



## Francesca Tacchi ■ is doing PitchWars '21 @jackdaw\_writes Sat Feb 05 08:21:57 +0000 2022

Some thoughts on cosmic horror and Lovecraft's legacy.

I guess you all know about Lovecraft's rampant racism and xenophobia (Black people, Jewish people and Italians were his favorite targets). And his bigoted views were without any doubt at the base of the genre he created 1/?

But what I want to challenge is that you \*have\* to be as bigoted as him to find cosmic horror appealing, or that the cosmic horror genre is inextricable from Lovecraft's bigotry, since it's based on the 'fear of the diverse'. I don't think that holds true anymore 2/?

I have a weird relationship with cosmic horror, in that I find eldritch abominations from beyond the stars endlessly fascinating rather than scary. I like the idea of beings ancient and unfathomable, dwelling in the depths of space and in the seams between realities. 3/?

What drives me close to cosmic horror is not the fear of the diverse (hell, I \*am\* the diverse) nor the desire to deconstruct the Lovecraftian myth. I don't want Lovecraft anywhere near \*my\* cosmic horror. I interpret the genre in my own way. 4/?

Which is one that comes from my own interiority. My spirituality, where I interpret it as a desire for something greater to exist, and a kinship to something that is incomprehensible to human minds (hello, neurodivergence). I approach cosmic horror with awe. 5/?

One can argue that is not horror anymore, then, because... well, fear should play the most important role in the genre. But there are many kind of fears. Imagine you're on a small boat, and a beautiful whale emerges from the water right next to you. What would you feel? 6/?

That mix of thrill, of fear, of awe... that is what I, as a writer, want to evoke when writing of cosmic horror. And that is what I, as a reader, feel when reading it.

Lovecraft may have invented the genre 7/?

(though I'd argue that 'cosmic horror' is far older... but that would need another thread on its own)

but the genre doesn't have to be static, it can evolve and adapt to any writer's interpretation. To think that it has to be shackled by its creator's bigotry is so reductive 8/?

So yeah, I do think cosmic horror as a genre can stand on its own, can have new meanings, especially when it's those same people Lovecraft despised who are writing it and reclaiming it.

Lovecraft's cosmic horror is inextricable from his bigotry.

But /my/ cosmic horror isn't. 9/9