

# The Nature of Gothic and Merchant Ivory Stand Out in Today's Resource List

Recommended Reading from Tech Founders

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Patrick Collison points readers to Ruskin's *The Nature of Gothic* with a direct link and substantive excerpt, while Ivan Zhao highlights Merchant Ivory films as a source of humanistic perspective and optimism. Together, the day's recommendations skew toward durable aesthetic judgment over tactical startup reading.

### Most compelling recommendation

Patrick Collison's Ruskin pick is the strongest save today because it comes with all three things that matter: a clear endorsement, a direct link, and a concrete glimpse of what he found worth reading [1].

“Just discovered Ruskin's *The Nature of Gothic*. Remarkable essay:”  
[1]

- **Title:** *The Nature of Gothic* [1]
- **Content type:** Essay [1]
- **Author/creator:** Ruskin [1]
- **Link/URL:** <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/30755/30755-h/30755-h.htm#page151> [1]
- **Who recommended it:** Patrick Collison [1]
- **Key takeaway:** The passage he highlighted moves across Mediterranean and northern landscapes, animal life, and human making, arguing that artistic form should be understood in relation to the natural laws and conditions of the places people inhabit [1]
- **Why it matters:** This is not a generic link share. Collison points straight to the text and spotlights the specific mode of seeing—connecting geography, life, and craft—that made the essay stand out to him [1]

## A second signal: humanistic cinema as a source of optimism

Ivan Zhao's recommendation is broader, but the conviction behind it is unusually strong: he said he and his wife watched more than 20 Merchant Ivory films, and he cited them when asked what makes him optimistic about the future [2].

- **Title:** *Merchant Ivory Productions* film catalog (*representative title: A Room with a View*) [2]
- **Content type:** Films [2]
- **Author/creator:** Merchant Ivory Productions [2]
- **Who recommended it:** Ivan Zhao [2]
- **Key takeaway:** Zhao describes the films as low-budget adaptations of era novels with exquisite detail and visuals, centered on emotions, fates, and distinctively human traits in beautiful settings [2]
- **Why it matters:** He presents these films as a source of optimism because each work condenses valuable human qualities into stories about emotion and fate [2]

## Pattern worth noting

Today's authentic recommendations lean away from tactical startup content and toward durable aesthetic judgment. One points to a text about how place shapes human expression; the other to films prized for their humanistic depth and beauty [1, 2].

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## Sources

1. X post by @patricke
2. AI “ ” | Ivan Zhao | 700 Agent | | SaaS |