

The Magnificent Showboats

In the Foreword, writing fifty years ago, the author describes his vision of a new space age; he predicts that by 1985 the age of space piracy will begin and that a Space Navy will be established, speculating that some of his younger readers might participate: "I hope that none of you serve with the pirates. The pay might not be so good in the Space Navy, but you'll live longer."

The Potters of Firk includes the majority of Vance's 'Magnus Ridolph' stories, previously collected in The Many Worlds of Magnus Ridolph. In the VIE edition this book is titled Gadget Stories. Contents: Planet of the Black Dust, Dead Ahead ("Ultimate Quest"), Hard Luck Diggings, Sanatoris Short-cut, The Unspeakable McInch, The Howling Bounders, The King of Thieves, The Sub-standard Sardines, To B or Not to C or to D ("Cosmic Hotfoot"), Spa of the Stars, The Enchanted Princess ("The Dreamer"), The Potters of Firk, The Visitors ("Winner Lose All"), Plagian Siphon ("The Uninhibited Robot"; "The Planet Machine"), Dover Spargill's Ghastly Floater, Sabotage on Sulfur Planet, Three Legged Joe, Four Hundred Blackbirds, Sjambak, Parapsyche, Sail 25 ("Gateway to Strangeness"; "Dust of Far Suns"). All Jack Vance titles in the SFGateway use the author's preferred texts, as restored for the Vance Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general, we also use the VIE titles, and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps.

Trullion - World 2262 of the Alastor Cluster - was a beautiful waterworld of fens, mists, idyllic islands set in clear oceans whose teeming richness provided food for the taking. The Trill were a carefree, easy-living race. But violence entered their lives during the raids of the galactic pirates known as the Starmenters. And there was also the planetwide game of hussade, when the Trill's ferocious passion for gambling drove them to risk all - even life itself - on the hazardous water-chessboard gaming fields. Their prize? The virginal body of the beautiful sheirl-maiden, the body any Trill is willing to die for.

This sequel to "Araminta Station", features the character of Glawen Clattuc, who helped save the unique planet Cadwal. The charter that granted Cadwal conservation has disappeared - and Glawen and Wayness Tamm are sent across a variety of planets to try and retrieve it.

The fantastic quests and adventures of Cugel: the greatest rogue in the realms of fantasy. For the second time, Cugel the Clever has been carried north over the Ocean of Sighs and dumped half a world away from home, on Shanglestone Strand. Swearing revenge on the Laughing Magician, Cugel sets off through mud pits and bars, through villages, manor houses and across the seas. At last, after many an extraordinary adventure, he comes once more to the land of Almerly and the chance to exact the vengeance he craves . . .

The Magnificent Showboats follows the farcical adventures of Apollon Zamp, owner of the showboat Miraldra's Enchantment, and his troupe of acrobats, magicians and actors. Zamp is invited by the King of Soyvanesse to travel up the river Vissel to the distant city of Mornune, there to participate in a contest. A rich prize awaits the showboat captain who stages the most spectacular performance and succeeds in entertaining the king.

In the dim far future of Earth, when the sun had shrunk to a small red disk in the dark sky and the race of man lived in isolated cities that echoed with the vastness of the world's history, science, myth and magic had become one. Sorcerors who read the books of ancient times held great power, and fearsome monsters created in ages long forgotten stalked the land. In this world of mystery and danger, the adventurer known as Cugel the Clever was forced to undertake a quest for Lucounu the Laughing Magician - a quest that was to take him to lands stranger than any he had dreamed of, and pit his wits and his sword against powers from beyond time itself. Previously published as The Eyes of the Overworld, this is the second of a quartet of titles sharing the same far-future setting first introduced in The Dying Earth Contents: The Overworld, Cil, The Mountains of Magnatz, The Sorcerer Pharesm, The Pilgrims, The Cave in the Forest, The Manse of Lucounu. All Jack Vance titles in the SFGateway use the author's preferred texts, as restored for the Vance Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general, we also use the VIE titles, and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps.

On Big Planet lies the Tinsitala Steppe and the great Vissel River, navigated by showboats bringing entertainment and spectacle to far-flung, idiosyncratic communities ashore. Canny ship-masters press relentlessly for advantage among quirky and boisterous audiences; competition is fierce. The stage is set for poignant mishap. The king of a wealthy up-river realm plans a great contest among showboats. Lured by the boon, Apollon Zamp sails into unknown regions, accompanied by the enchanting but enigmatic Damsel Blanche-Aster, and her suitor Throdorus Gassoon. Meanwhile arch-rival Garth Ashgale plots Zamp's downfall. Adventure, betrayal, high and low art, tragedy and farce ensue, in the inimitable style of Jack Vance. The Magnificent Showboats of the Lower Vissel River, Lune XXIII South, Big Planet is Volume 5 of the Spatterlight Press Signature Series. Released in the centenary of the author's birth, this handsome new collection is based upon the prestigious Vance Integral Edition. Select volumes enjoy up-to-date maps, and many are graced with freshly-written forewords contributed by a distinguished group of authors. Each book bears a facsimile of the author's signature and a previously-unpublished photograph, chosen from family archives for the period the book was written. These unique features will be appreciated by all, from seasoned Vance collector to new reader sampling the spectrum of this author's influential work for the first time. - John Vance II

[Ecce and Old Earth](#)

[Son of the Tree and Other Stories](#)

[Suldrun's Garden](#)

[Lyonesse Book 2](#)

[The Green Pearl](#)

[The Complete Works of Jack Vance: The magnificent showboats of the lower Vissel River, Lune XXIII South, Big Planet](#)

[Rhialto the Marvellous](#)

[Madouc](#)

[The Wannek](#)

[The Pnume](#)

The first book in the 5 volume Demon Princes saga. The protagonists parents were murdered by a posse of 5 galactic criminals, the "demon princes". He vows revenge, and eliminates them one by one. In the process Vance does what he excels at: creating strange worlds, environments, customs, and adaptations that humans have made to live in these conditions. This volume includes Vance's first published story ("The World-Thinker") and a selection of other stories including the novella "Telek". Contents: The World-Thinker, Dream Castle ("I'll Build Your Dream Castle"), Seven Exits from Bocz, The God and the Temple Robber ("The Temple of Han"), Telek, Men of The Ten Books, D.P., Noise ("Music of the Spheres"), The Absent Minded Professor ("First Star I See Tonight"; "Murder Observed"), The Devil On Salvation Bluff, Where Hesperus Falls, The Phantom Milkman, A Practical Man's Guide, The House Lords, The Secret All Jack Vance titles in the SFGateway use the author's preferred texts, as restored for the Vance Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general, we also use the VIE titles, and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps.

The Lyonesse sequence evokes the Elder Isles, is a baroque land of pre-Arthurian myth now lost beneath the Atlantic, where powerful sorcerers, aloof faeries, stalwart champions, and nobles eccentric, magnanimous, and cruel pursue intrigue among their separate worlds . . . When Princess madouc discovers that she is actually a changeling left by fairies in place of a baby boy, she sets out, with her servant and companion Pymfyd, to find her true identity. Madouc locates her mother, the fairy Twisk, easily enough, but her paternity poses a problem: Twisk is not certain who fathered her child. Meanwhile, her uncle, King Casmir, attempts to conquer the whole island of Hybras, on which Lyonesse is located, and thwart the prophesy of Persilian the Magic Mirror that his sister's son would one day rule. He is foiled at every turn by King Aillas of Troicinet and his son Dhrun, who is actually the child of the prophesy, but is older than expected because of a youth spent in the fairy shee (home), where time runs differently. A sly mixture of satire and epic, Vance's medieval tale is a delightful conclusion to an epic fantasy trilogy. Winner of the World Fantasy Award for best novel, 1990

The Rapparee is Jack Vance's preferred title for the novel previously published as The Space Pirate and The Five Gold Bands. Five gold bracelets imprinted with cryptic messages were the clues that set Paddy Blackthorn off on a riotous galactic treasure hunt. But Paddy found himself not only the hunter but also the hunted for the armbands had been left to him by his would-be killers, the Rulers of the Five Planets. All Jack Vance titles in Gateway use the author's preferred texts, as restored for the Vance Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general, we also use the VIE titles, and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps.

His face badly burned in a motor accident, young Robert Struve is horribly disfigured. Unable to afford corrective surgery, and denied lawful redress against the rich man whose daughter was responsible, Struve wears his scars as a badge of honor, excelling at school and sports. The social pressure is intense however, and he is treated harshly by his peers—young men and women alike. When his frustration boils over, he assaults a girl. In a correctional institution, as a ward of the state, he undergoes reconstructive surgery. Years go by. Then one of the girls involved in the incident is murdered, her face mutilated. A second and third are killed in similar fashion; is Robert Struve involved? No one has seen him, since his incarceration... Written in the late 1940s, The Flesh Mask was Jack Vance's first success as a mystery writer, launching his Edgar-winning career. The story was first published in 1957, as Take My Face, under the pseudonym "Peter Held". "The Tree ruled the horizons, shouldered aside the clouds, and wore thunder and lightning like a wreath of tinsels. It was the soul of life, trampling and vanquishing the inert, and Joe understood how it had come to be worshipped by the first marvelling settlers on Kyril." Joe Smith is roaming the galaxy in search of the man who has stolen his love's heart. During his travels he becomes involved with a power struggle taking part between two worlds - one religious, the other cultural - over possession of a developing, but potentially lucrative, third.

The gigantic world known as Big Planet had become a wilderness of strange peoples and weird cultures as a result of having been the dumping ground for every crackpot and malcontent that ever emigrated from the Earth. Somewhere in its unmapped vastness a plot was being hatched to disturb the peace of the mother world's civilization. This novel was previously published under the titles Planet of the Damned and Slaves of the Klau. All Jack Vance titles in the SFGateway use the author's preferred texts, as restored for the Vance Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general, we also use the VIE titles, and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps.

Jack Vance has long been one of the most influential, admired and imitated writers in science fiction and fantasy literature, the award-winning author of such widely acclaimed works as The Dying Earth, the Lyonesse trilogy, the adventures of Cugel the Clever, the Demon Princes series, and many other masterful tales set among the stars, in exotic fantasy realms or on our own Earth. For much of his career, Vance has also been one of the field's most private writers, an author who preferred to let his work speak for him. Now, at last, to coincide with the release of the tribute anthology Songs of the Dying Earth, Jack gives us this intimate and fascinating glimpse into his rich and eventful life, and a valuable insight into how he went about practicing his craft. For fans of the Grand Master's work, these memoirs are something to be treasured.

[Big Planet](#)

[The Magnificent Showboats of the Lower Vissel River, Lune XXIII South Big Planet](#)

[The Skybreak Spatterlight](#)

[The View from Chickweed's Window](#)

[Lyonesse Book 1](#)

[Vandals of the Void](#)

[The Fox Valley Murders](#)

[Araminta Station](#)

[The Deadly Isles](#)

[The Man in the Cage](#)

At last a lone youth dares to challenge the unchallengeable, to defy the Anome. But first he must find him - and though all men obey he knows his identity. He is the Faceless Man.

Big Planet is Jack Vance's first major sf novel, and in the words of the Encyclopedia of SF, "provided an sf model for the planetary rom been of significant use for forty years". The huge world of the title is home to a range of colourfully detailed and imaginative human so explores with the zest and humour which are hallmarks of his work. All Jack Vance titles in the SFGateway use the author's preferred the Vance Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general VIE titles, and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps. Big Planet was cut almost in half for its sadly the excised pages are lost.

Marooned on the strange planet Tschai, Adam Reith agreed to lead an expedition to return the princess, the Flower of Cath, to her ho around the globe. Monsters of land and sea lay before them, and beings both human and alien who might rob, kill, or enslave them.

The Pnume were an ancient race of the planet Tschai, living underground in a vast network of caverns with their human slave-species, Pnume were the historians of Tschai, collecting its past with ruthless and scholarly dedication. Surface-dwellers never saw the Pnume Adam Reith was not so fortunate. The Pnume had heard rumors of a strange man, claiming to have come from the planet Earth, and th Foreverness, the museum of Tschai life. Adam Reith was about to become an alien exhibit.

Ausley Wyett's release from prison after sixteen years in prison is an event of many consequences for the residents of San Rodrigo Co men whose testimonies led to Wyett's conviction receive threatening letters, and one by one become victims of fatal accidents. But th murder. For Acting Sheriff Joe Bain, proving Wyett's guilt - or innocence - is more than a matter of justice; while campaigning to be e must stubbornly protect Wyett from townspeople who insist upon immediate arrest- or a lynching.

Kirth Gersen carries in his pocket a slip of paper with a list of five names written upon it - the names of five Demon Princes. The Dem of beings who disguise themselves as humans and delight in power and destruction. However, to Kirth they are merely murderers who destroyed his home planet - and who deserve to die for those misdeeds. Three have already fallen at Kirth's hands, but there are two

The inhabitants of a planet called Iszm, a species known as the Iszic, have evolved the native giant trees into living homes, with all nee luxuries supplied by the trees' own natural growth. The Iszic maintain a jealously-guarded monopoly, exporting only enough trees to kee make a great profit. The protagonist, Ailie Farr, is a human botanist who goes to Iszm (like many others before him, of many species) t which might allow the propagation of the species off world and break the monopoly. This volume includes two short novels, previously - the title story, and Nopalgarth (published as The Brains of Earth). The collection is rounded out by two of his best shorter works - "The Narrow Land". "The Narrow Land" was the first of a proposed story sequence which was never completed. Contents: The Houses Gab, Nopalgarth (The Brains of Earth), The Narrow Land All Jack Vance titles in the SFGateway use the author's preferred texts, as res Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general, we also and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps.

The Lyonesse sequence evokes the Elder Isles, is a baroque land of pre-Arthurian myth now lost beneath the Atlantic, where powerful faeries, stalwart champions, and nobles eccentric, magnanimous, and cruel pursue intrigue among their separate worlds . . . Prince Ailla betrayed on his first diplomatic voyage and cast into the sea. Before he redeems his birthright, he must pass the breadth of Hybras Is vagabond, and slave, an acquaintance of faeries, wizards, and errant knights, and lover to a sad and beautiful girl whose fate sets his b tyrant Casmir, King of Lyonesse. (First published in 1983)

[Showboats](#)

[Cugel: The Skybreak Spatterlight](#)

[Trullion: Alastor 2262](#)

[This is Me, Jack Vance](#)

[The Houses of Iszm and Other Stories](#)

[The Chasch](#)

[The Anome](#)

[The Magnificent Showboats of the Lower Vissel River, Lune XXIII South, Big Planet](#)

[Lyonesse Book 3](#)

[The Rapparee](#)

In the reaches of Mircea's Whips the convoluted plots and politics that have swirled around the House of Clattuc and the Conservancy of Cadwal are beginning to unravel. But what remains for Glawen Clattuc to discover could bring down a dozen powerful families on as many worlds. Throy concludes the Cadwal Chronicles, which began with Araminta Station and continued in Ecce and Old Earth.

Far in the future, the craftsmen of the distant planet Halma create goods which are the wonder of the galaxy. But they know little of this. Their society is harshly regimented, its religion austere and unforgiving, and primitive - to maintain standards, even the most basic use of automation is punishable by death. When Amiante, a wood-carver, is executed for processing old documents with a camera, his son Ghyl rebels, and decides to bring down the system. To do so, he must first interpret the story of Emphyrio, an ancient hero of Halman legend. All Jack Vance titles in the SF Gateway use the author's preferred texts, as restored for the Vance Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general, we also use the VIE titles, and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps.

In the aftermath of World War II, 8-year-old Luellen Enright is orphaned and shipped to San Francisco and the care of a covetous aunt, over-friendly uncle, and adolescent male cousins. Her only friend is a neighbor boy-the sickly and eccentric "Chickweed", who writes in his "Book of Dreams" and makes home movies. Lulu suffers indignities and all manner of abuse, is finally accused of murder, and sent to juvenile detention. Years later Lulu sets out to reclaim what was taken from her-a priceless Sung vase left by her missionary father, baldly stolen by her aunt. One of four Jack Vance mystery novels which never found a mainstream publisher, The View from Chickweed's Window tells in delicate detail the misery of a defenseless child in the hands of unpleasant adults, and cruel

older children. In typical style Vance gives us a robust heroine who, rather than crushed by hardship-is instead motivated strongly to restore justice, with a focus on result over scruple!

Noel Hutson considers himself a gentleman adventurer-but running guns in Morocco during Algeria's revolution, he gets more than he bargained for. Noel goes missing, and his brother Darrell Hutson comes to Tangier to search. Darrell soon finds himself immersed in a shady world of ruthless smugglers and nationalist Muslim fanatics. When Noel disappeared, he took with him an enormous payment. Both sides think Darrell will lead them to it. The stakes are unimaginably high-and Darrell isn't the only one who could get hurt.

Rhialto the Marvellous takes up the personal and political conflicts among a conclave of two dozen magicians of Ascolais and Almetry in the 21st Aeon. The shocking appearance of the Llorio the Murtha, a powerful female force from an earlier aeon threatens to unbalance nature by "ensqualming" or feminizing the magicians. This triggers a tremendous struggle for power and the other mages turn against Rhialto. Hoping to reestablish his rightful place, Rhialto travels to other aeons to restore the missing Perciplex which projects the Mostrament, the constitution of the association. In his final adventure, Rhialto must, ultimately, travel to the very ends of time and space to confront an old adversary whom he had wronged and must commit further misdeeds to restore order.

A space opera is what science fiction readers call an adventure in outer space and on alien planets. But a space opera could also be an opera, a musical work, that originated in outer space... Jack Vance's unique novel SPACE OPERA fits both definitions marvelously! Because it starts with the mysterious opera company from the equally mysterious planet Rlaru that arrives on Earth to astonish and infuriate music-lovers - and then disappears without trace! And when Roger Wool's wealthy aunt determined to reciprocate by bringing an Earthly operatic team into space and to the unknown world Rlaru, there unwinds a complex and surprising space opera of the first kind ...filled with enigmatic aliens, weird worlds, and all the special color and cunning that is the hallmark of the best Jack Vance.

A young scientist with ties to a family fortune survives a murder attempt while working in Tahiti. He discovers the identity of the assailant, but not the motive. For this, he must follow the would-be murderer aboard an island-hopping passenger/cargo schooner bound for the Marquesas...

Travel out along the galaxy's Perseid Arm. Branch off to follow the ten thousand stars of Mircea's Wisp. Eventually you will come to the Purple Rose System - three stars, Lorca, Sing and Syrene, that seem about to drift away into the void. Three planets circle Syrene. On one, Cadwal, there is Life. Long ago the Naturalist Society of Earth had listed Cadwal as a natural preserve. An administration centre had been set up and staffed to protect the planet from all exploitation. Araminta Station. Now, centuries later, the young Glawen Clattuc is beginning to wonder what the future may hold for him in the hierarchic, carefully ordered hereditary society that is life on Cadwal.

[Alastor 2262](#)

[The World-Thinker and Other Stories](#)

[Gold and Iron](#)

[Space Opera](#)

[The Magnificent Showboats](#)

[Throy](#)

[Cugel the Clever](#)

[The History of an American Institution](#)

[Showboat World](#)

[The Domains of Koryphon](#)

With the guidance of the Gray Prince, the fierce Uldrans prepare to reclaim their rule over the planet Koryphon, seizing power from the hands of the aristocratic Outkers.

This book is a delightful and authoritative record of America's showboats from the first one, launched in 1831, to the last, ultimately tied up at a St. Louis dock. It is also a record of the men and women who built and loved these floating theaters, of those who performed on their stages, and of the thousands who sat in their auditoriums. And, lastly, it is a record of a genuine folk institution, as American as catfish, which for more than a century did much to relieve the social and cultural starvation of our vast river frontier. For these showboats brought their rich cargoes of entertainment—genuine laughter, a glimpse of other worlds, a respite from the grinding hardship of the present, emotional relaxation—to valley farmers, isolated factory workers and miners, and backwoodsmen who otherwise would have lacked all such opportunities. To the more privileged, the showboats brought pleasant reminder of a half-forgotten culture. They penetrated regions where churches and school had not gone, and where land theaters were for generations to be impossible. Like circuit preachers, they carried their message to the outer fringes of American civilization. In spite of many faults, it was a good message. The frontier had created this institution to fill a genuine need, and it lasted only until other and better means of civilizing these regions could reach them—good roads, automobiles, motion pictures, schools, churches, newspapers, and theaters. But although the showboats have passed into history, they have left a rich legacy. As long as the Mississippi flows into the Gulf, their story will fire the imagination of Americans. Showboating has become so legendary that few Americans know what this unique institution was really like. In Showboats, at long last, the true story emerges. It differs in many important respects from the motion picture and fictional versions to which Americans are accustomed, but it is not a whit the less glamorous. Philip Graham has told his story with imagination, genuine insight, and complete devotion to facts. No one who is interested in America's past should fail to read it.

The Lyonesse sequence evokes the Elder Isles, is a baroque land of pre-Arthurian myth now lost beneath the Atlantic, where powerful sorcerers, aloof faeries, stalwart champions, and nobles eccentric, magnanimous, and cruel pursue intrigue among their separate worlds . . . King Aillas of Troicinet defends the peace of the Elder Isles against both the Ska marauders who once enslaved him and the wicked King Casmir. While organizing the unruly barons in the frontiers of his land, Aillas goes out of his way to capture the lovely Ska noblewoman who once stung him with her disregard. When he gets separated from his men, his dream of forcing the lady's recognition becomes the toil of dragging a defiant captive across lands governed by Casmir's henchmen. Meanwhile, the world of magic has gone on the move. The concentrated malice of the witch Desmëi has manifested as a green pearl, breeding lust and envy and death; and a sorcerer in Casmir's employ abducts the princess Glyneth, in a bid to draw Aillas and friends on a hopeless rescue mission across a bizarre and deadly alternate world . . . (First published in 1985)

The second of the three 'Alastor' novels, a typical Vance story of a man who has lost his memory and is sent to the world Marune in the Alastor Cluster, which is believed to be his home. Once he has recovered his memory, he goes after the enemy who has caused its loss.

Tschai, the setting for the quartet of novels which commences with The Chasch (originally City of the Chasch), is a planet inhabited by a variety of alien species coexisting uneasily with humans - the Chasch, the Wannek, the Dirdir and the Pnume. All Jack Vance titles in the SFGateway use the author's preferred texts, as restored for the Vance Integral Edition (VIE), an extensive project masterminded by an international online community of Vance's admirers. In general, we also use the VIE titles, and have adopted the arrangement of short story collections to eliminate overlaps.

[Alastor 933](#)

[Emphyrio](#)

[The Book of Dreams](#)

[Marune: Alastor 933](#)

[The Star King](#)

[The Flesh Mask](#)

[The Potters of Firsk and Other Stories](#)