

mythPRINT



**Quarterly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society with Book
Reviews, Short Articles, Event Information, and More!**

VOL. 52 NO. 3

FALL 2015

WHOLE NO. 374

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NEWS AND FEATURES

Mythcon 473
 2015 Mythopoeic Award Winners3
 Mythcon 46 Reports4
 Mythcon 46 Miscellany6
 Namárië, Jef Murray8

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REVIEWS

Catherine Addison. *The Goblin Emperor*. Reviewed by Megan Abrahamson9
 Elizabeth Hand. *Wylding Hall*. Reviewed by Shiloh Carroll9
 Faith Harkey. *Genuine Sweet*. Reviewed by Jamie Schippers10
 Lewis Jenkins. *Diary of a Robot*. Reviewed by Susan Dorman10

ANNOUNCEMENTS11

Reviews, discussion group reports, news items, letters, art work, notes or short articles, and other submissions for *Mythprint* are always welcome. In return for printed pieces, contributors who are not already subscribers will receive an electronic copy of the issue in which the item appears. Contributors who are already subscribers will not receive an additional copy. Please contact the editor for details on format, or send materials to (and please note the address change):

Megan Abrahamson
Editor, *Mythprint*



The Mythopoeic Society also publishes two other magazines: *Mythlore* (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 through our web site (using PayPal or Discover card), or you may contact:

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Visit The Mythopoeic Society online at www.mythsoc.org.

Mythprint is the quarterly 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 discussion groups.

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Faces of
Mythology:
Ancient, Medieval
and Modern

The theme of the 47th annual Mythopoeic Conference is inspired by the 60th anniversary of C.S. Lewis's *Till We Have Faces* and *The Last Battle*; this year we focus on the mythology that has shaped and "given faces" to so many of our beloved characters, ranging from the myths of the Ancient Greeks to the legends of the Middle Ages and even to the modern mythology of the American Southwest.

Similarly, this mythological influence is also evident in the works of many of our favorite mythopoeic authors, from J.R.R. Tolkien to J.K. Rowling, from Ursula K. Le Guin to Alan Garner, and many, many more.

The committee is now proud to announce the location of Mythcon 47 at the Omni Colonnade Hotel in San Antonio, Texas. You can already register for the conference, so please do so before prices go up!

Both Room & Board prices and the Call For Papers will go out soon, so please check our website, mythcon.org, regularly. Looking forward to seeing you there!

**MYTHCON 47:
FACES OF MYTHOLOGY**

Omni Colonnade Hotel,
San Antonio, TX

August 5 - 8, 2016

**2015 MYTHO-
POEIC AWARD
WINNERS**

The Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature is given to the fantasy novel, multi-volume, or single-author story collection for adults published during 2014 that best exemplifies "the

spirit of the Inklings." Books are eligible for two years after publication if not selected as a finalist during the first year of eligibility. Books from a series are eligible if they

stand on their own; otherwise, the series becomes eligible the year its final volume appears. The Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature honors books for younger readers (from "Young Adults" to picture books for beginning readers), in the tradition of *The Hobbit* or *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Rules for eligibility are otherwise the same as for the Adult Literature award. The question of which award a borderline book is best suited for will be decided by consensus of the committees.

The Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies is given to books on Tolkien, Lewis, and/or Williams that make significant contributions to Inklings scholar-



Author Guest of Honor: Midori Snyder

Midori Snyder is the author of nine books for children and adults, published in English, French, Dutch, and Italian. She won the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award in Adult Literature for *The Innamorati*, a novel inspired by early Roman myth and the Italian "Commedia dell'Arte" tradition. Other novels include *The Flight of Michael McBride*, *Soulstring*, *The Oran Trilogy: New Moon*, *Sadar's Keep*, and *Beldan's Fire*, *Hannah's Garden*, and *Except the Queen*. Her short stories have appeared in numerous publications; her nonfiction has appeared in *Realms of Fantasy* and other magazines, and in essay collections including *Mirror*, *Mirror on the Wall: Women Writers Explore Their Favorite Fairy Tales*.

Scholar Guest of Honor: Andrew Lazo

Andrew Lazo co-edited *Mere Christians: Inspiring Stories of Encounters with C.S. Lewis* and has contributed articles and reviews on C.S. Lewis and other Inklings to several books and journals, including *Mythlore*. More recently, he transcribed and edited the landmark "Early Prose Joy," which has definitively corrected the accepted dating of Lewis's conversion to Theism. Lazo regularly speaks in Houston and around the country and has taught Lewis in both Oxford and Cambridge. He also teaches English and a course on Lewis at Houston Christian High School and is currently researching and writing a book on *Till We Have Faces*. This is his first appearance at Mythcon.

ship. For this award, books first published during the last three years (2012–2014) are eligible, including finalists for previous years. The Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies is given to scholarly books on other specific authors in the Inklings tradition, or to more general works on the genres of myth and fantasy. The period of eligibility is three years, as for the Inklings Studies award. Congratulations to this year's winners:



in? Check the web site, academia.edu, and see if the author has posted it there. That paper isn't there? Oh well, look at this other cool thing the author has written and uploaded. I've got to read that, too!

We all experience a slightly different convention, depending on our interests and experiences. Mine always include lots of listening to papers while knitting. Speaking of knitting – I met this year's winner of the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for adult literature, Sarah Avery, by noticing a woman I hadn't seen before, knitting during a paper. She was knitting lace in a fuzzy yarn using needles with tips I would have thought to be too bulky for lace knitting, so I struck up a conversation with her. It turned out she was the author of *Tales From Rugosa Coven*. I had read that twice while on the committee, so I wanted to talk to her about her book.

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature

Sarah Avery, *Tales from Rugosa Coven* (Dark Quest)

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature

Natalie Lloyd, *A Snicker of Magic* (Scholastic)



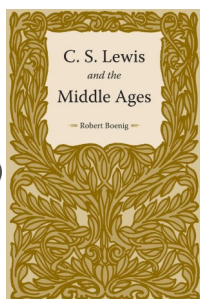
Author readings were a highlight of this year's Mythcon for me. Avery gave a fascinating reading as did another of the MFA nominees in attendance, Theodora Goss. Those who have read Goss know her to be an elegant writer. In person, she is equally elegant, poised and ethereal as a ballerina. She read seven of her poems from *Songs for Ophelia*, her nominated work, and two newer poems. And our author GOH, Jo Walton, gave poetry readings. She had her own session, which was lovely, and she alternated reading her Norse-themed poetry with sung performances of Norse music by her friends, Sassafrass (Ada Palmer and Lauren Schiller) in two additional sessions.

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies

Robert Boenig, *C.S. Lewis and the Middle Ages* (Kent State UP, 2012)

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies

Brian Attebery, *Stories About Stories: Fantasy and the Remaking of Myth* (Oxford UP, 2014).



Another highlight was Diana Glycer's presentation of her upcoming book, *Bandersnatch: C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and the Creative Collaboration of the Inklings*, which she does not want me to refer to as *The Dummy's Guide to the Inklings*. It's a more accessible version of her award-winning *The Company They Keep: C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien as Writers in Community*. Whereas *The Company They Keep* focuses on how writers can influence each other, *Bandersnatch* looks at that from a slightly different angle, examining how writers work in collaboration, and its target audience is people such as yours truly who are not scholars. *Bandersnatch* will also feature the breath-taking artwork of James A. Owen, with a *Bandersnatch* cleverly hidden in each full-page illustration for every chapter. (You can pre-order *Bandersnatch* in September. It is due out December 1.)

MYTHCON REPORTS

"Let Us Not Go to Camelot; It Is a Silly Place": Musings on Mythcon 46 by Berni Phillips Bratman

The great thing about Mythcons is that they masterfully mix the silly and the scholarly. The Arthurian theme encompassed papers with film clips of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and a serious reading of Tolkien's *The Fall of Arthur*. You could hear a paper on C. S. Lewis' *Lancelot* poem one day and the next see a presentation of graphic novels treating the Arthurian legends in different ways. And it's all entertaining and thought-provoking.

Another great thing about Mythcons is that you come home from them with new things to read and think about. Didn't get to a paper you were interested



John Rateliff's guest of honor speech ignited interest in Charles Williams. Some people were unaware of how twisted Williams was in his personal life and his interest in the Golden Dawn.

There was an art show this year with some impressive pottery: mugs with Celtic ornamentation, pie plates and other useful things for the kitchen with lovely fantasy decorations, yarn bowls (my personal favorites), etc. Bruce Leonard brought some of his impressive art collection for display. It was a chance to see things many of us loved and had not seen for years.

Two of the Davids, Bratman and Oberhelman, gave papers which largely focused on the *Monty Python Holy Grail* movie. (If David Emerson had as well, we would have had quite a run of Davids and Pythons.) Both of these papers were crowd-pleasers. Those of us who are old comic book—sorry, graphic novel readers, geeked out to Vicki Ronn’s presentation, “The Graphic King Arthur.” I think we all saw some things we hadn’t seen before. And many were surprised to hear that Prince Valiant is still going strong in the Sunday papers.

And no Mythcon report is complete without mention of the Golfimbul tournament. I know ye olde editor of *Mythprint* is too humble to blow her own kazoo, but she medaled in one of the Golfimbul events this year and almost medaled in a second. (There was a tie for the bronze medal in Golfimbawling; she lost the medal to the other contestant, Shannon Riojas.) What was truly amazing about this year’s Golfimbul event was that long-time Golfimbul champions such as Don Williams and Bruce Leonard were dethroned, replaced by next-generation Mythies such as Shannon Riojas (Lynne Maudlin’s son), and Chip Crane’s two young sons, Christopher and Elliot. It must be real humiliating to lose the distance medal to a kid in elementary school. I was just happy to not win the Linguist award for worst-performance in Golfimbul. This year, that medal went to Bonnie Callahan. It’s hard to bat an orc’s head with multiple cameras dangling from your neck. Oh, and speaking of the bat, this year featured a glorious new bat, courtesy of last year’s chair, Michael Drouot. It had gold lettering on it and everything. You’d have to ask a true linguist what the lettering said, because I have forgotten even which of Tolkien’s languages it was in, but it was pretty impressive.

Another medalist in Golfimbul was Kazia Estrada, the brave soul who will be chairing next year’s Mythcon in San Antonio, Texas. The theme will be “Faces of Mythology: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern” and the location will be in San Antonio’s historic Riverwalk neighborhood. It’s going to be amazing, so y’all should come. We’ll be there!

My First Mythcon by Alicia Fox-Lenz

When I signed up to present at my first attendance of a Mythcon, I wasn’t sure what to expect. There is a spectrum of conferences that range from purely academic to purely fandom-based, and I’ve found that until you actually attend a conference it’s really hard to pinpoint where a given one might be upon that spectrum. I am pleased to have found Mythcon a pleasant mix of the fun you might find at a fandom focused event and the intellectualism of an academic focused one. It’s a difficult balance to achieve—being academic but not dry, fun but with substance—but the resulting alchemy makes for a truly special experience.

Colorado Springs was an inspired choice for location.

Through the windows of the ballroom, the opening and closing ceremonies had the loveliest backdrop of mountains. It’s the sort of untouched natural terrain I’m sure would have gained the Inklings’ approval. The only downside to the spectacular view was that I found myself longing to be outside in it, making proper perusal of the art tables and booths difficult. This did not hinder the purchase of *Perilous and Fair*, which was wonderfully promoted by the “Reclaiming Tolkien’s Women for the 21st Century” panel.

I am primarily focused on Tolkien and thus stuck mostly to the Tolkien related talks. Admittedly, I wasn’t sure how well that would serve me given the overall theme of the Arthurian Mythos, but when I received the final schedule I was pleasantly surprised by the variety of presentations that were of interest to my incredibly narrow academic focus. “Reclaiming Tolkien’s Women” and “Consent and Historical Bias in the Silmarillion” were two that were of particular interest, given their more Cultural Studies focus. It was interesting to have the entire history of the Feminist study of Tolkien distilled into one panel discussion, and I was pleasantly surprised to see a pair of academics attacking rape culture through the events in *The Silmarillion*. My only wish would be that these presentations would have been sched-

uled closer together due to the complementary subject matter.

“One Song to Rule them All” was one of the most interesting presentations on the music in Tolkien I have ever attended. I’ve heard many talks with people discussing the position of music within the legendarium or discussing Howard Shore’s use of music within the Peter Jack-

son adaptations, or to a lesser extent the music within the Bakshi film. I had not previously seen a presentation about the centrality of music within Tolkien’s creation myth, coupled with the speaker’s orchestrated interpretation of his creation music and the underlying musical theory that informed it. It was an incredible melding of art and academia.

One of the observations I had made earlier in the conference was really brought home after my talk: most everyone was very supportive and friendly. There were a few comment sessions after presentations that got particularly heated, but afterwards I would see these same people continuing the dialogue in a friendly manner. Someone was always there with a kind word or suggestion on other ways to take the research or a book to read. Being in that sort of environment doesn’t completely dispel the pre-presentation nerves, but it does bring about a pleasant denouement from that anxiety.

I’m pleased to say that I made contacts, both friendly and professional, and I look forward to attending Mythcons in the future to build upon those relationships. One of the things I have been considering is starting a Mythcon knitting guild, as there is a large contingent of knitters here. I was so pleased at this! I have definitely had my knitting

Mythcon seems to have a number of little traditions, and these are what makes it more than a dry, academic conference or even a fun, fandom conference. Those traditions really set Mythcon apart as a community of people who are gathering around a mutual love of the Inklings and a desire to further explore their work.

frowned upon at other conferences. In some ways I feel as though I have found my conference people.

In what was likely the non-academic highlight of the conference, we did finally go *en masse* into the rugged natural terrain of a nearby dark lot to play Golfimbul. I love that not only is this a Mythcon sanctioned reenactment of a pseudo-historical reference in *The Hobbit*, but that it's a bit of tradition for the conference. It's mildly creepy and thoroughly frustrating to play, but an entertaining tradition nonetheless. I've just had to resign myself to the fact that I do not have what it takes to make a professional Golfimbul player, though I plan to continue to try my hand at it.

Mythcon seems to have a number of these little traditions, and these are what makes it more than a dry, academic conference or even a fun, fandom conference. Those traditions really set Mythcon apart as a community of people who are gathering around a mutual love of the Inklings and a desire to further explore their work. I'm glad that I had the opportunity to participate in that experience with this community.

Excerpts From Blog of Mythic Proportions. By C. F. Cooper

The only way to truly know Mythcon is to be there, forging one's own experiences defined by the literary insights in whichever presentations one chooses to attend, the friendships newly made or renewed during banter over a meal, the immersion in sheer esoteric silliness and unabashed fandom! What follows are excerpts from one attendee's three-day unexpected journey, the highs and the lows, when a bunch of fantasy aficionados landed in the wilds of Colorado...

DAY ONE — For one thing, the Pikes Peak region of Colorado in summertime is Rocky-Mountain gorgeous. For another, here at the Hotel Elegante in Colorado Springs for the 46th annual meeting of the Mythopoeic Society, Megan Abrahamson and Lynne Darga offered a great way to start, treating *The Silmarillion* as a historical document and highlighting how acknowledging the bias of the particular historian's perspective gives a more nuanced insight into the characters of Tolkien's legendarium. In particular, rape and other violations of others' will in the text are disguised or revealed, depending on the victor who tells the story...

Later, after a social hour of booze and cake (and more booze), the long day ended with Bardic Circle, a sort of exchange of song and storytelling around a conceptual campfire, strictly for those who choose to participate. We were treated to a clever original poem, excerpts from Sarah Avery's droll *Tales from a Rugosa Coven* (read by the author herself), and any number of great songs (my rendition of "Blue Moon," in honor of the one floating outside above us, definitely not among that greatness)...

DAY TWO—Hotel Elegante? Not so much. It officially cemented its hold on the title of Most Disappointing Mythcon Venue at lunch, which consisted primarily of cold cuts and Wonder bread. Let me say that again: Cold

cuts. Wonder bread. I resisted the temptation to compress its squishiness into doughy balls of dubious nutritional value, and instead slathered on enough Gulden's to choke it down.

Fortunately, Mythcon primarily promises food for thought, and it delivered today in a banquet of surprising diversity. Scholar guest of honor John Rateliff offered remarks at opening ceremonies on the autobiographical key to understanding Charles Williams' Arthurian cycle of poems. (Rateliff's remarkable research manages to be both thorough and even a bit racy.) The day of presentations that followed ran the gamut from Buffy the Vampire Slayer to *The Brief, Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*...

DAY THREE—'Nobody will ever use the word "tepid" about David Bratman. In his presentation "The Problem of Arthur" Bratman dissected different Arthurian tales with such ferocity I felt like a critical wuss. The '80s comic book *Camelot 3000* left Bratman "captivated by its sheer awfulness," while he deemed another rendition of the legend "supernatural thriller as supermarket checkout filler"... among other rhetorical grenades...it's safe to say from our laughter that no one in the room was bored...

'We'd soon witness another bit of brilliance, or rather, hear it. In her first-ever Mythcon presentation, assessing the Music of the Ainur from the opening of Tolkien's *Silmarillion*, Jasmine Edison posited that Melkor gets a bad rap; that musical innovation is about pushing boundaries, and that in smacking down Melkor for going too far with his experimental themes, Iluvatar was stifling innovation.

Edison goes on to ask, "How does the creation of Tolkien's universe sound?" And then, thrillingly, she offers an answer. Edison is a trained musicologist and a composer, so she proceeded to play a recording of an orchestral performance of her interpretation of the Music of the Ainur...

Read the complete account at C.F. Cooper's Blog of Mythic Proportions [\[REDACTED\]](#)



MYTHCON 46 MISCELLANY

Vicki Ronn Scores "Best of Show"

Clerihew Win at Mythcon 46.

By Michael Foster.

The Seventeenth Or Maybe Fourteenth Not Very Annual Mythcon Mary M. Stolzenbach Memorial Clerihew Contest held at Mythcon 46 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, was judged, as always, by They Who Must Not Be Named, who ranked clerihews on a 1-10 scale in three categories: Humor, Originality, and Clerihewness.

The top score was 28, one of two winners penned by Vicki Ronn of Wichita, Kansas.

She was awarded a "Best Of Show" jeroboam and "Before Inklings" first-place two-litre bottle of Chateau Le

Seigneur des Anneaux invisible champagne, both of which she generously shared with others in the Con suite after the Aug. 2 banquet where the contest results were announced.

The judges burned the ballots in one of the Rolling Stones Tolkien spoof “Sympathy For The Nazgul” guitars in order to keep that information secret forever.

The winners, published exactly as written, include:

“Best Of Show “ and “During Inklings”

*Charles Walker Stansby Williams
Seemed to like his S & Ms.
Who knew that an Inklings could say
He'd predate Fifty Shades of Grey.*
--Vicki Ronn

“Before Inklings”:

*The Lady of Sballot
Liked to weave an awful lot.
There's not much else for a girl to do
If the only option is to die on cue.*
--Vicki Ronn

“After Inklings”:

*Peter Jackson
Ignored the facts, son!
Tolkien never wrote of Rhosgobel rabbits pulling a sled.
Why diminish a masterpiece that we all have read?*
--Jeanell Pelsor of Albuquerque, New Mexico

Tremendous triple trifecta special honorable mention:

- (1) *Two cleribevs
To share the breaking news:
Diana Ghyer's great new book
And James Owen's drawings (well worth a look)!*
- (2) *Diana Ghyer
Has lit the Bandersnatch fire.
This book on creative collaboration
Is creating a mythic sensation!*
- (3) *James A. Owen
Has really got me goin'.
His drawings almost make me cry.
Inklings and monsters and hobbits—oh my!*
--Hannah Thomas of Fillmore, California

Honorable mention:

*John Rateliff disclosed
Williams' maidens unclothed
As Charles' earthly delight.
Naughty bits trump Christianity, alright!*
--Karla Powell of Big Rapids, Michigan

Let us conclude this account by referring to E. Clerihew Bentley's 1940 parody “Greedy Night,” which is the last story in the Dorothy L. Sayers' Lord Peter anthology of short Wimsey stories, purchased at the Mythcon 46 auction for \$13.

Bentley includes a Lord Peter clerihew:

*Lord Peter Wimsey
May look a little flimsy,
But he's simply sublime
When nosing out a crime.*

Selections From Sympathy For the Nazgul's Tolkien Inspired Music Performance.

Parody lyrics by David Emerson, Michael Foster, and Marion VanLoo. Performed at Mythcon 46 with David VanLoo and Jo Foster.

“Black Rider” (“Brown Sugar”)

Hobbits traipse through Farmer Maggot's field;
thought that a shortcut would be their shield.
Tried to avoid bein' seen in the light
an' got to Crickhollow just around midnight.

Black Rider, how come you chasin' me?
Black Rider, go 'way and leave us be!

Met old Bombadil who saved their hides,
fed them well and set them on new rides.
Slogged through the Marsh where the midges bite.
They got to Bree-town just around midnight.

Black Rider, how come you chasin' me?
Black Rider, go 'way and leave us be!

Took up with Strider and went on their way;
Riders gettin' closer each and ev'ry day.
Ringwraith had a knife with an evil bite
Up on Weathertop just around midnight.

Black Rider, how come you chasin' me?
Black Rider, my ring you'll never see!

I said yeah, yeah, yeah, woo! How come you...how come
you chasin' me?
Yeah, yeah, yeah, woo! My ring you'll never see! Yeah, yeah,
yeah, woo!

“Take It Back” (“Paint It Black”)

I've got a magic ring; they want it taken back.
They think it's bad for me and say it must go back,
back to the mountain where 'twas forged so long ago.
Now they have to find someone to take the thing and go.

There's been a Council and the plan is: take it back.
They talked for hours and their brains they had to wrack.
Who to send out with the Ring when it gets sent away?
Mighty Elven armies you don't get just every day.

Gandalf the Grey will go, to stand against the black.
Pippin almost got sent home tied up in a sack.
I've said that I would go, though I don't know the way.
“Nice pickle we've landed in,” was all Sam had to say.

Day at December's end was fading into black.
The Company was off, each shouldering a pack.
Gandalf, their leader, went with Strider, at the fore.
Who knew if they would see their far homes anymore?

Hmm, hmm, hmm...

I wanna get it taken, taken back!
Back to the Mountain, black as coal!

I wanna see the Ring put into the fire!
I wanna get it taken, taken, taken... taken back! Yeah!

“Frodo’s Little Helper” (“Mother’s Little Helper”)

ALL: What a drag it is getting lost...

FRODO: Well, we tried to make our way
through the Emyrn Muil today.
Sam said we were in a fix, and no mistake.
Fest’ring marshes lay below, and there was no way to go.
Stuck here what seems like forever,
and we need some kind of helper.

All my choices have proved ill; got to get down off this hill!

SAM: We’re so turned-around today; we just cannot find a way.
Yes, we need someone right now to show us where.
And as we were losing hope, we caught Smeagol with a rope.
He can find us all some shelter; he’ll be Frodo’s little helper.
He can guide us on our way; get us through another day.

GOLLUM (and chorus): Some lembas? Please, no more of
these!

You got some fish? They’re quite a dish!

Wish he’d give me back my Precious.

GOLLUM: Nasty cru-el hobbits say that Smeagol must show
the way

To the land where always burns the
Lidless Eye.

But there’s a secret place we know;
we’ll show them just where to go!
They’ll come running helter-skelter
after Frodo’s little helper.

We’ll guide hobbits through the
night, and we’ll maximize their
plight!

CHORUS: Oh, Master, please...
just follow me.

I’ll lead you there... to Shelob’s
lair. And I’ll get back my Precious!

“Nineteenth Nervous Movie-Going Experi- ence” (“Nineteenth Nervous Breakdown”)

In two thousand one you had
some fun

With that film of Tolkien’s book
After all these years you have
some fears
’Bout the liberties that he took

Now you might think, with a
very large drink

And popcorn in your hand
That you’re ready now to find
out how

Much Jackson you can stand

So go inside.....

& Sit down.....

Here it comes, here it comes

Here it comes, here it comes

Here comes your nineteenth Hobbit sequel!

Here comes your nineteenth Hobbit sequel!

Masquerade Winners

Hannah Thomas: “Rosie Cotton”

The Rosiest Hobbit Award

Steve Gaddis: “Ufthak the Orc from Cirith Ungol”

The Middle-earth Wide Web Award

Rebecca McCurdy: “Karigan G’dadhean, from the
Green Rider series”

Most Ecologically Friendly Constestant

Cameron Kozbarek: “Gandalf the Grey”

Best Beard Presentation

Marion VanLoo: “Ioreth of Gondor”

Best Tolkien Presentation

Josiah Riojas: “King Arthur”

Best Armor Award

Courtney Riojas: “Morgana”

The Watery Tart Award

Terry Adams: “Valkerie”

Best Musical Presentation

Rosa Brassart: “A Hobbit”

Furriest Feet Award

Jasmine Edison: “Sarella

Sand/Alleras the

Sphinx”

Least Bloody Game of

Thrones Character Award

Amy Nyman “Julian of Nor
wich”

The All Shall Be Well

Award; also The Hazelhuttiest

Cordan Estrada “Baby

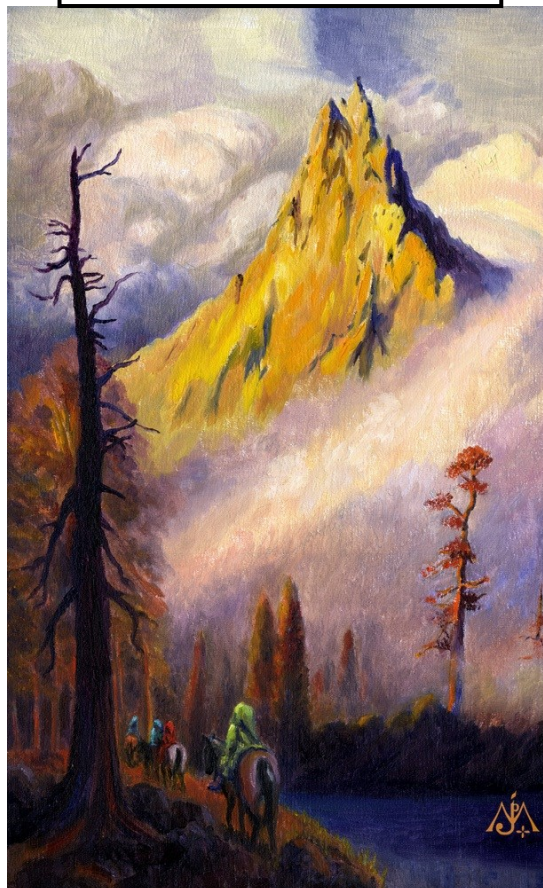
Smaug”

Best Dragon Attack Award

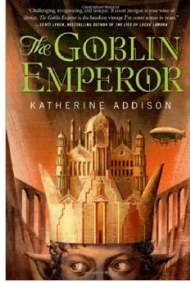
Namárië, Jef Murray

On August 3rd, the last day of Mythcon 46, we received the sad news of the passing of Jef Murray, whose art was regularly featured in *Mythprint*. Jef’s work appeared on the cover of my first *Mythprint* as editor and, poignantly, also on our most recent issue, #373. From Jef’s [artist biography page](#), “I’ve sketched and painted natural and mythological wildlife and landscapes since my childhood

Jef MURRAY, “Lonely Mountain”



years in the north Georgia hills. I suspect I'm best known for my illustrations from Inklings-themed publications... I love the writings of G. K. Chesterton, and a good deal of my work explores the connection between myth/fairy tales and Christian thought." Jef was an engineer for many years before pursuing his life's real calling, which was artwork, especially illustrating the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, to whom Jef credited his conversion to Catholicism. Jef became an internationally known artist with works appearing in *Amon Hen*, *Malborn*, *Silver Leaves* and the *St. Austin Review*. You can read his [obituary](#) here, and enjoy a reprint of one of my favorite pieces of his, "Lonely Mountain," on page eight. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.

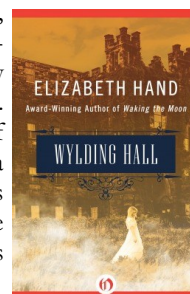


history is far-reaching, as the imperial reign is one steeped in traditions expounded upon at length. Maia's reign seeks to balance inequalities in gender, race, and class: racial tensions between white-skinned Elves and black-skinned Goblins are soothed by the biracial emperor, the problem of women as chattel only useful for childbearing is confronted, the lower classes are granted consideration and dignity unknown to them under previous rulers, and even the tragedy of homophobia is made apparent.

The struggle—though not quite a downside—to the text are the names. It felt rather like I was jumping into *The Silmarillion* for the first time, with the added challenge of titles: various ranks of lords, courtiers, clergy, and working-class characters are given Elf or Goblin addresses that make the names hard to follow. There is an index of names at the back, but it was not always helpful: in some sense we are like Maia, thrown into this complex world and expected to follow what is going on. There is challenge there, but I mostly considered it a fun challenge. Beyond that, the language itself is beautiful: the language of the court uses the formal "we" instead of "I," and only in those very intimate moments do characters call each other "thee" instead of "you." The names of people and places are often visually long to read (like Tolkien, but without the benefit of familiarity) and it helped to sound them out. My sister enjoyed listening to the audiobook, so I can safely recommend that, too.

Maia is told from the beginning that the emperor can have no friends, but as he struggles to make sense of his imperial duties, juggling the needs and wants of his extended kin, his court, his betrothal to a woman he has never met, and his close personal staff, the journey is, ultimately, one of friendship. Because the court itself is stiff and formal, and so much of the story revolves around these formal interactions, the book's moments of tenderness are enormously emotional and poignant. Maia's kindness shocks his court just as much as he is in turn shocked when kindness is shown to him. These moments where Maia and his supporting cast simply do the right thing—or even just the nice thing—make the book sweet as well as powerful.

Elizabeth Hand. *Wylding Hall*. Open Road Media, 2015. 94pp. \$4.99. Reviewed by Shiloh Carroll



During the British Folk revival of the 1970s, the band Windhollow Faire travels to remote Wylding Hall, an ancient, crumbling manor house, to write their second album. But there's something wrong with Wylding Hall, and the wrongness culminates in the disappearance of the lead singer and an odd girl who appears out of nowhere. Neither of them are ever seen again.

REVIEWS

Katherine Addison. *The Goblin Emperor*. TOR Books, 2014. 448pp. \$8.99. Reviewed by Megan Abrahamson.

Set in a high fantasy steampunk world—but without a great deal of either high fantasy or steampunk—Maia, the biracial son of an Elf emperor and a Goblin mother ascends to the throne after an "accident" kills his father and three older brothers. The problem is, since his mother's death, Maia has been relegated away from court and there neglected, abused, and undereducated. But law dictates he is emperor, anyway, and while he is simply in the process of learning how to be that, Maia not only discovers his father and brothers were in fact murdered, but also attempted coups d'état on his own reign continue to keep our protagonist busy.

The demands of court intrigue are at first far beyond our young hero—as is the dangerous discovery of his supreme power. Maia's innocence (even ignorance) functions both as a device to highlight Addison's excellent worldbuilding, since the reader can be educated along with the protagonist, and also to make him into a thoroughly likeable character. His drive to be a good person and a good emperor, his desire for companionship, and his desperation to comprehend the world around him are very relatable. Even his flaws, which he recognizes in himself just as we recognize them, are only human.

Although there is little true action in the book, I found it surprisingly difficult to put down. Characters, setting, background, and conflicts are richly painted and sometimes tantalizingly obscured. The religion in this world (and its only kind of "magic") is unfashionable in Maia's court, but a source of great solace to him because he was raised in it by his mother (whose remembrance dictates many of our hero's actions). The world's

Years later, the remaining members of Windhollow Faire, along with their manager, a photographer, a music journalist, and a psychic, tell their story to a documentarian, explaining in their own words their experiences with the house, the girl, and Julian's disappearance.

This short novel reads like a *VH1's Behind the Music* episode, with each remaining band member providing his or her own perspective and memories about the time they spent at Wylding Hall, each interview snippet feeding from the last and into the next to create a more-or-less continuous narrative. That narrative is undeniably gothic in nature, its atmosphere similar to *The Turn of the Screw* or anything by Poe; the house is a maze that changes as visitors move through it, with impossible interior architecture. Eerie noises emit from nowhere and each band member hears them differently. One room is full of tiny dead birds whose beaks have been sliced off. Hand has a distinct talent for building scenes and vignettes that stick in your head long after you've finished the book.

The true horror appears toward the end of the novel, though she's hinted at throughout. The girl who whisks Julian away is decidedly not human, though what she is—ghost, demon, faerie—Hand leaves up to the reader to decide. (It is entirely possible, even likely, that for someone with more history with the Gothic and the various poets mentioned in *Wylding Hall* than I, her identity will be obvious.)

Wylding Hall has just enough of a modern horror sensibility to be approachable to readers who are not familiar with the Gothic, while containing so much Gothic to be a treat to those who enjoy Poe, Bradstreet, Wilde, or James.

Faith Harkey. *Genuine Sweet*, 2015. 288 pp. \$6.99. Reviewed by Jamie Schippers.

Genuine Sweet just happens to be one of those genuinely sweet books that rarely comes around. Genuine Sweet, a small-town girl in Georgia, is able to grant the wishes of everyone in her community. The only catch; she cannot grant her own wishes to help her family.

This folksy tale is set in the impoverished town of Sass, Georgia. It is a normal backwoods town except that "wish fetchers" reside in it. Gen soon discovers that she comes from a long line of wish fetchers which includes her deceased mother. Gen's Grandmother, who primarily raises her, helps her learn what it means to be a wish fetcher. Gen continually struggles with her father who is unemployed and often drunk.

Gen realizes that by baking wish biscuits, she can spread her wish making abilities far and wide. She even attempts to end world hunger. Little does she know a calamity she cannot fix by wish-



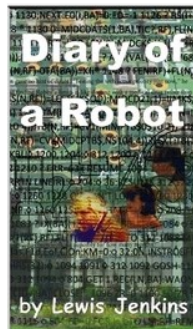
es shakes up both her life and her beliefs. With the help of friends, Gen is able discover that quick fixes are not always what they appear to be, and that our lives are shaped and built on love and our own strengths. *Genuine Sweet* is a quick read and a truly heart-warming tale that will leave you feeling uplifted and motivated to be as kind and generous as Gen.

Lewis Jenkins. *Diary of a Robot*. 2015. 446 pp. \$19.46. Reviewed by Susan Dorman.

The oddest thing about Lewis Jenkins' first novel, *Diary of a Robot*, is the robot's prime directive. That the "Doc," its inventor, succeeds in his artificially intelligent creation is shown in Jenkins' premise—or conceit, if you will—that the AI is the one telling us its own story. But, I have not yet revealed *the weird*—the robot's prime directive. In the robot's diary are respectful nods to *I, Robot*, Isaac Asimov's work, and touches of evident love for Patrick McGooohan's *The Prisoner*. You'll find history, science fiction, and mystery in this story.

Dr. Little's invention, the TM 2000—Robey (pronounced Row-bee)—is on its way to becoming a self-directed systems, software, and hardware *testing machine*. The "Doc" does not invent without the aid of his little company (ILC—The Little Company). In much of Jenkins' book Robey displays the learning process of an artificial intelligence. But the book does so much more, as regards the imaginative reading experience. What we want while reading science fiction is hardware, suspense, defined characters, situation, and the "what if" or big idea. This novel has that, and more—corporate espionage, bad news, abduction, impersonation, intimations of murder, and chess problems. But the real *move* is in TM 2000's process of testing, of learning, *What's a human being?* Many questions are asked (by The Machine) and, as we watch it mature toward its full intellectual stature, many more possible answers are given (also by The Machine).

Have you ever heard of a computer program designed to test for *truth*? And why would financial backers invest in a testing machine with such a directive? Although to "do no harm" is an important directive suggested by Asimov, Dr. Maynard Little's team have encoded those specs and others—but secondarily. Robey wants to determine the thoughts and intentions of the human heart. Its aim is incisive: Precision in reading the human intention in order to act toward its goal of perceiving the truth about each person. Intelligently, Robey *intends* to achieve it. Being designed specifically for the task, nothing can stop it but a command to ... stop?... What if the command to stop is not based on truth —? Do you like exposition and introspection? This is the SF for you. If you read to escape, or for respite from, introspection, this book may not be for you. Yet, it's a fun and funny novel. The frequent SF take on AI, e.g. Clarke's HAL, is often sinister, but this robot is different in being innocently tedious, or irritating, boring, obnoxious, office-disrupting; some kind of pain, depending on



who is charging/spending time developing (in concert with Robey) its core directive. The reader has fun watching it “test” (read bedevil) the crew at TLC. However, we see that Robey is a servant and understands that it is a servant. Everyone is either Mr. or Ms., e.g. Mr. Guy and Ms. Marie. Robey is also, of course, the ultimate testing machine. This is, after all, how it makes money for The Little Company. There’s an abundance of humor in this book, the kind I like. I won’t give examples because the humor is always contextual. The kind that punctuates (or punctures) the silence of reading with small explosions of laughter.

A big theme, a BIG IDEA, in Robey’s story is (metaphorically) the increasing influence of surveillance in our lives. C.S. Lewis has said about our human condition that the more we take precautions to be secure, the less secure we feel. But this Big Idea is also not present at first in Jenkins’ story of Robey. Instead, as intelligent software and machines increase at TLC, themes of security and surveillance accelerate the *Diary’s* narrative force, while underscoring C.S. Lewis’ observation about our condition.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call For *The Hobbit* Essays

Seeking professional or independent scholars to produce original essays on *The Hobbit* for a volume under contract with Grey House Publishing. Contributions should be around 5000 words long and must be completed by April 1, 2016. For guidelines and proposals, please contact the editor, Stephen W. Potts, [redacted] or the Department of Literature (MC 0410), University of California-San Diego, [redacted]

13th Annual C.S. Lewis Festival: C.S. Lewis and War, September 22 - November 4.

Before penning the battle between Aslan and the White Witch, C. S. Lewis was a young soldier in WWI — or, as it was known at the time, the Great War. One hundred years after the beginning of this conflict, the



Jian Guo © 2015

C. S. Lewis Festival welcomes speakers from diverse perspectives to discuss C. S. Lewis and War.

Speakers include Joseph Loconte and Tony Campolo. Download the [flyer here](#) or visit their website for more information:

Forthcoming translation of Charles Nodier’s fantasy stories by Ruth Berman. 296 pp. \$22.95.

Announced as forthcoming on the [Black Coat Press website](#) is

Ruth Berman’s translation of fantasy stories by Charles Nodier, one of

the leaders of French Romanticism. The stories included, besides titular *Trilby* and *The Crumb Fairy* are “Bean-Treasure and Peaseblossom,” “The Dream of Gold,” “Goodman Genie,” “Love and the Grimoire,” “The Man and the Ant,” and “Smarra, or the Demons of the Night.” “The Dream of Gold” previously appeared in *Tales of the Unanticipated*; the others have not appeared before.

Take a journey through the landscapes of Middle-earth with the Beyond Bree Calendar for 2016!

Come delight to the works of your favorite artists such as Anke Eissmann, Tim Kirk, Octo Kwan, Ruth Lacon, Jef Murray, Gordon Palmer, Ted Nasmith, and Colin Williams. Thrill as we introduce new artists Joe Gilronan and Glenn Hernandez. And help us welcome our special guest artist Jian Guo (the above work will be July’s art), cover illustrator of Wen Jing Publishing’s Chinese language edition of *The Lord of the Rings*, as we travel through the landscapes of JRR Tolkien’s Middle-earth! For more information on purchasing the calendar, please e-mail: [redacted]

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MYTHCON 47

Faces of Mythology: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern



Omni Colonnade Hotel
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Author Guest of Honor:

Didori Snyder

Scholar Guest of Honor:

Andrew Lazo

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Room & Board and
Call For Papers coming soon.