Borges: Influence and References

Martin Amis

From: Halifax Slasher

My favorite Borges reference is from Martin Amis's *The Information*, where a bad poet writes something good for once, and it turns out he swiped the lines from one of Borges's prose works.

From: Jose Zelaschi

In the author's note of *Einstein's Monsters*, Amis cites Borges and Rushdie as influences for his short story "The Immortals." The story, which is quite interesting, reads as if it had been written by a very witty -- I feel tempted to say, tongue-in-cheek -- Borges.

From: James Diedrick

Amis reviewed Borges, though he neglected to include it in *The War Against Cliché*:

Also, there are several references to Borges in other reviews collected in *The War Against Clichê* -- pp. 66, 384, 401, 421.

**From: José María Gomez**

One story in *Other People* is about an amnesiac girl. In this work Amis uses lot of ideas, concepts, images even direct quotations from Borges short-story "Funes el memorioso," in which a boy gets the gift of infinite memory after suffering from an accident. In fact, the amnesiac girl is reading Borges' fiction:

"She read *Labyrinths, Scruples, America...*" (p.104)

"A few of the books... contain all things... like alephs" (p.104)

The postmodern irony is using images from a story about a person with infinite memory to describe the situation of an amnesiac, thus suggesting that both abnormal situations call into question our standard vision about reality.

**Additional Information**

The Martin Amis Web -- An excellent resource on Amis by James Diedrick, author of *Understanding Martin Amis*. It includes these Borges-specific sections:

- **Borges' Genius Praised on the Centennial of his Birth** -- Laura Weffer Cifuentes of the Latino On-Line News Network reports on the 14 January 1999 colloquium on Borges at the British Library, featuring Martin Amis and Ian McEwan.

- **Martin Amis and Ian McEwan discuss Borges** -- A streaming video of the Amis-McEwan conversation.

- **The significance of "The Aleph" in *The Information*** -- From *Understanding Martin Amis* by James Diedrick.

**Selected Works by Martin Amis**

- **Einstein's Monsters**  
  by Martin Amis. Paperback (March 1990)

- **The Information**  
  by Martin Amis. Paperback (March 1996)

- **The War Against Cliché**  
  by Martin Amis. Paperback (November 2001)