

# MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 39 No. 1

January 2002

Whole No. 238



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## Illustrations

Cover: "The One Ring" (New Line Cinema © 2001)

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See inside back cover

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DEADLINES for receiving material for each issue of *Mythprint* are the 1st of the preceding month (eg, February 1st for the March issue).

# *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*

## Principal Cast

Frodo Baggins . . . . .	Elijah Wood	Legolas . . . . .	Orlando Bloom
Gandalf . . . . .	Ian McKellen	Saruman . . . . .	Christopher Lee
Arwen . . . . .	Liv Tyler	Elrond . . . . .	Hugo Weaving
Aragorn . . . . .	Viggo Mortensen	Boromir . . . . .	Sean Bean
Sam . . . . .	Sean Astin	Bilbo Baggins . . . . .	Ian Holm
Galadriel . . . . .	Cate Blanchett	Gollum/Sméagol . . . . .	Andy Serkis
Gimli . . . . .	John Rhys-Davies	Celeborn . . . . .	Marton Csokas
Pippin . . . . .	Billy Boyd	Haldir . . . . .	Craig Parker
Merry . . . . .	Dominic Monaghan	Lurtz . . . . .	Lawrence Makoare

## Principal Filmmakers

A New Line Cinema release of a Wingnut Films production.

Peter Jackson, Director/Writer/Producer

Barrie M. Osborne, Producer

Tim Sanders, Producer

Fran Walsh, Writer/Coproducer

Philippa Boyens, Writer

Mark Ordesky, Executive Producer

Bob and Harvey Weinstein, Executive Producers

Rick Porras, Associate Producer

Richard Taylor, Creature/Miniature/Armor/  
Special Makeup Effects Supervisor

Grant Major, Production Supervisor

Ngila Dickson, Costume Designer

Richard Taylor, Costume Designer

Howard Shore, Composer

Jamie Selkirk, Post-Production Supervisor

John Gilbert, Editor

Michael J. Horton, Editor

Jim Rygiel, Visual Effects Supervisor

Alan Lee, Conceptual Artist/Set Decorator

John Howe, Conceptual Artist

Dan Hennah, Supervising Art Director

Peter Owen, Makeup and Hair Design

Peter King, Makeup and Hair Design

Digital Visual Effects: WETA Digital

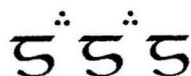
Casting: John Hubbard, Amy MacLean

(U.K.), Victoria Burrows (U.S.), Liz Mullane  
(New Zealand), Ann Robinson (Australia)

Based on the book by J.R.R. Tolkien

Running time . . . . . 179 Minutes

Classification . . . . . PG-13



## Film Reviews and Comments

The reader of Tolkien need only see Peter Jackson's *The Fellowship of the Ring* once to realize the nearly impossible task he and co-screenwriters Fran Walsh and Philippa Boyens set for themselves in adapting it into a three hour film. Even so, the viewer must marvel at how much story actually gets squeezed into those three hours. The movie does not capture the length and breadth of Middle-earth, to be sure, but Jackson still manages an agreeable amount of atmosphere.

When adapting very long books, a screenwriter sometimes has to do the opposite of what the author has done in the novel in order make the film story understandable and accessible to the widest audience (i.e., the non-Tolkien reader). Jackson, Walsh and Boyens give Glorfindel's role over to Arwen out of necessity. Otherwise, sheer time constraints would have prevented introducing her at all, seeing as how the Rivendell banquet and the Hall of Fire scenes are absent.

Saruman's subtle treachery is abandoned because there is inadequate time to explore it. Making him an open ally of Sauron solves the problem of externalizing evil on the screen. The threat of Sauron needs to ramp up quickly into something hard on the heels of the Company, and "Movie Saruman" serves this purpose.

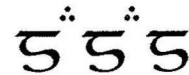
Some changes are due to editing, not scripting. From existing trailers, it is clear that there is a lot more Lórien footage which did not make it into the final cut. Had that footage survived into the theatrical release (expect it in the director's cut on DVD), the numerous battles would not feel like they are one on top of the other. Several battles should have been shortened to expand events in Rivendell and, more importantly, in Lórien, which, as a sequence, suffers the most from too little screen time.

So, is it Tolkien? No. But it is exactly what

Peter Jackson said it would be: *his* take on *The Lord of the Rings*. It is an impression of Tolkien; a respectable paraphrase. The film's most important function may well be that it encourages people to read the real thing.

Even though it's not Tolkien, one needs to ask: Is it wrought with skill, detail and affection? Is it earnest? Sincere? Compelling? Is it an exciting three hours at the movies? You bet your *lembas* it is!

*Paula DiSante*



Here's my review. There's so much more I could say, because parts of it were (in spite of my husband the ultra-purist grumbling beside me) heartbreakingly good. But ... it could have been so much better.

I never claimed to be a purist. I expected dropped scenes and cut characters. But I didn't expect to be bitterly disappointed by the clumsy way the scriptwriters robbed many key scenes of their importance.

For example, replacing Glorfindel with Arwen was risky but could have worked if handled with skill. However, having her take over Aragorn's healing of Frodo diminishes a later clue to his right to be king, and her flight across the Ford was one of several scenes where Frodo's physical courage was downplayed, giving a subtly false impression that flattens his character arc.

Visually, the film was stunning. Most of the actors did excellent jobs; McKellen and Wood were outstanding. The expanded Hobbiton scenes worked beautifully, and exposition from *The Hobbit* and Elrond's Council was cleverly worked into the dialogue. But the scenes of Saruman breeding his orcs were a waste of time that would have been better spent by retaining



several of the important scenes cut from Lothlórien. The battle between Saruman and Gandalf was painfully embarrassing to watch.

There is much in this movie that is breathtakingly good; if nothing else, it will lead many new readers to the books. But those who love the books and have read them closely may wonder if Peter Jackson and his co-writers read the same text, or Tolkien's own comments on an earlier screenwriter's efforts. It is all too obvious that snipping the wrong thread of Tolkien's skillfully interlaced plot unravels far too much of the story.

*Janet Brennan Croft*



The movie: Short review: It was good, I was disappointed. It was fast. It was too short. I'll have to see it again.

At times it generated the appropriate emotion with regard to Tolkien's story and was very moving. Some of the Galadriel bits were a little too weird. So was Bilbo's transformation when looking at the ring.

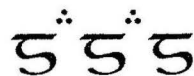
I understand condensation for space and pace, but Jackson's added bits often miss the Tolkien mark. The troll chasing Frodo around the pillar and the Riders & Arwen weaving in and out and around the pines... too much. Usually Jackson did not waste any frames but these chase scenes are almost silly.

However, his interpolated bits often work well.... Gandalf hitting the ceilings at Bag End. Generally I liked the acting... Strider, Gandalf, Frodo & Sam, most all the cast really. Don't know Elvish well enough to judge how they did on the Elvish language bits. Many little details were out of the book and very satisfying.

The best part is the movies will help open the market for "other hands"... maybe even Thomas

Peterson's *The Tale of the Rings of Power* can get produced.

*Bruce Leonard*



I saw two films at once. The visuals were true to Tolkien, splendid and dazzling. The plot and script were more variable. A few parts worked, many others didn't. Most of the really egregious horrors had been revealed in the trailers, and the scenes zipped by so quickly there wasn't time to linger on anything that didn't fit.

But the tone and style bore almost no relationship to the book I have read and loved. The film is about war tactics: the novel is about moral issues that transcend the details of the war. The film dwells intensely on images of evil: the novel focuses lovingly on the Elves and Hobbits, giving attention to the beautiful things, and the homely pleasures, that will be lost should the Ring be taken. The film's battle scenes go on and on, while the stays in Rivendell and Lórien are scanted: the novel describes the battles briefly and in a detached style, leaving whole chapters for the beauties of the Elven lands.

Some will say, this is Peter Jackson's vision, not Tolkien's. You can say that again. The best comment is Tolkien's own, in his 1958 letter critiquing a scenario. Jackson's film avoids many of these flaws, to his credit. But Tolkien makes two larger criticisms which apply perfectly here.

Tolkien writes, "One of [the writer's] chief faults is his tendency to anticipate scenes or devices used later, thereby flattening the tale out. ... He has cut the parts of the story upon which its characteristic and peculiar tone principally depends, showing a preference for fights."

None of this makes it bad as film. Compared with most recent blockbusters it was quite enjoy-

able. But it's a pseudo-historical medieval war movie, like *Braveheart* (also an enjoyable film that ludicrously trashed its sources). It smells of orcs, but not of elves.

*David Bratman*



In general, I liked the look of the film, from the character design to the scenery. The way they shrunk the hobbits and dwarves simply blew my mind. I thought the actors for the most part did excellent jobs, and pronunciation was quite good, too. The number of mispronunciations that made me cringe can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Nearly all of my complaints stem from the script's deviations from the book. I understand the need for compressing and modifying the story for dramatic effect, but the story was changed considerably more than I felt was justified. Arwen Warrior Princess is the obvious example, though I knew about that well in advance. Why did Saruman have to be responsible for the storm on Caradhras? Why was Narsil a museum piece in Rivendell rather than at Aragorn's side? Why did Frodo have to solve the riddle of the Moria-gate? The Cheap Laughs, however, were what irritated me the most. Gimli's "No one tosses a dwarf!" and almost every scene featuring Merry and Pippin made me squirm uncomfortably. Don't get me wrong: I can enjoy cheap laughs (as anyone who knows me well can attest), but not in my beloved Tolkien, thank you very much!

*Arden Smith*



As a long-time Tolkien enthusiast, I anticipated the movie with a mixture of excitement and trepidation. Overall, I am happy to say, I enjoyed the movie and don't think it will forever change or lessen my enjoyment of the books.

Yes, there were many things that may have purists screaming, "But that wasn't in the book!" I wasn't terribly bothered by most of the changes because I think things such as the somewhat altered roles for Arwen and Saruman, for example, made sense dramatically in the movie. I did miss a few things that were left out, though. The biggest change I would have recommended would be to cut down the battle scenes a bit (do we really need to see Gandalf and Saruman smack each other around over and over again?) and spend more time on character development.

The relationships between most of the characters were very believable, but I was disappointed we don't really see much of Legolas and Gimli as individuals at all, or get a sense of their developing friendship. I would have loved to see Gimli's transformation upon meeting Galadriel and the Fellowship receiving the gifts in Lothlórien. Rivendell was beautiful, but I wish we could have seen more of it. I would have gladly sacrificed a minute or two from some of the battles to have these parts included.

The cinematography was top-notch and the actors performed well, particularly Ian McKellen as Gandalf. Most of the special effects came off splendidly.

*Ellen Denham*



It was almost like Christmas came six days early. For a week or so before the film's premiere, I found myself waking like I was eight and it was Dec. 25. Of course, much experience with many

Christmasses had prepared me: I knew there would be a few expected delights, and some unexpected ones. I knew there would be pleasant surprises and quiet disappointments. I knew that there would be, in Dylan Thomas's sagacious classification, "useful presents and useless presents."

The Far Westfarthing smial, along with assorted spice, daughters, sons-in-law; nephews, and friends, had pledged over pizza that we would attend opening night together, and so it was a crew of over a dozen that trooped in to commandeer two rows midway back in the Peoria multiplex of choice that night. With us was a journalistic friend, Terry Bibo, columnist for the *Peoria Journal Star*, who tagged along to both see for herself and get our group's reaction. Bibo is an all-too-rare journalist who had actually read *The Lord of the Rings*. Indeed, she'd read it five times, most recently this summer. She was a participant in, as well as chronicler of, our mixed-message eulogy.

Afterwards, we adjourned to the Peoria Pizza Works, where the waitress re-lit the gas log, trundled out many pizzas, and very kindly served Bass Ale in the occasional Burger King Aragorn mug [they look great in a firelit pub].

Those who'd not read the book, or read it long ago, seemed to be more favorably impressed than the smialing faces. My daughter noted that the name/ID shift from Strider to Aragorn was pretty swift off the mark. It helped to know who was who beforehand, as names were used cursorily.

Pursuant to the idea that Satan has most of the good lines in *Paradise Lost* was the notion that the intense chase and combat scenes quite stole the show. The quiet moments of rest and reflection—with Gildor and the High Elves, at Crickhollow, Maggott's farm, *chez* Bombadil, and in Bree, were quite drowned out in the clamor of hoofbeats and swordclash. Of course, I pointed out that a group of good friends sitting around chatting merrily in a pub, whether pizze-

ria or Bird & Baby, is hardly hot cinema.

The break-dancing Gandalf vs. Saruman combat scenes were a bit too much, some felt.

Some thought Elijah Wood looked like Michelangelo's David; another suggested the most recent Michael Jackson. Elrond's pessimism for the line of Númenor seemed more Denethorian than High Elvish, and a bit of a rebuke to his daughter's betrothed as well.

It was agreed that perhaps the biggest objection to the elevation of Arwen was the fact that she, not Frodo, faces down the Nazgûl at the Ford. That moment of Frodo's defiance was a crucial and uncanonical, as well as unnecessary change. Another was the death of Boromir: compare the dignity, the absolution, and the mystery—do the Orcs have all the hobbits or not?—was lost by insertion of Legolas, Gimli, and Aragorn in the film-ending battle.

Pizza-faced sneers were directed at the dwarf-tossing and 'Let's hunt some orc!' lines.

We agreed we'd see it again, and as of the Professor's birthday 2002, some of our group has, though not this writer. The long list of howlers in the film, now all over the Web, included one I noted—kind of a short railing at Rivendell for clumsy Men if not hobbits—and dismay that Lórien was not as described.

We missed the songs, especially 'Hey diddle diddle' at Bree. Seeing the Alastair Sim version of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* in later days renewed the wish that the screenwriters had hewed closer to Tolkien's words, especially at the Ford and at Boromir's death.

The verdict: like most Christmasses, pleasant but not perfect. But if it brings new readers to Tolkien, or leads to the act of re-reading (as it has with my wife Jo), then Jackson & Co. have given all of us who admire Tolkien a wonderful gift indeed.

*Mike Foster*

# Activity Calendar

Matthew Winslow, Discussion Group Secretary

[REDACTED]

## Prospective Groups

### CALIFORNIA

*San Diego: LOTHLÓRIEN*

Linda Sundstrom, [REDACTED]

### CONNECTICUT

*Southington: FANTASTIC WORLDS*

Bill Pierce, E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

### FLORIDA

*Tampa Bay: HOBBITON*

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]

*North Central Florida: ERYN GALEN*

B.L. McCauley, NFCC English Dept., Madison, FL.

### GEORGIA

*Atlanta area: CENTRAL ATLANTIS*

Irv Koch, [REDACTED]

### ILLINOIS

*Peoria: THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMIAL*

Mike Foster, [REDACTED]

### INDIANA

*Central Indiana: CERIN AMROTH*

Ellen Denham, E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

### MICHIGAN

Julie Bailey, [REDACTED]

### MISSOURI

*St. Louis: THE KHAZAD*

Gary & Sylvia Hunnewell, [REDACTED]

### NORTH CAROLINA

*Charlotte: THE CAROLINA TOLKIEN SOCIETY*

Matt & Renita Peeler, [REDACTED]

### OHIO

*Akron*

David Staley, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

*Dayton-Kettering: THE PRANCING PONY*

Eileen Ribbler, [REDACTED]

### PENNSYLVANIA

*Pittsburgh area*

Will Vaus, Murrysville Comm. Church, [REDACTED]

### TENNESSEE

*Nashville: SPARE OOM*

Mary & Conrad Stolzenbach, [REDACTED]

## Chartered Groups

### CALIFORNIA

*Greater Los Angeles: NIGGLE'S PARISH*

Gracia Fay Ellwood, [REDACTED]

*Los Angeles/Pasadena: MYDGARD*

Lee Spath, [REDACTED]

January: *The Fellowship of the Ring* (movie)

*San Francisco Bay Area: KHAZAD-DÛM*

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

January: *The Fellowship of the Ring*: book and movie

February: *Mendoza in Hollywood* by Kage Baker

March: The *Harry Potter* books by J.K. Rowling

### COLORADO

*Denver area: FANUIDHOL ("CLOUDY HEAD")*

Patricia Yarrow, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

Ongoing topic: Mythcon 33: *Shakespeare and Fantasy*

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

*Washington & Suburbs: KNOSSOS*

Mimi Stevens, [REDACTED]

January: *The Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* by Michael Chabon  
February: *The Death of Ivan Ilich* by Leo Tolstoy  
March: *Hyperion* by Dan Simmons

#### HAWAII

Oahu: SAMMATH NAUR

Steve Brown, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

#### LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge: ROKE

Sally Budd, [REDACTED]

#### MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor area: GALADHREMMIN-ENNORATH

Dave & Grace Lovelace, [REDACTED]

#### MINNESOTA

Minneapolis-St. Paul: RIVENDELL

David Lenander, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

January: Tolkien discussion

February: *The Mists of Avalon* miniseries

March: *Tamsin* by Peter S. Beagle

#### NEVADA

Reno: CRICKHOLLOW

Joanne Burnett-Bowen, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

January: *Stardust* by Neil Gaiman

#### OREGON

Mid-Willamette Valley Area

Donovan Mattole, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

#### PENNSYLVANIA

Lancaster Area: C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS

Neil Gussman, [REDACTED]

#### SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia: THE COLUMBIA C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY

Nina Fowler, [REDACTED]

#### WASHINGTON

Seattle: MITHLOND

John James, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

#### WISCONSIN

Milwaukee: THE BURRAHOBBITS

Jeffrey & Jan Long, [REDACTED]

January: *Thirteenth Night* by Alan Gordon

#### Special Interest Group

THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP

Carl Hostetter, [REDACTED]

[www.elvish.org](http://www.elvish.org). Newsletter, *Vinyar Tengwar*. Journal, *Parma Eldalamberon*: Christopher Gilson, [REDACTED]

#### Correspondence Groups

BUTTERBUR'S WOODSHED (general fantasy)

Diane Joy Baker, [REDACTED]

Correspondence circular with set topic. Web: [REDACTED]

March: *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman

May: 2002 Mythopoeic Fantasy Award nominees

July: Fantasy and Food

ONCE UPON A TIME (children's fantasy)

Laura Krentz, [REDACTED]

Correspondence circular. Web: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED].html

#### Online Discussion Groups

MYTHSOC E-LIST

Society activities and general book-related discussion.

Sign up: [REDACTED] or contact

Joan Marie Verba: [REDACTED]

COINHERENCE

Online discussion of Charles Williams

David Davis: E-mail: [REDACTED]



## More Film Reviews and Comments

In any genre of any popular film, one can seek to find inaccuracies and usually will be extremely successful: If I were to give a numerical rating to Peter Jackson's *The Fellowship of the Ring* I would suggest either 7.5 or 8 out of ten. The loss of points is the result of poor literary editing and adding in some extraneous scenes or lines. These few examples suffice to make my point:

1. Merry & Pippin stealing the dragon pyrotechnical device at the 111<sup>st</sup> birthday party.

2. The Lord Glorfindel placed Frodo upon his white horse Asfaloth alone to have him outride the Nazgûl *en route* to Rivendell. The Lady Arwen Evenstar was elsewhere at at this time.

3. Was not Sam Gamgee also present with his master Frodo at Galadriel's Mirror?

4. At the bridge of Khazad-dûm, would Gimli have said "no one throws a Dwarf!?" At Elrond's Council the Dwarf Prince retained his seat and did not attempt to destroy the Ring with his axe!

There are many such points one could make about this film. However, of the married couple I asked to accompany me to the film, the woman had read Tolkien's comprehensive literature many times over recent decades but her husband had never read any of his volumes. They both were deeply impressed by *The Fellowship of the Ring*. I am sure that the gentleman will read something of Tolkien's works in future. The example of this couple is a token of what the vast viewership of this film, and its two successor films, will find. The superb casting and acting, special effects, general attention to detail, costume (sartorial & creature prosthetic) and ironmongery are almost beyond ordinary criticism for any popular film.

*Elliott Levitt*



Short version: I liked it a lot. It seemed like three hours just sped by, partly because I was aware of how much was left out—at times it seemed like *The Fellowship of the Ring* on fast-forward. I would have made different choices on what to leave in (more personal interaction) and what to leave out (less time thwacking orcs) but my version would have no doubt caused the investors to lose their shirts. I told our esteemed Editor I would focus on the visual elements, so here goes. Hobbiton was just about perfect, and I would move into Bag End on a moment's notice. (I might need to stoop a little, but not much.) I was less happy with the portrayal of the elves—neither their physical appearance nor their architecture rang true to my conception.

Galadriel came closest to looking like she should, and Legolas was not bad either. Yes, his hair color was inaccurate, but I can see why a director might consider that a necessary aesthetic choice for visual variety—the rest of the Fellowship ranges largely from one shade of brown to another. Arwen's appearance is so-so, and Elrond is way too forbidding and gaunt-looking. If one ever wondered what an Elf in rehab might look like, one need look no further.

Both Rivendell and Lothlórien looked less natural than they look in my head; I would have preferred more nature and less art. Yes, the structures were based on natural forms, but they looked too regular, too elaborate—Art Nouveau with a touch of Victorian. Both places should look more like they grew and less like they were built. As a member of Khazad-dûm [*Edith means the Society discussion group, rather than any particular Dwarvish family connections—Ed.*] I was particularly interested in the portrayal of Moria, and I was not disappointed. The doors with their silvery design worked very nicely, and I defy anyone with a limbic system to watch the escape over those stone bridges that span apparently



bottomless depths.

Having already exceeded my word allotment, I'll wrap up quickly. Not a perfect adaptation, but the best we're likely to see in our lifetimes. It moved me to tears more than once (interestingly, not in the same places the book does). New Zealand makes a dazzling, believable Middle-earth. What an amazing country it must be. When a film lasts three hours and my reaction at the end is distress that it's over too soon, somebody is doing something right.

*Edith Crowe*



Who knew I was a Tolkien purist?! After literally years of defending the making of this film to more “conservative” fans, I was appalled to discover I'm right up there with 'em! I went to see *The Fellowship of the Ring* expecting to be disappointed (fr'instance, Lee & Howe are my least favorite Tolkien illustrators, but their work was inspiring the look of the film), and I was disappointed—and more than I expected to be. It wasn't until a phone conversation with Paula DiSante that I saw the problem: I went expecting Tolkien. Truncated Tolkien, yes, but Tolkien nonetheless. So I went back to see it a second time, trying very hard to view it purely as a film and not as Tolkien, and it was much more successful when viewed in that light.

But even in this modified light, I still have problems. Most glaring is the look of the film; most of it is leached of color and bathed in blue or heavy shadows or both, whether it's appropriate or not. Rivendell and Lothlórien are especially bereft of light and color and joy. The mirror of Galadriel sequence is very disappointing; I figure they just ran out of time or money or both and therefore settled for the cheesy “nuclear” effect. Another complaint about

the film is the sound design—what's with the screeching eagle sound attached to the Nazgul? Or the growling lion/tiger sound from Saruman's orcs? Or the whistling wind effect when Frodo's wearing the ring? I felt pummeled by the sound, like I was stuck inside of the film *This is Spinal Tap* and—like Nigel Tufnal's guitar amp which “goes to eleven” instead of ten—the whole film felt like it was cranked up to eleven.

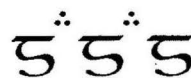
But the worst might be the over-processed Galadriel vocal as she endures the test—ack! Such powerful language, and obscured by bad sound effects and to no purpose. Ack, bleah! This is a place where the hiring of a spectacular sound designer like Gary Rydstrom would have made a HUGE difference.

On the other hand (having at least three, you know), my friend Mark came with on the second trip and he hasn't read the novel and is a fan of Peter Jackson's work; he was blown away by the film, he thought it was truly brilliant on every level and as I began to explain why I was still bothered by certain story elements he said, “Then I'm glad I haven't read the book and thus ruined my enjoyment of this terrific film!” Heretical, yes, but thought provoking...!

My areas of enthusiasm remain highly enthusiastic: the performance of the primary cast, with the possible exception of an overly bombastic John Rhys-Davies as Gimli, is wonderful—especially Elijah Wood and Orlando Bloom; the charm of the long-expected party and the Shire as a whole; the beauty of the ring and flaming inscription; certain design elements of Moria.

To close, I'd simply say, “don't hesitate to give this film a second viewing—it will almost invariably improve with repeated applications!”

*Lynn Maudlin*



Being an aficionado of film costume, I thought I'd concentrate on this aspect of the Jackson presentation. Costume designer Ngila Dickson's work is familiar to fans of *Hercules* and *Xena: Warrior Princess*; the historical quirkiness of these two television series allowed for a great deal of creativity in costuming Greek warriors, denizens of the underworld, Roman emperors, Chinese war lords, several pantheons of gods and goddesses, and beleaguered villagers in a variety of locales (all of which also utilized the diverse and spectacular New Zealand scenery).

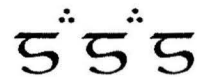
For *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Dickson and co-designer Richard Taylor have largely stuck to practical travelling garb for the members of the Fellowship, using woven fabrics in natural colors for the hobbits and dwarves *vs.* more delicate layers in lighter shades for the elves. Elrond and Galadriel have the most elegant clothing, which incorporates beading, brocades and embroidery; these garments are accentuated with delicate headpieces and other jewelry. I particularly liked the little touches of embellishment used for Boromir's tunic, Gimli's helmet, and the leaf clasp designs for the elven cloaks woven by Galadriel and her ladies (although the scene where these gifts are presented is absent, the Ringbearer and his companions are shown wearing them after they leave Lothlórien).

The flowing robes cloaking the Nazgûl—each of which uses about 50 yards of material—lend to the menacing appearance of the Black Riders pursuing Frodo through the Shire. And Gandalf's hat is truly marvellous!

General comments on the film: I found it visually stunning, especially the set designs for the mines of Moria. Arwen's expanded role went better than expected (although giving her the ability to heal Frodo was a bad choice in view of Aragorn's kingly privilege here). I was most disappointed with the characterization of Galadriel,

especially when she went ballistic after Frodo offered her the Ring. With such a talented cast, there seemed no need to use special effects to demonstrate the Ring's power over those susceptible to it: Ian McKellen and Sean Bean did just fine in this respect, as in fact they did in general as giving the best performances of the major cast members. In general, despite quibbles with these and some other choices of material omitted and scenes added, I thoroughly enjoyed watching the film and look forward to the next installment.

*Eleanor Farrell*



The two most prominent of my feelings regarding Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* are disappointment and indifference: disappointment at the several near-hits of the film and the many unnecessary misses; and indifference at the prospect of seeing this film again or its successors.

There are a few bright spots: Ian McKellen is spot-on wonderful as Gandalf, and Elijah Wood's Frodo worked for me. Perhaps the biggest surprise is Sean Bean's passionate and poignant Boromir, whose death scene is unforgettable. And the Shire looks beautiful, bright, green and real. But these bright spots are islands in an overwhelming sea of darkness, literally: despite the stunning vistas afforded by the New Zealand location shooting, the predominant memory and feeling of this movie is darkness, ugliness, and shabbiness. Even Lothlórien is shown only as a dark dream: no mallorn trees are evident, its Lord and Lady are sinister (and the former nearly mute), and to judge by this film the Golden Wood is so called because it is perpetually night and lit only by blue lights. Beauty is glimpsed only briefly and through gauze,

while views of ugliness, violence, and evil are many, lengthy and sharp. Extensive and often entirely redundant scenes of conflict and nefarious doings are fabricated for the film (in one case apparently only for the purpose of having Gimli deliver the unforgivable line: "No one tosses a dwarf!"), with such results as that the film spends far more time in the murky, mucky forges and orc-breeding pits of Isengard than in Lothlórien.

Much has been made, especially by the filmmakers, of this film's faithfulness to Tolkien's work and striving for authenticity. As a Tolkienian linguist, I can put the lie to these claims by noting that almost none of Tolkien actual Elvish poetry and dialogue is preserved in the film, while huge gobs of pseudo-Elvish dialogue were fabricated in its place, thus ensuring that nearly all the Elvish to be found in the movie is inauthentic. And this failure stands for the whole: the prevailing attitude of the film and its makers is that they know better than Tolkien.

*Carl Hostetter*

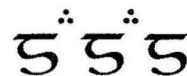


**Film Score:** Soundtracks usually offer three functions: to provide a framework for emotions during the most dramatic film scenes, to set up expectations and emphasize suspense, and to act as a musical memorial, helping viewers re-visualize the film after viewing. If it also presents a beautiful symphonic expression of themes which satisfies on its own terms, that is a bonus. Howard Shore's soundtrack for *The Fellowship of the Ring* at once performs all four functions, without a sense that it overtly manipulates. It seems a natural outgrowth of events, an organic rendering which neither intrudes too often, nor descends into insipid bathos. Having two songs from ethereal Irish singer Enya helps. Interesting

note: she asked to be part of this project, not the reverse. I slightly prefer "Aníron," which poignantly, unobtrusively accompanies scenes between Aragorn and Arwen. Few people stayed to hear Enya's finale, though "May It Be" is lovely, the likely "hit"; it points to future hope in subsequent films as this simple, haunting song accompanies credits. Would that all of it had been in Elvish!

Enya aside, Shore uses other voices: Elizabeth Frazer in "Lothlórien," whose strange minor-keyed "Lament for Gandalf" (much shorter on film than CD) evokes otherworldly sadness. While Shore's instrumental music has a few themes running, nearly approaching modern single themed musicals (think *Phantom of the Opera*), he adapts them in so many ways that they sound fresh, with varying tempo, instrumentation and genre. "Concerning Hobbits" has a Celtic feel, while "The Breaking of the Fellowship" has a grand, heroic, almost operatic character. "The Bridge at Khazad-dûm" provokes shivers, as I heard it before and after the film, for it both warned of and provoked visions of the Balrog, and Gandalf's fall. This film score is a keeper.

*Diane Joy Baker*



## 2002 Mythopoeic Awards

Members of the Mythopoeic Society are invited to join the committees which choose the Society's annual Fantasy and Scholarship Awards, and/or to nominate eligible books. Nominations (no more than five books for each award, please) and requests to serve on the selection committees should be sent by **February 28, 2002** to the awards administrator, Eleanor M. Farrell, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] You must be a current member of the Mythopoeic Society to nominate books or serve on the committees.

The Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature is given to the fantasy novel, multi-volume, or single-author story collection for adults published during 2001 that best exemplifies "the spirit of the Inklings". Reissues (such as paperback editions) are eligible if no earlier edition was a finalist. Books from a series are eligible if they stand on their own; otherwise, the series is eligible the year its final volume appears. Last year's winner was *The Innamorati* by Midori Snyder.

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. Last year's winner was *Aria of the Sea* by Dia Calhoun.

The Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies is given to books on Tolkien, Lewis, and/or Williams that make significant contributions to Inklings scholarship. For this

award, books first published during the last three years (1999–2001) are eligible, including finalists for previous years. Last year's winner was *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* by Tom Shippey.

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. Last year's winner was *King Arthur in America* by Alan Lupack and Barbara Tapa Lupack.

Volunteers for the committees must state their willingness to read all the finalists, and also state whether or not they are willing to be included on an address list to be distributed among the committee for purposes of discussion.

For each committee, Eleanor will be sending out lists of nominees in early March, from which you must pick five books that you would like to see as finalists. Your choices must be returned to Eleanor by May 15; she will then tabulate the vote and inform the committee of the five finalists. These five are the books you must read (or re-read) by the final voting deadline of July 15. Please volunteer, and come to hear the winners announced at the banquet during Mythcon XXXIII, to be held in Boulder, Colorado from July 26–29, 2002.

A complete list of Mythopoeic Award winners is available on the Society web site:

[REDACTED]

The finalists for the literature awards, text of recent acceptance speeches, and selected book reviews are also listed in this on-line section.



*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.

Mythopoeic Society Web Site:

[www.mythsoc.org](http://www.mythsoc.org)

## Membership and Subscriptions

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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 \$18/year for Society members, \$4 for a sample issue) and *The Mythic Circle*, an annual magazine publishing fiction, poems, etc. (\$8/issue).

Back issues of *Mythprint* are available for \$1 each (U.S. postage included). For subscriptions and back issues of Society publications, contact:

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### Submissions for *Mythprint*

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:

*Mythprint*

Eleanor M. Farrell, Editor





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The Mythopoeic Society



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