

Book Review

Paul Auster pens another classic

'Travels in the Scriptorium' tells the tale of a lost character

Jacob Malewitz
A&E Editor

Novelist Paul Auster has always been able to tap into the humanity of his characters.

Auster is a master of mystery. It seems he intends the story to take the backseat to his characters. He makes the characters the mystery, not the story.

"Travels in the Scriptorium" is Auster's new literary masterpiece and is in the vein of his previous classics "City of Glass" and "The Book of Illusions."

Perhaps he sticks to a format throughout his stories, but because his characters are fascinating his voice is one of the strongest in modern literature.

Auster awakens an interesting compassion for the main character with this novel. The process of going to the bathroom, of being aroused, and of aging all provide the framework for a character who seems lost both in the real world and in his mind.

"Travels in the Scriptorium" is one of Auster's shorter novels, being about 150 pages.

Even though it is brief, the Brooklyn writer created a masterful look into events similar to his other novels.

It begins when Auster's character, which the narrator calls "Mr. Blank," who finds himself in a locked room. Even the narrator is unsure of who this character is and how he got there.

'Auster intends the story to take the backseat to his characters.'

"He can't escape the feeling he is the victim of a terrible injustice," Auster writes. Then he finds a manuscript in the enclosed room and begins reading it.

It tells a scathing story of a man bordering on madness, a madness Blank believes might come into his life.

While studying the manuscript, a woman named Anne who Mr. Blank has a history with, comes into the room, adding another mystery to the tale. She provides the needed background for Blank, and offers him a

way to escape the madness.

While explaining this, she says "We might be the ones to suffer, but there's a reason for it, a good reason, and anyone who complains about it doesn't understand what it means to be alive."

Blank continues reading the manuscript. It appears to be a chronicle of a man who went through the same version of hell that he was going through.

"Each time I write another word, I hear the sound of my own voice even though my lips are silent," writes this broken man.

With the plot thickening, the themes of humanity appear. Auster writes of a man trying to find himself.



Photo courtesy Yahoo.com

Mystery of character: Paul Auster is not a mystery writer, but he does add in mysterious details to his stories. This can be seen in many of his novels, including "Travels in the Scriptorium."

Album Review

The Muldoons bring Detroit rock to Lansing

Rich Tupica
Associate Editor

The Muldoons are a family punk-rock band from Detroit.

Their first public gig was not at a bar, it was opening for the Grammy Award winning White Stripes.

Shane, 10, and his older brother Hunter, 13, both write and play guitar while their father Brian,

48, pounds away on the Gretsch drum kit.

These kids haven't even reached high school and they have already opened for virtually every great Detroit rock band, recorded a few seven-inch singles and recently released their debut full-length album.

Ben Blackwell, of the Detroit band The Dirtbombs and his uncle Jack White of The White Stripes co-released The

Muldoons new LP on their record labels, Cass Records and Third Man Recordings, making this even more of a family-oriented album.

Not to mention Hunter and Shane's mother Patricia and their uncle Dan Muldoon did the album art.

People should be warned that even in the presence of their father the Muldoon boys were not deterred from penning songs about topics that would get other kids grounded for a month!

Hunter and Shane's lyrics on the new LP range from explosives, to comic book fantasies, to killing zombies "one by one."

While their guitar riffs echo The Stooges, Nirvana and on one track The Gories, they use their

influences to make every song different from the next.

Ben Blackwell recalls the day he discovered The Muldoons' music:

"My first experience with The Muldoons was actually reading Shane's handwritten lyric sheet for 'Destruction Boy.' She may kill me for saying this, but Shane's mom was looking at me, almost scared, saying, 'Social Services are going to take him away,' while I thought I'd finally found the reincarnation of Darby Crash," said Blackwell.

Those who want to buy the new album can visit www.cassrecords.com, or pick it up at one of their upcoming Lansing shows.

Visit them online at: <http://www.myspace.com/muldoonsofficialsite>



Photo by Patricia Muldoon

Brotherly Rock!: Shane, 10 (left) and Hunter, 13 (right), along with their father, Brian Muldoon have a new album available on Cass Records.

The Muldoons invade Lansing!

Oct. 12 @ Mac's Bar
Muldoons, Hard Lessons, The Darts
2700 E. Michigan - Lansing

Nov. 3 @ Replay Entertainment
Muldoons, Metal Teeth, The Darts
1723 E Michigan Ave - Lansing

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