

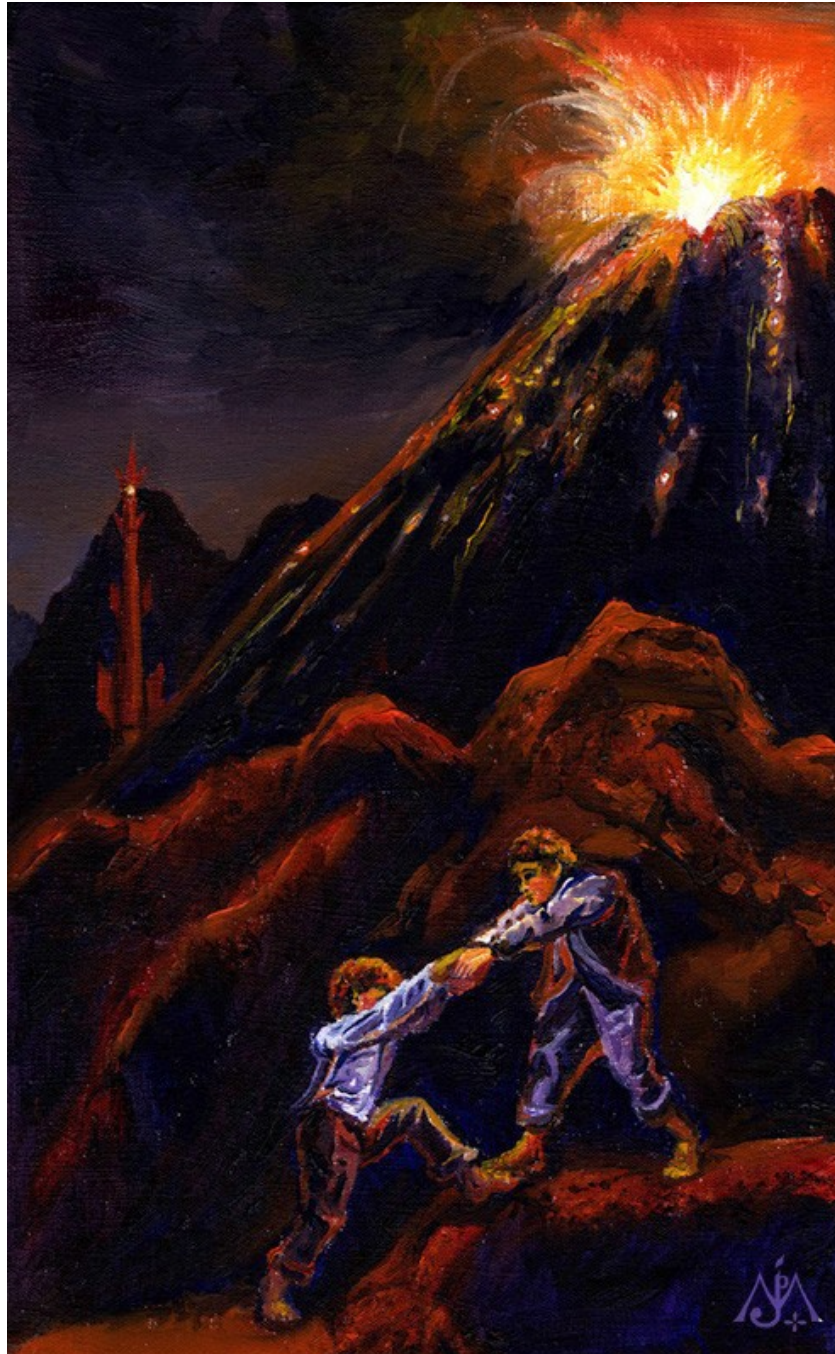
# mythPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

VOL. 47 NO. 6

JUNE 2010

WHOLE NO. 335



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Reviews, discussion group reports, news items, letters, art work and other submissions for *Mythprint* are always welcome. Please contact the editor for details on format, or send materials to:

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The Mythopoeic Society also publishes two other magazines: *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature* (subscription \$25/year for U.S. Society members) and *The Mythic Circle*, an annual magazine publishing fiction, poems, etc. (\$8/issue for U.S. addresses). Subscriptions and back issues of Society publications may be purchased directly thorough our web site (using PayPal or Discover card), or you may contact:

Mythopoeic Society Orders Department



Visit the Mythopoeic Society on the web at [www.mythsoc.org](http://www.mythsoc.org).

*Mythprint* is the monthly bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society, a nonprofit educational organization devoted to the study, discussion and enjoyment of myth and fantasy literature, especially the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams. To promote these interests, the Society publishes three magazines, maintains a World Wide Web site, and sponsors the annual Mythopoeic Conference and awards for fiction and scholarship, as well as local and written discussion groups.

### Membership and Subscriptions

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**An Interview with Simon Tolkien.** By Jason Fisher.

*Simon Tolkien, the son of Christopher Tolkien and the grandson of J.R.R. Tolkien, has recently published his second novel, *The Inheritance*. His next novel, *The King of Diamonds*, will be published by Minotaur in April, 2011. You can*

*learn more about Simon Tolkien and his novels at his website,*

**Jason Fisher:** Can you tell us what you remember of your grandfather, J.R.R. Tolkien, and grandmother, Edith? (Apologies for giving you the same question you've no doubt answered a hundred times; and thank you for indulging me!)

**Simon Tolkien:** Yes, I have answered this question many times so let me treat it as if you are asking me about my grandparents together – a question I have never answered. They were very different people, and there were barriers between them throughout their marriage. My grandmother was not in any way intellectual. In the early years of their marriage in Leeds she transcribed some of my grandfather's early stories, but Oxford was always hard for her – the university was an entirely male-dominated world. As a girl she had been a very good pianist but she did not pursue this once she was married. Religion also separated them. My grandfather persuaded my grandmother to convert to Roman Catholicism when they were married but within a few years she had turned her back on the Church. This must have been hard for him given the Church's teaching that only true believers went to heaven. Their lives were never easy. My grandfather had to work very hard, combining two jobs as an author and a university professor. They brought up four children, and they lived through two World Wars. My grandfather fought on the Somme in 1916 and two of their sons fought in the Second World War, with my uncle Michael being permanently scarred by his terrible experiences under fire. They always remained deeply loyal and proud of each other. I think that my grandfather agreed to leave Oxford for Bournemouth after he retired because he knew his wife would be happier there and it was also 'her turn.' I think they always retained a heartfelt tenderness for each other, remembering that they had both been orphans and the

struggle that they had had to overcome to get married after my grandfather's guardian had forced them apart for years before my grandfather came of age. Their old friend, Rob Murray told me several years ago how he had come upon them unawares when he was staying with them in Bournemouth at the end of the sixties and they were sitting hand in hand remembering how happy they had been. My grandfather was a romantic and his wife was always in part Lúthien Tinúviel dancing in the woods in 1917, and so their names appear as Beren and Lúthien on their gravestones in Wolvercote Cemetery where they are buried side by side.

**JF:** When did you first read *The Lord of the Rings*? What do you think of it?

**ST:** I have read it five times, first when I was a child and now again to my daughter – we are about to climb the stairs of Cirith Ungol. This is the first time I have read the book since I myself became a writer, and reading it gives me a sense of who my grandfather was. I have been particularly struck by the extraordinary detail of his description of landscape. It reminds me of Thomas Hardy at his best, and I sense how much the natural world must have meant to him. Perhaps this is where his love of words began – from when his mother taught him the names of the trees and flowers in the countryside around Sarehole when he was a child. Also this time round I was deeply moved by Tom Bombadil and Goldberry – I think this was as close as my grandfather could come to describing an earthly heaven – language become poetry and song in the valley of the Withywindle.

**JF:** Can you remember anything of the time when your father, Christopher Tolkien, was editing *The Silmarillion* and other posthumous publications of your grandfather's? You would have been a teenager at the time, but did he ever say anything to you about the process, the difficulties, or hint at his hopes or fears in taking on that momentous task?

**ST:** There was an old barn in the house where my father lived in Berkshire when I was a boy, and we had wonderful games of table tennis in there together. And there was a rickety ladder leading up to a loft with a view down into the working farm next door. But when my grandfather died the barn was converted to a great workroom in which all the manuscripts were assembled for the writing of *The Silmarillion*. I remember Guy Kay working out there with my father. And when the project was finished several years later my father

and stepmother sold the house and moved to France which was upsetting for me. As you say, I was a teenager during these times, and *The Silmarillion* is not what concerned me; it was the changes that my grandfather's death brought about in my life that mattered.

**JF:** How did you come to decide on a literary career of your own? Obviously, your education followed a different path from that of your father and grandfather (Professors of Lit. and Lang.). But at some point you came around to writing. Did some part of you always want to be a writer?

**ST:** I wrote no fiction until I was forty. With the benefit of hindsight I think that I was intimidated from doing so by the scale of my grandfather's achievement. Then at the end of the 1990s the Jackson movies spurred me to want to create an identity of my own so I would not look in the mirror and just see the grandson of *The Lord of the Rings* staring back at me. However I think that unconsciously I'd been preparing for this change in career for a long time as I wrote a daily diary from 1990 onwards and over the course of ten years slowly learnt to write without self-consciousness.

**JF:** Write what you know, they say. And indeed, your latest novel (like your first) is a legal thriller, not a fantasy story. But unlike the first, *The Inheritance* seems to be more suffused with people, professions, settings, and artifacts — professors, ancient codexes, the aftermath of the World Wars, Oxford, Bournemouth, even a Remington typewriter — that could have been lifted from your childhood. The main action of *The Inheritance* is set in 1959, the year you were born. How much of the period and settings come from your own personal childhood memories, as opposed to your larger study of history?

**ST:** History was my first and greatest love. I am slightly ashamed to say that as a boy I hero-worshipped Napoleon Bonaparte and my greatest thrill was visiting his huge pink tomb in Paris when I was eleven. I still think of the past as another country as real as the present but forever just out of reach. In particular I am awed by the colossal struggles and sacrifices that shook the world during the Second World War — a time when history seems stranger, grander and more terrifying than fiction. And so in *The Inheritance* and again in my new novel, *The King of Diamonds* (out next April), I have deliberately made the War the backdrop to events at the end of the fifties and in each book my detective, Inspector Trave must go back into the past to solve a murder. I suppose that

my vision of the past is an amalgam of childhood memory and historical research.

**JF:** I couldn't help but notice the minor character of Charles Blackburn, estate solicitor to the late Professor John Cade. Is this a deliberate echo of the name of the Tolkien Estate's solicitor, Cathleen Blackburn? Or is it just a startling coincidence?

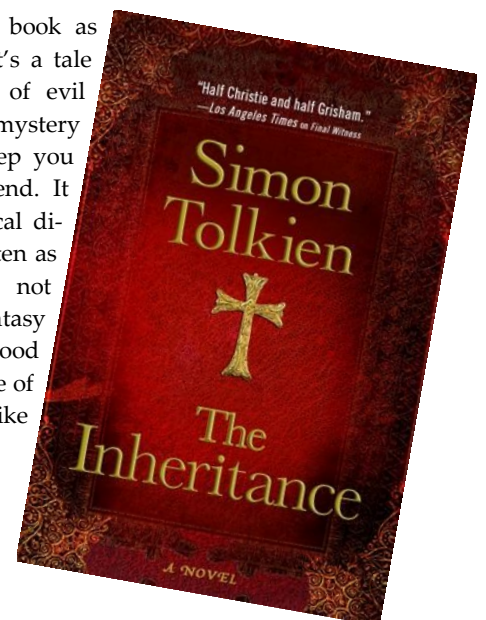
**ST:** Several readers noted the connection between the Sackville family in *Final Witness* and the Sackville-Bagginses, and that was certainly pure coincidence. There might be more of an unconscious connection here, which I hope Cathleen will not mind.

**JF:** Who are some of your own favorite writers, in the legal thriller genre, or in any genre?

**ST:** I was an only child and grew up in a cottage in the Oxfordshire countryside. I was thrown very much on my own resources which consisted of books, books and more books. I used to think I was very deprived by this experience but now I think the opposite. The books I read lying on my bed filled up my imagination and they are the fuel for my creativity now. Above all I loved romances that transported me entirely into a fictional past — *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Treasure Island*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre*, *Gormenghast*, and *The Lord of the Rings*. They filled me with a sense of wonder — (to borrow Van Morrison's phrase) — which has never left me since.

**JF:** Is there anything you would like to say to *Mythprint* readers to interest them in your own novels? Our readers have a special preference for fantasy and science-fiction literature, but most are voracious bibliophiles and might like to try your books.

**ST:** I can't sell my book as something it isn't. It's a tale with its fair share of evil characters and a mystery that is meant to keep you guessing until the end. It has a strong historical dimension and is written as a page-turner. It's not science-fiction or fantasy but I think it's a good read and I hope some of your readers may like it. ≡



# SELECTED UPCOMING EVENTS



**Infinitus Harry Potter Fan Conference.** July 15-18, 2010. Orlando, Florida. [REDACTED]



**Comic-Con 2010.** July 22-25, 2010. San Diego Convention Center. [REDACTED]



**Confluence 2010.** The 22nd Annual Literary Sci-Fi Convention in Pittsburgh. July 23-25, 2010. Doubletree Hotel, Pittsburgh Airport.



**Edge of the Wild Tolkien Art Exhibition.** August 13-16, 2010. Redesdale Hall, Moreton-in-Marsh, England.



**Omentielva Cantea: The Fourth International Conference on Tolkien's Invented Languages.** August 11-14, 2011. Universidad Politécnica de

Valencia, Spain. [REDACTED]



**The Annual Convention of the Dorothy L. Sayers Society.** August 13-16, 2010. University of Nottingham. [REDACTED]

**The Return of the Ring:** Sponsored by the Tolkien Society. Loughborough University (England), August 16-20, 2012. [REDACTED]



**Festival in the Shire:** August 13-15, 2010. Conference, Collector's Exposition, and Festival. Y Plas, Machynlleth, Wales. [www.festivalintheshire.com](http://www.festivalintheshire.com). 15% discount for Mythopoeic Society members; code MS2010.



**Oxonmoot 2010.** September 24-26, 2010. Annual meeting of the Tolkien Society. Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. [REDACTED]



**H.P. Lovecraft Film Festival and CthulhuCon.** October 1-3, 2010. Hollywood Theatre, Portland, Oregon. [REDACTED]



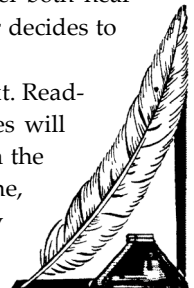
**The 7th Annual C.S. Lewis Festival.** Running throughout October, 2010 in Petoskey, Michigan. [REDACTED]



**Fuyumi Ono.** *The Twelve Kingdoms, Volume 4: Skies of Dawn.* Los Angeles: Tokyopop, 2010 hardcover, \$19.99, ISBN 978-1598169492. 656 pp. Illustrated by Akihiro Yamada. Translated by Alexander O. Smith and Elye J. Alexander. Original in Japanese, Tokyo: Kodansha Ltd., 1994. Reviewed by Daniel Baird.

Intrigue, spying, disguises and desperation—this new volume by Ono has it all. First there is the return of Yoko from Volume One who is having problems ruling—problems with her ministers, problems with rebellions, problems with her stubborn unicorn and the worst of the worst, she doesn't know what her first royal edict should be! But Yoko is only one of three main characters in the thickest of the *Twelve Kingdoms* books. She is joined by Suzu, a girl sold by her poverty-stricken parents in feudal Japan and is swept off to the Kingdom of Sai in a storm. Then there is Shoukei, pampered princess of Hou. Only her father was just murdered and now she is a hated orphan in a village where she throws a self-pity party. In contrast, Suzu is made a lovely immortal and sent to live in a beautiful mountain retreat—oops, as a servant. Immortal, but miserable. Lonely Suzu and pitiful Shoukei both hear about Yoko; the former decides to run away to seek Yoko's favor to return her to Japan, the latter decides to murder Yoko as punishment for having what she has lost. And that's just in the first few pages.

I couldn't turn the pages fast enough to find out what Ono was going to surprise me with next. Readers new to the series will find this a wonderful fantasy book. Fans of the *Twelve Kingdoms* series will drool over this 600+ page treat where we travel through both familiar and unfamiliar places with the trio as they reach for their goals. And of course everyone's favorite human/rat from Volume One, Rakushun, returns to send all the characters spinning in different directions with his wisdom. Buy it, borrow it, steal it. This is a must read! ≡



# Discussion Groups

The Mythopoeic Society has members throughout the U.S. and in several foreign countries; the lucky ones are able to find other people interested in the Inklings, myth, and fantasy literature close enough geographically to meet on a regular basis. The Society sponsors Discussion Groups in several different states in the U.S., with a number of additional groups in the process of forming and active.

Groups are listed as **Active** or **Inactive**. Groups that wish to be listed in the Active category should regularly update the Secretary with their meeting and discussion plans. Groups are also encouraged to share reports of their activities with the Secretary for inclusion in *Mythprint*.

Groups that wish to become active should contact the Secretary and inform her of their first meeting, topic, time, location and contact person. Groups that have not yet chosen to become Chartered, or those who are interested in creating a new Mythopoeic Society-sponsored discussion or special interest group, please complete our group charter form at [www.mythsoc.org](http://www.mythsoc.org).

Marion VanLoo  
Membership & Discussion Group Secretary

[membership@mythsoc.org](mailto:membership@mythsoc.org)

## ACTIVE GROUPS

### CALIFORNIA

**Los Angeles/Pasadena:** *Mydgard*

Lee Speth, [REDACTED]  
July 18: *The Children of Green Knowe*, by Lucy M. Boston. Garfield Park in South Pasadena, on Mission St. two blocks east of Fair Oaks. 2:30 PM.  
August 22: *The Princess Bride*, by William Goldman. At the Callahans' home, 3771 Alzada Rd., Altadena; 2:30 PM.

**San Francisco Bay Area:** *Khazad-dum*

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe, [REDACTED]  
Web site: [www.mythsoc.org/groups/kd](http://www.mythsoc.org/groups/kd)  
Sept 12: *The Legend of Sigurd & Gudrun*, by J.R.R. Tolkien. In Berkeley. 2:00 PM.  
Dec. 4: The Annual Reading and Eating Meeting. At Edith and Amy's. Time TBD.

### COLORADO

**Denver area:** *Fanuidhol* ("Cloudy Head")

Patricia Yarrow, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
July 11: Mythopoeic Award nominees  
Aug. 15: *Coyote Road: Trickster Tales* (anthology) edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling  
Sept. 12: Classic fantasy: *The King of Elfland's Daughter* by Lord Dunsany  
Oct. 10: Scholarly work: *The Owl, the Raven and the Dove* by G. Ronald Murphy  
Nov. 7: *Storied Treasure* by Bailey Phelps  
Dec. 12: Recent works by Terry Pratchett

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**Washington & Suburbs:** *Knossos*

Mimi Stevens, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
July 2: *Knossos Film Festival*. At Bill Hussar's, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### HAWAII

**Oahu:** *Sammath Naur*

Steve Brown, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Or, Ken Burtness- [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
July 18: *The Lost Symbol*, by Dan Brown  
August 21: *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, by Betty Smith  
Sept. 18: *Garlic and Sapphires*, by Ruth Reichl  
Oct. 16: *A Game of Thrones*, by George R.R. Martin  
Nov. 13: *South of Skye*, by Steven Goldsberry.

### ILLINOIS

**Peoria:** *The Far Westfarthing smial*

Mike Foster, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### IOWA

**Decorah:** *Alfheim*

Doug Rossman, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### MINNESOTA

**Minneapolis-St. Paul:** *Rivendell*

David Lenander, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
July 3: *Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, by C.S. Lewis.  
TBA: *Thirteenth Child*, by Patricia Wrede.  
TBA: *The Magician's Book*, by Laura Miller.

### NEVADA

**Reno:** *Crickhollow*

Joanne Burnett, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Crickhollow

### OREGON

**Portland:** *Bywater Inklings*

Gary Lundquist, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### PENNSYLVANIA

**Pittsburgh:** *Fantasy Studies Fellowship*

Lori Campbell, University of Pittsburgh, Department of English,  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### WASHINGTON

**Seattle:** *Mithlond*

John D Rateliff, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## WISCONSIN

**Milwaukee:** *The Burrahobbits*

Jeffrey & Jan Long, [REDACTED]

**Note:** *Burrahobbits* is currently full to overflowing with members. If you live in the Milwaukee area and would like to be a part of a discussion group, why not start your own? Contact the Discussion Group Secretary for more details.

## INACTIVE/PROSPECTIVE GROUPS

### CALIFORNIA

**Oakland:** *C.S. Lewis Society of California*

David J. Theroux, [REDACTED]

### FLORIDA

**Tampa Bay:** *Hobbiton*

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]

**North Central Florida:** *Eryn Galen*

B.L. McCauley, [REDACTED]

### INDIANA

**Central Indiana:** *Cerin Amroth*

Ellen Denham, [REDACTED]

### LOUISIANA

**Baton Rouge:** *Roke*

Sally Budd, [REDACTED]

### MICHIGAN

**Ann Arbor area:** *Galadhremmin-Emmorath*

Dave Lovelace, [REDACTED]

### MISSOURI

**St. Louis:** *The Khazad*

Gary & Sylvia Hunnewell, [REDACTED]

**St. Louis:** *Imladris*

Tonia O'Neal, The Tolkien Adventure Community, [REDACTED]

### NEW YORK

**New York:** *Heren Istarion*

(The New York Tolkien Society)

Anthony Burdge & Jessica Burke, The New York Tolkien Society, [REDACTED]

### NORTH CAROLINA

**Charlotte:** *The Carolina Tolkien Society*

Matt & Renita Peeler, [REDACTED]

### OHIO

**Akron:**

David Staley, [REDACTED]

## OREGON

**Mid-Willamette Valley Area**

Donovan Mattole, [REDACTED]

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Lancaster Area:** *C.S. Lewis and Friends*

Neil Gussman, [REDACTED]

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Columbia:** *The Columbia C.S. Lewis Society*

Nina Fowler, [REDACTED]

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

### **The Elvish Linguistic Fellowship**

Carl Hostetter, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Newsletter, Vinyar Tengwar. Journal, *Parma Eldalamberon*: Christopher Gilson, [REDACTED]

### Active Correspondence Groups

#### **Once Upon A Time (children's fantasy)**

Laura Krentz, [REDACTED]

Correspondence circular. Issues come out every other month, on the even numbered months. Our membership is small; we would welcome new members. Interested people can contact Laura for a sample issue.

## ONLINE DISCUSSION GROUPS

### **Mythsoc Announcements**

Society announcements

### **Mythsoc E-List**

Society activities and general book-related discussion.

### **LiveJournal Mythopoeic Society discussion forum**

Society activities and general book-related discussion, especially the works of JRR Tolkien, CS Lewis, and Charles Williams. It is also a place to talk about The Mythopoeic Society and to post Society News. [REDACTED]

### **Facebook Group**

Society activities and general book-related discussion.

Friend "The Mythopoeic Society"

or contact Lisa Deutsch Harrigan: [REDACTED]

**Jedediah Berry.** *The Manual of Detection*. New York: Penguin Press, 2009, hardback, 278 pages, \$25.95, ISBN 978-1-594-20211-7. Reviewed by David Emerson.

This is a wonderful book, in both senses of the word — the current sense (great, terrific, fabulous) and the original sense (full of wonders). The wonders include an army of sleepwalkers, a barge loaded with clocks, phonograph records that play nothing but rustling noises, the theft of an entire day, and many more I can't tell you without giving too much away. Even though the library shelved it under "Mystery," it definitely qualifies as fantasy, but I can't tell you why; you'll just have to trust me.

First-time novelist Jedediah Berry has taken the clichés of the hard-boiled detective story and imbued them with a mythic quality. You've got the cynical, wise-cracking detective, the loyal assistant, the femme fatale (two of them, actually), the unexpected corpse, the criminal mastermind, the gritty dark streets of the city in the rain, the brooding mansion, the revelation of secrets, the showdown with the villain, even a nightclub scene. But each is taken to its extreme, and then past it into the realm of archetype.

The setting is a generic big city. Charles Unwin is a meticulous clerk working for a large agency whose employees are locked into rigidly stratified roles. Quite by chance one day, his usual routine is interrupted by a dropped umbrella, a strange dream, and a memo promoting him to detective. Believing the latter to be some kind of mistake, Unwin spends a good chunk of the novel trying to correct it. He becomes the most unlikely of detectives, fumbling around completely out of his element, trying to imagine what a "real" detective would do, constantly afraid he'll be exposed as a fraud and demoted to under-clerk. But in the process, he discovers much more than he ever imagined, beyond the mysteries of the missing detective, the murdered watcher, the beautiful client with an assumed name, and the startling crime being planned and executed while the city sleeps. He discovers astonishing secrets about the very nature of his world.

I hope it's not too much of a spoiler to say that a lot of the action of the story takes place in the mind — in memories and dreams. The prose style manages to evoke a state somewhere between waking and dreaming, so that at times the reader is never quite sure if the story will really stop upon closing the book. Think of Walter Mitty starring in a Raymond Chandler story directed by David Lynch from a screenplay by René Magritte, and that comes close to what this novel is like. It's an unusual book, delightful, intriguing, trippy, and, as I said, wonder-full. ≡

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### **Report on the 13th Annual C.S. Lewis and Inklings Society Conference.** By Jason Fisher.

This past April, I spent a terrific two days in Oklahoma City attending the 13th annual conference of the CSLIS. This is my third time to this event, but it's been three years since the last one I attended (then, at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas). This conference is probably not one of the better-known among Mythopoeic Society members, but it really should be — especially for those members who live in the south-central United States, where the conference is typically (but not always) held.

As usual, the event was jam-packed. Over only two full days, there were *forty-five* presentations (four of them plenary). Of these, thirty-four dealt with C.S. Lewis, fifteen with J.R.R. Tolkien (including mine), three with Charles Williams, two each with G.K. Chesterton and Dante Alighieri, and one each with George MacDonald, Dorothy Sayers, J.K. Rowling, and H.G. Wells. Note that the numbers add up to more than

forty-five, because many papers dealt with more than one author. Moreover, papers by a couple of talented undergraduate students from Oral Roberts University dealt with *three* authors each: Abby Griffin looked at Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams; and Jonathan Hall talked about Tolkien, Lewis, and Rowling.

Schedules as packed as this one, with as many as three sessions running simultaneously, always present some tough choices. I chose eighteen papers catering (mostly) to my own personal interests and tastes. Some highlights (kept to a few, for the sake of brevity, and given in the order I heard them):

(1) Abby Griffin's look at Adamic figures in the works of the Inklings; during the Q&A, I suggested Abby take a look at "The Tale of Adanel", from Tolkien's *Athrabeth*;

(2) Mike Milburn's investigation into Tolkien's idea of Truth (capital T); Mike has an essay in the forthcoming volume of *Tolkien Studies*;

(3) Joe Christopher's thoughtful inquiry into the significance of Lewis's allusions to Dante in his early



poem, "The Nameless Isle"; Joe will be looking at the same poem from a different perspective at Mythcon 41 (in about a week's time);

(4) Emily Redman's paper on the seven deadly sins in Lewis's *Voyage of the Dawn Treader*; Emily contrasted Lewis's representation of these sins with that seen in the 13th and 14th centuries – in Dante and the anonymous morality play, *Mankind*, respectively;

(5) Jonathan Himes's close look at the Bodleian manuscript of Lewis's controversial and unfinished novel, *The Dark Tower*; it was especially exciting to hear Jonathan discuss unpublished fragments that Lewis struck from the manuscript.

The plenary presentations were (as usual) in a class entirely by themselves. Michael Ward, author of *Planet Narnia*, gave an enthralling two-part talk (some two hours of material altogether). In it, he summarized the findings he has published in his book, and he discussed how the insight came to him. A wonderful speaker, he had us on the edge of our seats – not easy to do first thing in the morning. For those of you who couldn't see him in person, you must read his book! As some of you know, *Planet Narnia* is a finalist for the Mythopoeic Scholarship Award for Inklings Studies this year.

Diana Glycer gave a terrific and lively after-banquet keynote speech, in which she discussed the central hypothesis of her own book, *The Company They Keep*: whether, and to what extent, Lewis and Tolkien (and to a lesser degree, the other Inklings) influenced one another, and moreover, what "influence" itself really means. I say "hypothesis", but the persuasive power of Diana's argument is such that it is hardly that any longer. I regard it as established fact. Diana's book, of course, *won* the MSA for Inklings Studies a couple of years ago.

Finally, a real gem, the very Arkenstone of the entire weekend's embarrassment of riches: Diana Glycer and Michael Ward performed a reading of selected letters from the unpublished (as yet) correspondence of Major Warren Lewis and Blanche Biggs, a missionary doctor stationed in Papua New Guinea. I know, I know, you're probably thinking, *Warren Lewis*? But trust me, their correspondence, of which we heard roughly a quarter of the extant material, was funny, affectionate, clever, and in the end, profoundly moving. It brought tears to my eyes. For those of you

coming to Mythcon this year, we will be staging the same performance (with Mike Glycer in place of Michael Ward) – take my word for it, you will not want to miss this.

The CSLIS also held a competition this year for the best papers by scholars, graduate students, and undergraduates, and at the risk of immodesty I must report that I won first prize in the scholar category – "best in show" in the words of Diana Glycer. Seventeen papers were submitted for consideration, roughly one in three on the conference schedule, and the winners and runners-up were:

**Best Undergraduate Student Paper:** "Ringwraiths, Dementors, and the Un-Man: Evil Incarnate in the Worlds of Tolkien, Rowling, and Lewis," Jonathan Hall, Oral Roberts University

**Honorable Mention:** "The Yellow-Booted Enigma: Tom Bombadil's Role in *The Lord of the Rings*," B.J. Thome, Oral Roberts University

**Best Graduate Student Paper:** "The Planetary Architectonics of C.S. Lewis's Ransom Trilogy," Seth Wright, Baylor University

**Honorable Mention:** "Blood and Thunder: Penny Dreadfuls and the Novels of G.K. Chesterton," John C. Moore, Baylor University

**Best Scholar Paper:** "Dwarves, Spiders, and Murky Woods; J.R.R. Tolkien's Wonderful Web of Words," Jason Fisher, Independent Scholar

**Honorable Mention:** "A Tryst with the Transcendentals: C.S. Lewis on Goodness, Truth, and Beauty," Donald T. Williams, Toccoa Falls College

Congratulations to all the other winners! Needless to say, I was thrilled to win, and I am very grateful to the committee (Joe Christopher, Jonathan Himes, and Larry Fink) for taking the time to read and consider so many wonderful submissions. Theirs must have been a very difficult job.

Next year's CSLIS conference will be held at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma (the exact date is yet to be determined, but probably a week or two after Easter). I plan to be there, and I hope some of you will too. It was wonderful reconnecting with old friends and making new ones. What a small world it is, after all. I hope you'll come out to CSLIS 14 next year, and help make it a little smaller still. =



**Verlyn Flieger. *Interrupted Music: The Making of Tolkien's Mythology*.** Kent, OH, and London: Kent State University Press, 2005. Xv, 172 pp., \$18.00 (trade paperback) ISBN 0873388240. Reviewed by Douglas C. Kane.

Verlyn Flieger is widely considered one of the most insightful commentators on J.R.R. Tolkien's writings. It was, therefore, quite a surprise to me to discover that no review of her most recent book, *Interrupted Music: The Making of J.R.R. Tolkien's Mythology*, which was published in 2005, has appeared either here in *Mythprint* or in *Mythlore*. I was equally surprised to find no review in either publication of the revised and expanded edition of Flieger's classic book, *Splintered Light: Logos and Light in Tolkien's World*, which was published in 2002, and is unquestionably one of the most important books about Tolkien's work ever written. I hope to remedy that lack in the near future, but first, *Interrupted Music*, which itself stands at a critical junction in Tolkien scholarship.

Previous books on Tolkien have tended to focus mainly on aspects of *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, and *The Silmarillion*. There have been a few earlier books that have addressed aspects of *The History of Middle-earth* (HoMe) series. In fact, Flieger herself did so quite successfully in her previous books. *A Question of Time: J.R.R. Tolkien's Road to Faerie* focuses in large part on Tolkien's two unfinished time-travel novels, *The Lost Road* and *The Notion Club Papers*, both printed in volumes of HoMe, and the revised edition of *Splintered Light* is also enhanced by details taken from HoMe (as are other works, including the revised and expanded third edition of Tom Shippey's seminal *Road to Middle-earth*). Another book, *Tolkien's Legendarium: Essays on The History of Middle-earth*, edited by Flieger and linguist Carl Hostetter, brought together a series of unrelated essays that each address different aspects of HoMe. However, *Interrupted Music* is perhaps the first book-length attempt to look at Tolkien's legendarium as a whole.

Ironically, the material in *Interrupted Music* did not start out as a coherent whole. Many of the disparate parts of the book had appeared individually in "slightly different forms" in previous publications. Flieger notes in her preface that in rereading them she realized in hindsight "that they formed a coherent and revealing picture. Taken together they showed the motives, the methods and the narrative strategies that went into the making of Tolkien's ongoing, frequently interrupted yet stubbornly persistent creation, conventionally referred to as his mythology for England" (ix). It is therefore all the more remarkable that the book hangs together so well. There is little impression in reading through *Interrupted Music* that it is largely comprised of separate stand-alone essays cobbled together only later. In fact, it is perhaps the most accessible of Flieger's three books about Tolkien (I do not, of course, include in this tally the "extended editions" of Tolkien's works that she edited or co-edited, or the collection of essays that she edited). Like *Splintered Light* and *A Question of Time*, *Interrupted Music* is certainly full of insightful ideas that probe deeper beneath the surface than most Tolkien scholars have been able to achieve, but it is not as densely challenging (though also perhaps not quite as deeply insightful) as the other two books.

Flieger uses the creation story of the Ainulindalë, in which the music of the Ainur is interrupted and never ultimately completed, as a metaphor for Tolkien's creation of his "mythology". She notes in her introduction that "[t]he result has been that, over the course of time, the entire structure came to resemble real world mythologies in the cumulative process and temporal span of its composition, as well as in the scope of its subject matter" (xiv). And she concludes that "[t]he fact that Tolkien never completed his mythology is its flaw and its virtue, its greatest weakness that is also its greatest strength. The general outline (especially if we discount the never concluded time-travel stories) is secure, but the elements, as with most real-world mythologies are within their own parameters, dynamic and changeable" (143). In between this introduction and conclusion she probes the motives, methods and narrative strategies referred to above to paint a compelling portrait of how one remarkable and complex man created a body of work that (without conscious intention) so closely mimicked real-world mythologies.

While Tom Shippey is justly renowned for scholarship rooted in a philological background that closely paralleled Tolkien's own, I would argue that no one does more to open new avenues of thought in examining Tolkien's work than Verlyn Flieger. She is not afraid to look at things from challenging new angles (e.g. her provocative and controversial essay in *Tolkien Studies* 6, "Music and the Task: Fate and Free Will"). Flieger certainly does not attempt in *Interrupted Music* to say everything there is to say about Tolkien's mythology or the material in HoMe – far from it. But perhaps her greatest contribution with *Interrupted Music* is that it has helped broaden the scope of Tolkien scholarship by encouraging readers to look at the legendarium as a whole, rather than to focus only on its individual pieces. It is clear that Elizabeth Whittingham was inspired by *Interrupted Music* in writing her book *The Evolution of Tolkien's Mythology: A Study of the History of Middle-earth*, which looks at a similar subject matter, but from a different angle. I also certainly took inspiration from *Interrupted Music* in writing my own book, *Arda Reconstructed: The Creation of the Published Silmarillion*. I hope that others continue to follow this lead. =

Anthony Burdge, Jessica Burke, and Kristine Larsen, eds. *The Mythological Dimensions of Doctor Who*. Crawfordville, FL: Kitsune Books, 2010. Reviewed by Hugh H. Davis.

In “Tomb of the Cybermen,” from the classic series, the Doctor says, “I love to see the experts at work, don’t you?” Readers of *The Mythological Dimensions of Doctor Who* may well share the Doctor’s enthusiasm. Despite its longevity (the original series ran from 1963–89, with several spinoffs and continuations through 2005, when the revival series was born), the program has been paid limited scholarly attention, but this collection helps to redress that imbalance. In the more than forty-five years since its debut, *Doctor Who* has earned many fans and followers of its mythology who are now “the experts at work”. These scholars combine to produce a thoughtful and thought-provoking read, one which raises and answers many questions and also prompts a variety of further topics for discussion.

This volume tackles many fertile topics, both within the corpus of *Doctor Who* itself and connecting the series to other mythologies, both classic and contemporary. While the idea of discussing the renegade Time Lord in conjunction with *Batman* comics (Leslie McMurtry, “I Am Vengeance, I Am the Night, I Am ... the Doctor?”) seems at first glance an odd comparison (although McMurtry erases doubts by making this case clearly), it is in many ways the most conventional of the comparisons, given the general labeling of *Doctor Who* as a science-fiction series. However, this collection ably reminds readers/viewers of the limitations of narrow definitions, revealing the mythological aspects of a program which in many ways transcends a single genre. *The Mythological Dimensions of Doctor Who* intelligently frames the series as fantasy (with a framework that allows the incorporation of different genres), subtly establishing its importance as a conveyor and purveyor of myth.

Other chapters link the series to Campbellian myth and *The Lord of the Rings*, as in Anthony Burdge’s excellent “The Professor’s Lessons for the Doctor: The Doctor’s Sub-Creative Journey Toward Middle-earth,” a thoroughly inventive and insightful application of Tolkien to both the classic and revived series; the Promethean myth, Vincent O’Brien’s “The Doctor or the (Post) Modern Prometheus,” an illuminating review of mythic possibilities within pop cultural storytelling; and to the Norse legends of the Valkyries, Kristine Larsen and Jessica Burke’s respective parts of “Doctor Who and the Valkyrie Tradition,” two articulate and engaging essays which are both highly readable and educational, both about the mythological Valkyries – contrasting with and complementing popular Wagnerian notions of the warrior women – and how those elements have manifested in the new *Who*. These essays form the core of the collection, and they overcome an implicit challenge with any work of this type, for these essays must discuss the *Doctor Who* series in the context of the myths at hand while maintaining balance. Provide too little explanation and the reader can be left behind; offer too much exposition, and chapters bog down. These essays are excellent examples of balancing analysis with explanation, immensely readable and enjoyable while also inviting further thought and discussion.

Other chapters consider the program’s own ever-evolving and developing mythology. These look at the presentations of sacrifice (Melody Green’s “‘It Turns Out they Died for Nothing’: Doctor Who and the Idea of Sacrificial Death”), sentimentality (Matthew Hills’ thoughtful, if theory-heavy, “Mythology Makes You Feel Something”: The Russell T. Davies Era as Sentimental Journey”), and moral relativism (Melissa Beattie’s “Life During Wartime: An Analysis of Wartime Morality in Doctor Who”). The back cover suggests this collection occurs “At the Intersection of Canon & Myth.” This is the focal point of Neil Clarke’s “Holy Terror and Fallen Demigod: The Doctor as Myth,” which considers how the show links the Doctor to figures of myth, religion, and fairy tales, noting that the very conception of the character (and, in turn, the show) lends itself to myth. Also intelligently meeting at this intersection is C.B. Harvey’s excellent opening essay, “Canon, Myth, and Memory in *Doctor Who*,” which discusses the means through which the program’s mythology is determined through collective memory. This chapter also articulates the ever-prevalent (and, for many fans, ever-vexing) canon debate. With *Doctor Who*’s “transmedia” storytelling, questions of what “counts” as “official” *Who* are continually posed. As Harvey discusses, the very persistence of that question contributes a further mythological dimension.

The excited fan encountering this collection finds many immediate possibilities to consider, for *Doctor Who*, as these essays thoroughly demonstrate, is a program which builds—and builds upon—its own myths. These essays offer a mere starting point. This volume, even with its references to the original series, is primarily focused on the first four seasons of the revival. The fifth season, now airing, is built upon mythical allusions, with episodes developing narratives evocative of fairy tales, so the Steven Moffat era is ripe for mythological analysis. Further essay collections could also consider the earlier series and its spin-offs. But in this volume, the experts are at work, and readers/viewers should enjoy *The Mythological Dimensions of Doctor Who*. =

The Mythopoeic Society



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## CALL FOR MYTHCON REPORTS

Calling all *Mythprint* readers attending Mythcon 41 —

I would like to run a special issue for the July, 2010 *Mythprint*, focusing on conference reports from this year's Mythcon in Dallas, Texas. If you are attending Mythcon, please take a little time to write up a report of your experiences. All reports are welcome — from as little as 250 words to as many as 1,500. Tell us what you liked, what you didn't, who you reconnected with or who you met for the first time.

Write your reports while the event is still fresh in your memory, and send them to me at [mythprint@mythsoc.org](mailto:mythprint@mythsoc.org). I look forward to reading them!

