



Horror has a home in Toronto



Glow-in-the-dark jacket that is charged

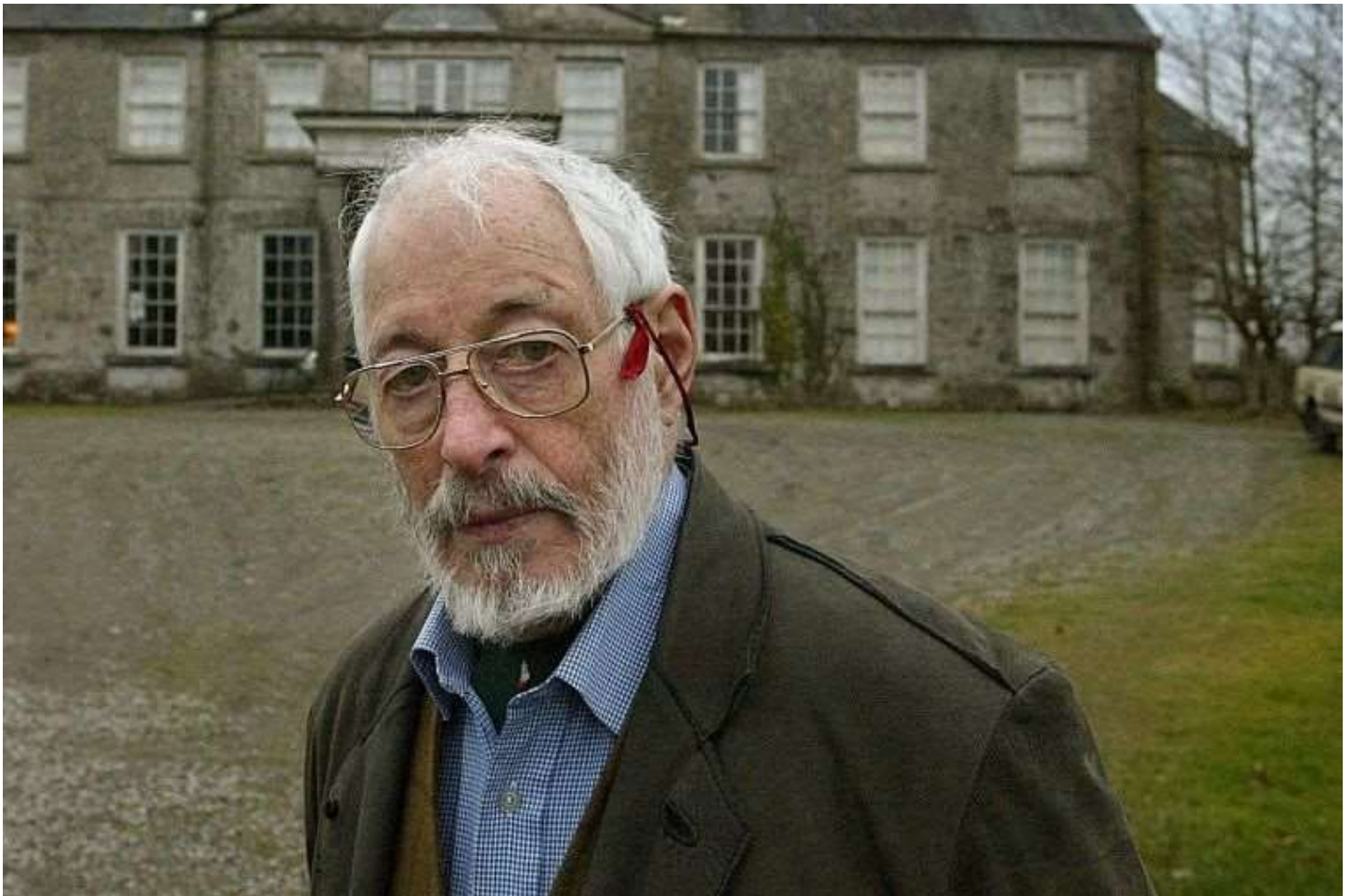


Couple Adopts 1-Scribol

Recommended by

Obituary

Author's dirty book became a classic



J.P. Donleavy

🕒 PUBLISHED 2 HOURS AGO

LONDON • The Ginger Man book was both banned and burnt in Ireland. When it was published in the United States in 1958, Chapter 10 was omitted.

Its expatriate American author, J.P. Donleavy, died on Monday at a hospital near his home in Mullingar, County Westmeath, Ireland. He was 91. His sister said the cause was a stroke.

Donleavy had faced problems finding a publisher for *The Ginger Man* (1955), his bawdily adventurous story of 1940s university life in Dublin, which he described to *The New York Times* in 2000 as "celebratory, boisterous and resolutely careless mayhem".

Playwright Brendan Behan, a friend, suggested that he send the manuscript to Olympia Press in Paris. This worked out well, in that it accepted the book, and not well, in that it was published as part of the *Traveller's Companion* series, which was known for erotica.

"That was basically the end of my career," Donleavy told *The Times*. "I was 'a dirty book writer' out of Paris."

But the book eventually won acclaim - it is now considered a contemporary classic, selling more than 45 million copies worldwide.

Donleavy was compared with James Joyce and hailed as a forerunner of both the black humour movement and the London playwrights known as the Angry Young Men.

In a strange twist, after Donleavy had been pursuing legal action against Olympia for years to regain the book's copyright, he ended up owning the Paris company, having sent his wife to slip into an auction and buy it for a relatively small sum in 1970 after it went bankrupt.

A stage version of *The Ginger Man* opened in London in 1959 and a British television movie was broadcast in 1962.

Donleavy wrote more than a dozen novels as well as plays and non-fiction books. If anyone doubted his taste for stylistic extravagance, the titles of some of his books - such as *The Beastly Beatitudes Of Balthazar B.* (1968), the story of a man whose only happy affair was with his nanny; and *The Destinies Of Darcy Dancer, Gentleman* (1977) - made that point on their own.

He was also an accomplished painter and had exhibitions on both sides of the Atlantic, including a show in Manhattan in 2007 when he was 81.

Of old age, he wrote: "It's not nice, but take comfort that you won't stay that way forever."

He lived in London and on the Isle of Man for most of the 1950s and 1960s, then moved to Ireland in 1969 after it abolished the income tax for creative artists.

A writer for T: The New York Times Style Magazine described him in 2014 as "an odd fish swimming the mid-Atlantic apart from all the usual schools of thought".

But how the world benefited from his unusual catch of ideas for his books.

NYTIMES