

[PDF] Emerald Atlas

John Stephens - pdf download free book

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Description:

: With a timeless writing style that invokes thoughts of children's fantasy classics such as Philip Pullman's *The Golden Compass* and J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, author John Stephens weaves a gripping tale of mystery and magic into *The Emerald Atlas*. His enchanting prose and spot-on wit can only be described as both hip (Stephens was previously the executive producer of *Gossip Girls*) and Dickensian, a delightful combination that will both engage young readers with its relatable nature and fascinate them with its aberrant charm. If Stephens's comic finesse and archetypal writing style aren't enough to engage young readers, they will no doubt be captivated by the plot. Stephens's complex formula for time travel and fascinating explanation for the disappearance of the magical realm is so convincing that readers might begin to believe that there is, in fact, far more to the world than meets the eye. Thought-provoking and enchanting, *The Emerald Atlas* has the makings of a children's classic. --Jacqueline Segall

Amazon-Exclusive Q&A with Author John Stephens

Amazon: You started off in television, co-producing and writing for *The Gilmore Girls* and *The O.C.*, and then moved on to be the executive producer (and occasional writer and director) for *Gossip Girls*. After establishing yourself in Hollywood, what inspired you to change your course and write a children's book trilogy?

John: Honestly, sometimes I ask myself that question in the reverse. How did I ever end up in Hollywood? The truth is that writing novels was my first ambition, and given my druthers when I finished grad school, I probably would've gone off and just written books. The only problem was that at the time I was pretty bad at it. I really kinda stunk. As it turned out, I needed another decade of learning the craft before I was ready to write a novel. And, fortunately, writing for Hollywood turns out to be a great training ground. You learn how to work on a schedule, tell a satisfying story, build character, construct scenes, you develop a feel for dramatic momentum...and you get to tool around the Warner Bros lot on a golf cart, which is kind of awesome. In fact, writing and producing television was so much fun I kind of forgot about writing books for a while. That is, till the day I read *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman and realized that all I wanted to do was write children's fantasy novels. And luckily by then I had the skills to pull it off without embarrassing myself.

Though I do still miss cruising around the lot on golf carts.

Amazon: The whole time I was reading *The Emerald Atlas*, I kept thinking what a great movie it would make. Are there any plans for a film version?

John: I hope so! Wouldn't that be awesome? Unfortunately, at present, if people are making plans, they haven't told me about them.

Amazon: I loved the characters of Kate, Emma, and Michael. They were all so relatable. I felt as if they were kids I had met before. Were your three young heroes inspired by anyone in your life or from your childhood?

John: Kate not so much (though she does share a name with my younger sister). Her closest inspiration came from a character in the movie *Not One Less* by Ziyang Yimou, where this young girl is put in charge of a schoolhouse in rural China, and the teacher tells her that she'll be paid if all the children are there when he returns. Well, of course one of the kids, this little rascal, runs away, and she has to track him down to this big city. And the job of finding this kid in this huge city is OVERWHELMING and yet this girl is unbelievably tenacious. I just loved that sense of incredible strength in someone so young.

Emma is partly inspired from a friend of mine, a writer I worked with who can be incredibly combative and feisty, but also has an enormous heart. I love that combination of fury and vulnerability.

Michael, in many ways, was based on me. We're both the middle brother of two sisters, studious, wear glasses, think dwarves are awesome, and have a need to document our worlds. However, like all characters, he grew away from me and became much braver and more resourceful than I could ever hope to be.

Amazon: The fantasy world in *The Emerald Atlas* is described in such detail that it really comes to life in the mind of the reader. What was your inspiration for the world that Kate, Emma, and Michael happen upon?

John: The inspiration was the Adirondacks of upstate New York. A few years ago, I spent a lot of time up near Lake Placid and I found the area to be really magical and just imbued with history, in

particular, a romantic, turn-of-the-century, Edith Wharton-type of history that I found very appealing. British fantasy writers are surrounded by buildings, streets, and graveyards that are centuries old. Fantasy and magic seems to cling to those places. It's a little bit harder to find that in the States, but I felt the Adirondacks had that quality in spades, as well as being near the old stomping grounds of Washington Irving, who sort of began the tradition of American fantasy I was trying to nod towards.

Amazon: You have a distinctly individual voice and plotline in *The Emerald Atlas*, but your writing style does invoke thoughts of some children's fantasy classics. The beginning portion of *The Emerald Atlas* reminded me a little bit of Lemony Snicket's *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, while the main body of your work read more similarly to C.S. Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia* and Phillip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy, and the action scenes reminded me most of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. Which writers would you say inspired you most as an author?

John: First off, to say that my book reminds you of those writers is a HUGE compliment, so thank you. I feel very indebted to particular writers for very specific things. Among the ones you mention...from Pullman, I love the authority of his other worlds. He believes in Lyra's world completely and he makes you believe in it. Also, his characters live at the edges of their feelings, which makes reading the books enormously exciting. From Lewis, at his best, he can convey a true sense of magic to readers, especially young readers. And though I don't love all his books, his prose is always great. I admire so much about J.K. Rowling's books but just to pick a couple things, she has a Dickensian affection for side characters that I also have. Also, she shares with Roald Dahl, one of my other literary heroes, a taste for the comic grotesque. I'm deeply indebted to Edith Nesbit, most particularly for her *Bastable* books. I love her humor, her lightness of touch and above all the interaction of her children. And finally, I'd just say Dickens for so many things, but mostly because he proved again and again that a funny book can also be moving.

--This text refers to an alternate edition.

Review "Rich with wonder and personality, *"The Emerald Atlas"* is a terrific read. I wholeheartedly recommend it, and look forward to more." -- Brandon Mull, #1 "New York Times" bestselling author of *Fablehaven* and *Beyonders*

Starred Review, *School Library Journal*, June 2011:

"Unfolding magic and secrets deepen the story and build excitement as it reaches its complex and time-bending climax....Echoes of other popular fantasy series, from *"Harry Potter"* to the *"Narnia"* books, are easily found, but debut author Stephens has created a new and appealing read that will leave readers looking forward to the next volumes in this projected trilogy."

Publishers Weekly, January 18, 2011:

"This fast-paced, fully imagined fantasy is by turns frightening and funny, and the siblings are well-crafted and empathetic heroes. Highly enjoyable, it should find many readers."

The Wall Street Journal, April 2, 2011:

"[A] great story is all in the telling, and in *'The Emerald Atlas'* the telling is superb...First-time novelist John Stephens has created a vicarious adventure for children ages 9-15--the first in a trilogy--filled with unexpected twists and marvelously distinct and vivid characters."

BookPage, April 2, 2011:

"With magic, humor and unforgettable characters, John Stephens' remarkable debut novel follows Kate, Michael and Emma as they attempt to outwit the Countess, rescue the children and maybe even save the world in the process. Unanswered questions and two more books to locate ensure a sequel and more robust adventures ahead."

Realms of Fantasy, April 2011:

"Ambitious, entertaining, magical, and whimsical, this marks a strong beginning to a new trilogy,

invoking just a little "Harry Potter" and "Series of Unfortunate Events" along the way."

Booklist, March 15, 2011:

"Fast-paced and engaging, with plenty of action, humor, and secrets propelling the plot. . . . Themes of family and responsibility . . . will easily reson

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