



The Empire of Isher: The Weapon Makers / The Weapon Shops of Isher

By A. E. van Vogt

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Two classic Van Vogt works, The Weapon Makers and The Weapon Shops of Isher form the complete story of Robert Hedrock and the Empire of Isher. They are about revolution through time travel, the right to bear arms, the end of the universe and the beginning of the next.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Having more stories from A.E. van Vogt repackaged and reprinted can only be good news: along with Heinlein and Asimov, this prolific, wild-eyed author deserves much of the credit for pioneering science fiction's golden age back in the '40s and '50s. As a sort of crazy old uncle of modern sci-fi, though, van Vogt doesn't always get his due: his writing wasn't always spectacular, his plot and pacing fell somewhere between harum-scarum and willy-nilly, and his ideas were delivered in relentless salvos, each more outlandish than the last. But an embarrassment or not, the visionary van Vogt is indisputably part of the family, an entertaining and daring author whose influence can be seen in the work of countless other writers.

This 288-page paperback binds together two of van Vogt's better stories, "The Weapon Makers of Isher" and "The Weapons Shops of Isher," published in sequel-prequel order back in 1946 and 1951. These time-hopping, politically convoluted tales follow the struggle between the oppressive (but beautiful) Empress Innelda and the superadvanced libertarian Weapon Shops ("The right to buy weapons is the right to be free," reads the storefront sign). Much of the melodramatic plot revolves around the Shops' immortal, ultragenius founder Robert Hedrock, his conflict with the Empress, and their differing visions for the future of humanity, but don't fret too much over the details: van Vogt keeps your head comfortably a-swim in a steady stream of whiz-bang gadgetry, plot twists, and breakneck action. --*Paul Hughes*

About the Author

A. E. Van Vogt was a SFWA Grand Master. He was born in Canada and moved to the U.S. in 1944, by which time he was well-established as one of John W. Campbell's stable of writers for *Astounding Science-Fiction*. He lived in Los Angeles, California and died in 2000.

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