

Mystical Essay Writer

Mystical stories of Jorge Luis Borges forever changed the world literature. Literary columnist BBC Culture explains why the works of the Argentine writer should be read by everyone.

When you first read Borges, you get the feeling that you have opened a new letter of the alphabet or a new note in the musical scale. His friend and co-author Bioy Casares called the works of Borges "a transitional form between an essay and a story."

Artistic fiction in them is closely intertwined with jokes, understandable only to the initiate, esoteric, historiography and sarcastic comments. The stories are short and often have an unexpected beginning.

Labyrinths, mirrors, chess and detective scenes add up to a colorful intellectual canvas, but the language of his works is light and ironic. He describes fantastic scenes in simple words, inviting us to fly following his boundless imagination.

Canadian science fiction writer William Gibson describes his feelings from the first reading of Borges's short story "Tlen, Ukbar, Orbis Tertius," which describes an imaginary country in the form of an encyclopedic article. "If I knew programming," Gibson wrote in his preface to Borges's short story Labyrinths, "I would have the feeling that I was installing a program that would one day become a huge information network."

Half a century ago, when the fictional collection Fictional Stories first appeared in English, Borges was practically unknown outside the literary circles of Buenos Aires, where he was born in 1899, and Paris, where his works were first translated in the 1950s.

Scary much horror: the hotel, the horror of Stephen King

"I coped with" Ulysses "for the week"

The miraculous power of book therapy

In 1961, international publishers awarded him the first Formentor Award for Outstanding Literary Achievement, and he instantly took off on a pedestal of world fame.

Along with him, Samuel Beckett received the prize, and among other nominees were Carpentier, Max Frish and Henry Miller. Thanks to the Fictional Stories and Labyrinths award, they translated into English, and Borges gained international recognition and popularity.

Originally, Borges was a writer who synthesized traditions and epics of many cultures. He grew up on books. His father, from whom Borges inherited an eye disease that led him to blindness at the age of 55, was a fairly successful writer.

"He wrote several poems, a good historical novel, and made the first translation into Spanish, Rubayat Omar Khayyam, from a free English translation," says Donald A. Yeats, one of the first American translators of Borges.

An English grandmother was reading the classics of English literature to the future writer. "The boy was short-sighted and ran away from reality into the world of the printed word," says Yeats.

The statue of the writer near the National Library of Argentina, whose director Borges worked since 1955

As a child, Borges wrote many poems and often visited the library, where he read extensive opus by Taylor Coleridge and Thomas de Quincey from the encyclopedia Britannica. He spent his youthful years in Geneva and Spain. And when he grew up, he worked as a librarian, and then as a director of the National Library in Buenos Aires.

By 1930, Borges had published six books: three collections of poems and three collections of essays. And for ten years from 1939 to 1949 he wrote and published almost all of his outstanding works.

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"Each writer creates his predecessors," Borges wrote in an essay about Kafka. "His work changes our view of the past as well as the future."

At Borges himself greatly influenced by Paul Valery and Arthur Schopenhauer, as well as world literature from "Beowulf" and Kabbalah to Dante.

He translated works by Walt Whitman, Edgar Poe, James Joyce, William Faulkner, Virginia Woolf, Andre Gide, Franz Kafka, as well as Old English and Scandinavian epic. His favorite authors were Mark Twain, Robert Stevenson, Lewis Carroll, Joseph Conrad, he was fond of the stories of Henry James and Ring Lardner.

"Borges's prose is a skillful blend of popular mass culture plots detectives, science fiction with architectural composition and philosophical reflections. He loved Buenos Aires, but the world he created in his works is, in essence, library mazes."

Harlan allison

science fiction writer

FANTAST HARLAN ELLISON WRITTED ABOUT 2000 STORIES, articles and essays for 50 years of his career. In his youth, he was expelled from Ohio University for being unfit for writing, but this did not stop the novice author: at first, his productivity was because Allison wanted to make a living only from writing. His biographers say that in order to receive at least \$ 500 a month, during this time the science fiction writer had to publish at least 50,000 words. In the 1970s, when Alisson was already known, he wrote a story a day, regardless of the circumstances: he continued to work even while recording TV shows, in a bookstore, in a hotel, etc. Such fecundity did not affect the quality of the works: Elisson is the winner of the Bram Stoker Prize, the Edgar Poe Prize and others.

Ezra Klein

journalist

Journalist Ezra Klein became famous for his blog Wonkblog on the Washington Post website, in which for 5 years (until January 2014) he wrote a lot about politics, economics, health care, energy and technology. In addition to current blog materials, the journalist was preparing a Wonkbook daily by 9 am, where the survey of 20,000 characters described the five brightest stories of the day, and supplemented them with infographics and the "number of the day."

In addition to his employment in a blog, Ezra prepared political commentaries for three television shows on the American channel MSNBC. Since 2011, the journalist began to lead a column on Bloomberg View. The fact that Klein worked on so many projects at the same time did not affect the quality of his articles: in 2011, Time magazine included Wonkblog in the ranking of the top 25 blogs. However, Washington Post did not support the idea of a journalist to increase the staff and budget of the blog, and he left the newspaper to create his own political online publication. On the productivity of Klein says that after his departure Wonkblog lead five authors.

Isaac Asimov

science fiction writer

We consider even the authors of several dozens of novels to be productive, so the workability of Isaac Asimov, who wrote about 500 novels, is amazing. He could write a non-fixation work in 70 hours: for this, for several days he woke up at 6 in the morning and wrote until 10 in the evening. Even if Azimov did not set himself the task of writing a book as quickly as possible, he worked every day for 12 hours 5 days a week - he adhered to this schedule for 30 years. In addition, the writer usually worked on several works at the same time, and if he didn't succeed in one of them, he would take on the other.