinched the comparison.

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In this context, it seems to be appropriate to comment on my own posts - posts that the future changes as much as the past does.

I wonder if the LoM writers went into their own pre-LoM future to read these posts?

Indeed, did I actually speak to them in the future, the future yet to come?

I am only talking about the philosophical (Proustian, Priestian?) dual-time resolution, not the other ideas about pre-PC Manchester and the excellent Sweeney-inspired stories.

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Athanasia is relevant to LoM and The A.

<http://www.answers.com/topic/athanasia>

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"But the narrative came to a halt, with no conclusion, no revelations."

from ch 3 'The Affirmation'

"I invented a city and I called it 'Jethra', intending it to stand for a composite of London, where I had been born, and the suburbs of Manchester, where I had spent most of my childhood."

from ch 3 'The Affirmation'

"'Yes' she kissed me briefly. 'When you get to the clinic there are a few preliminaries[...]"

'I have to write my autobiography?'

'That's what it amounts to, yes [...] They renew your body, but they wipe your mind. You'll be amnesiac afterwards. [...] You become what you wrote. Doesn't that scare you?'"From 'The Affirmation' (ch. 9)

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More separate quotes from 'The Affirmation' (1981):-

"Childhood in the Manchester suburb: safe houses and streets with neighbours and gardens, school close at hand, but always a few miles to the east, dark and undulating and wild, the Pennine Hills."

"There were now two realities, and each explained the other."

"Soon afterwards I underwent a period of self-dislike, knowing I was patronizing them and I was no better than them, just younger and healthier."

"...the artistic recreation of the past constituted a higher truth than mere memory."

"I still knew very little about what had been done to me. That I had undergone some form of major surgery was obvious. My head had been shaved..."

"As a consequence of the surgery I had suffered amnesia..."

"I don't feel I'm immortal. I am what you've made me believe I am."

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"What are you explaining, Peter? What's left to say?"

"I've got to read you this."

"Don't torment me! I'm not mad ... you've written nothing!"

"It's how I defined myself. Last year, when I was away."

"Peter, are you crazy? Those pages are blank!"

From ' The Affirmation' Ch. 22

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All this was solid and tangible around me, yet internally I knew none of it could be real.

From ' The Affirmation' Ch. 23

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It seemed that that it could be read on three levels.

The first was contained in the words I had actually written [...]

Then there were the pencilled substitutions and deletions [..]

Finally, there was what I had not written: the spaces between the lines, the allusions, the deliberate omissions and the confident assumptions.

From ' The Affirmation' Ch. 23

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Magic Fiction: <http://www.ligotti.net/showthread.php?t=818>

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