

MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 43 No. 12

December 2006

Whole No. 297



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“Butterbur’s Woodshed” logo by Kevin Farrell © 2006 (p. 7)

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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, January 1st for the February issue).

2007 Mythopoeic Awards Announcement

Individual members of the Mythopoeic Society are invited to nominate books for the 2007 Mythopoeic Awards, and/or to volunteer to serve on any of the committees. (You need not join the committee to make nominations.) Deadline for committee volunteers and for nominations (limit of five per person per category, please!) is **February 15, 2007**; send nominations to the awards administrator (see contact info below) via e-mail (preferred) or U.S. mail. Authors or publishers may not nominate their own books for any of the awards. Books published by the Mythopoeic Press are not eligible for the awards. The Mythopoeic Society does not accept or review unsolicited manuscripts.

The Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature is given to the fantasy novel, multi-volume novel, or single-author story collection for adults published during the previous year that best exemplifies “the spirit of the Inklings”. Books not selected as finalists in the year after publication are eligible for a second year. 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 J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and/or Charles Williams that make significant contributions to Inklings scholarship. For this award, books first published during the previous three years 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.

Winners of the 2007 Mythopoeic Awards will be announced at the **38th Annual Mythopoeic Conference (Mythcon 38)**, to be held from August 3–6, 2007, at the Clark Kerr Conference Center in Berkeley, California.

Please contact Eleanor Farrell, the Awards Administrator, to nominate books, volunteer for committees, or ask questions about the Mythopoeic Awards process.

Eleanor Farrell
Mythopoeic Awards Administrator

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
E-mail: [REDACTED]

The 38th Annual Mythopoeic Conference

Mythcon XXXVIII

Theme: "Becoming Adept: The Journey to Mastery"

Clark Kerr Conference Center

Berkeley, California, August 3-6, 2007

Guests of Honor: Ellen Kushner and Delia Sherman

Ellen Kushner and Delia Sherman are both Mythopoeic Fantasy Award winning authors for their novels *Thomas the Rhymers* and *The Porcelain Dove* respectively. Both have new novels appearing in 2006, Kushner's *The Privilege of the Sword* and Sherman's *Changeling*. Kushner's public radio series *Sound & Spirit* is a renowned weekly program "exploring the human spirit through music and ideas." Both have made great contributions to the mythopoeic and interstitial arts, and we are proud to welcome them to Mythcon 38.

The Mythopoeic Society discusses myth, fantasy and imaginative literature in discussion groups across the U.S. and on the internet, in newsletters and scholarly books and journals, and at its annual Mythopoeic Conference (Mythcon). Inspired by the scholarly discussions and writings of the 1930s Oxford University group The Inklings (including C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams), the Society began in California in 1967.

The conference will feature the usual blend of the scholarly (papers, panels, keynote addresses, presentation of the Mythopoeic Awards) and seasoned Mythcon traditions (auction, costume presentation, banquet, Golfimbul, the Not-Ready-for-Mythcon Players). The Clark Kerr Campus of the University of California will be the setting. Its charming Spanish courtyards, arcades, and fountains have been the setting for three previous Mythcons, in 1988, 1995, and 2001.

Conference membership:

- * \$50 for Mythopoeic Society members
- * \$60 for non-members
- * \$40 for registered students, age 12 and up
- * Children under 12 free

Online registration (using Paypal):

[REDACTED]

or make checks payable to The Mythopoeic Society, and mail to:

Bonnie Rauscher, Registrar

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Note: Rates will increase on February 1, 2007

If you are uncertain of your Society membership status, please contact our Membership Secretary, Marion Van Loo, at [REDACTED]

Room and board rates will be announced in early 2007.

Call for Papers

The 38th Annual Mythopoeic Conference (Mythcon XXXVIII)

Theme: "Becoming Adept: The Journey to Mastery"

Clark Kerr Conference Center, Berkeley, California, August 3-6, 2007

Guests of Honor: Ellen Kushner and Delia Sherman

Both authors published new novels in 2006, Kushner's *The Privilege of the Sword* and Sherman's *Changeling*. Kushner's public radio series *Sound & Spirit* is a renowned weekly program "exploring the human spirit through music and ideas." Both have made great contributions to the mythopoeic and interstitial arts, and we are proud to welcome them to Mythcon 38.

Fantasy literature features many characters who journey along a path from beginner to adept, from apprentice to master. How is this journey portrayed? What various highways and byways have such seekers traveled? What are the stages of transformation and the elements of the process of achieving mastery? How is mastery demonstrated, and what happens if these skills are lost? From the seasoning of Tolkien's Merry and Pippin to the wizard-school training of Ursula K. Le Guin's Ged and J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter, the journey to mastery runs throughout fantasy.

Papers dealing with the conference theme are especially encouraged. We also welcome papers focusing on the work and interests of the Inklings (especially J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams), of our Guests of Honor, and other fantasy authors and themes. Papers from a variety of critical perspectives and disciplines are welcome.

Each paper will be given a one-hour slot to allow time for questions, but individual papers should be timed for oral presentation in 40 minutes maximum. Participants are encouraged to submit papers chosen for presentation at the conference to *Mythlore*, the refereed journal of the Mythopoeic Society. All papers should conform to the *MLA Style Manual* (2nd ed). Paper abstracts (250 word maximum), along with contact information, should be sent to the Papers Coordinator at the following address (e-mail is preferable) by **April 15, 2007**. Please include your AV requests and the projected time needed for your presentation. All paper presenters must register for the full conference; please see the **Mythcon 38** web page, [REDACTED] for information and rates.

Eleanor M. Farrell
Mythcon 38 Papers Coordinator

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The Mythopoeic Society is an international literary and educational organization devoted to the study, discussion, and enjoyment of the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and mythopoeic literature. We believe the study of these writers can lead to greater understanding and appreciation of the literary, philosophical, and spiritual traditions which underlie their works, and can engender an interest in the study of myth, legend, and the genre of fantasy. Find out about the Society's activities at: [REDACTED]

Activity Calendar

Marion VanLoo

Membership & Discussion Group Secretary



Prospective Groups

CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED] *LOTHLORIEN*

Linda Sundstrom, [REDACTED]



FLORIDA

[REDACTED] *HOBBITON*

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]



[REDACTED] *ERYN GALEN*

B.L. McCauley, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

INDIANA

[REDACTED] *CERIN AMROTH*

Ellen Denham, E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

Chartered Groups

CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED] *MYDGARD*

Lee Speth, [REDACTED]



Dec.: *The Father Christmas Letters* by J.R.R. Tolkien

[REDACTED] *KHAZAD-DÛM*

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe, [REDACTED]



E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

December: Annual Reading & Eating Meeting

March: *Solstice Wood* and *Winter Rose* by Patricia A. McKillip

June: *Swordspoint* and *The Privilege of the Sword* by Ellen Kushner

Sep.: *Three Days to Never* and *Declare* by Tim Powers

December: Annual Reading & Eating Meeting

COLORADO

[REDACTED] *FANUIDHOL* ("CLOUDY HEAD")

Patricia Yarrow, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

[REDACTED] *KNOSSOS*

Mimi Stevens, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

HAWAII

[REDACTED] *SAMMATH NAUR*

Steve Brown, [REDACTED] E-

mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

ILLINOIS

[REDACTED] *THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMIAL*

Mike Foster, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

IOWA

[REDACTED] *ALFHEIM*

Doug Rossman, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

LOUISIANA

[REDACTED] *ROKE*

Sally Budd, [REDACTED]



MICHIGAN

[REDACTED] *GALADHREMMIN-ENNORATH*

Dave & Grace Lovelace, [REDACTED]



MINNESOTA

[REDACTED] *RIVENDELL*

David Lenander, [REDACTED]



Web: [REDACTED]

NEVADA

[REDACTED] *CRICKHOLLOW*

Joanne Burnett, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

NEW YORK

██████████ *HEREN ISTARION*
(*THE NEW YORK TOLKIEN SOCIETY*)
Anthony Burdge & Jessica Burke, The New York
Tolkien Society, ██████████
██████████ E-mail: ██████████
Web: ██████████

OREGON

██████████ ██████████
Donovan Mattole, ██████████
██████████. E-mail: ██████████
██████████
Web: ██████████
December: Group viewing of movie, *Apocalypto*, and
annual Christmas dessert
January: *Albion: The Origins of the English*
Imagination by Peter Ackroyd
February: *The Power and the Glory* by Graham
Greene
March: *Children of God* by Maria Doria Russell

PENNSYLVANIA

██████████ *C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS*
Neil Gussman, ██████████
██████████ E-mail: ██████████

SOUTH CAROLINA

██████████ *THE COLUMBIA C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY*
Nina Fowler, ██████████
E-mail: ██████████

WASHINGTON

██████████ *MITHLOND*
Matthew Winslow, ██████████
██████████

Web: ██████████

WISCONSIN

██████████ *THE BURRAHOBBITS*
Jeffrey & Jan Long, ██████████
██████████

Special Interest Group

THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP

Carl Hostetter, ██████████
██████████
Newsletter, *Vinyar Tengwar*. Journal, *Parma*
Eldalamberon. Christopher Gilson, ██████████
██████████
██████████

Correspondence Group

ONCE UPON A TIME (*children's fantasy*)
Laura Krentz, ██████████
██████████

Correspondence circular. Web: ██████████
██████████

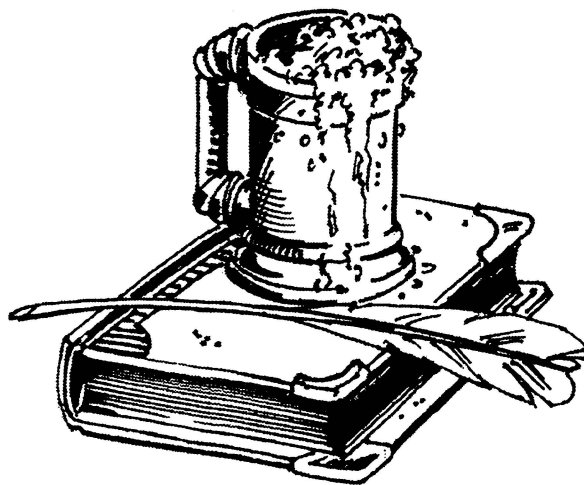
Online Discussion Groups

MYTHSOC E-LIST

Society activities and general book-related discussion.
Sign up: ██████████ or contact
Joan Marie Verba: ██████████

COINHERENCE

Online discussion of Charles Williams
David Davis: E-mail: ██████████



Short Book Reviews for a Busy Season

JIM C. HINES, *GoblinQuest*. New York: DAW, 2006. ISBN 0756404002, pb, 352 pp., \$6.99.

Over the years since *The Lord of the Rings* first hit the bigtime there've been lots of stories about elves, dragons, vaguely Anglo-Saxon peoples, Celts, blah blah, usually fighting orcs, or critters that may as well have been orcs. Eventually writers did venture outward to explore the story possibilities of other historical backgrounds while still trying to match that same sense of wonder. Others have ventured outward in territory that Tolkien explored—like among the bad guys.

What we've got here is a book with Tolkienish bad guys as, well, not quite the good guys, but an interesting blend of the two, permitting the author to explore all kinds of moral and sociological questions while still entertaining the reader. *GoblinQuest* centers around Jig, a small blue goblin whose fangs would make a bulldog's jaw look delicate, whose only clothing is a loin-cloth apparently innocent of laundry trips. Jig, accompanied by his little fire-spider friend Smudge, stumbles upon adventurers who have invaded his mountain, as usual on a quest. Adventurers do show up from time to time, and while they kill a lot of goblins, they usually end up dead, which means an added delicacy for the communal cookery.

Prince Barius Wendelson is one of many sons, who is trying to win his father's attention with a rilly, rilly BIG quest—for the Rod of Creation, which is part of the dragon Straum's swag. Jig is taken prisoner by the prince, who prates of honor, knows how to use a sword (which Jig does not) and is about as sensitive—and bright—as a boar. Not to say bore, as he rants on about his quest. Barius can be trusted at all times to believe that Everything is About Barius. His brother Ryslind, a mage, is also along. He's a slippery fellow, intelligent, cold, cruel, and sometimes crazy, the price he apparently paid to acquire his pow-

ers. Also along is the dwarf Darnak, who raised the brothers (serving as more of a father than the king ever has) and last, a young elf girl named Riana, who is also a thief. Jig gets to know them all, he even manages to accidentally aid them, though they keep threatening to kill him. After all, he's just a worthless goblin.

The book is funny, poignant, sometimes riffing off quest tales, other times plunging the reader into straightfoward adventure. I loved Jig and his questions and discoveries, I loved the complexity of the others—including Straum, the dragon. Though this was a quest tale, Hines kept me guessing right until the very last page.

Though this book would be categorized as fantasy adventure, don't underrate the specific aspects. It looks at tropes and cultural assumptions, often turning values around to be re-examined, while never letting the pace flag, and manages to evoke that evanescent "sensawunda." That's good writing, and I really look forward to this author's next effort.

Reviewed by Sherwood Smith



MERCEDES LACKEY, *The Wizard of London*. New York: DAW Books, 2006. ISBN 0756403634, pb, 384 pp., \$7.99.

This is the fourth in Lackey's series of Victorian fantasies, and will be best suited to readers who are interested in classic or English novels. This one more directly focuses on two children as characters, in addition to the adults featured in the rest of the series. I thought that the resolution was a little too pat, as one of the characters is confronted with the flaws in his own character and lifestyle, and immediately crumbles, even though the whole key to his own character flaw was that he was too sure of himself. Other than that, the writing was quite enjoyable, and you

get a hint of what Mercedes Lackey thinks inspired *Peter Pan*, along with two of the more interesting non-human characters in recent fantasy, a parrot and a raven, both of whom are a bit more than the average birds, but still birds in attitude and mentality.

Reviewed by Nick Smith



MARGO LANAGAN, *White Time*. New York: Harper Collins 2006. ISBN 006074393X, hc, 224 pp., \$15.99.

Some authors find it too difficult to explain an entire fantasy world in the format of short fiction. Margo Lanagan is a delightful exception, a skilled artist in the short form.

This is Lanagan's second collection of SF/fantasy/horror stories. Her first, *Black Juice*, won a World Fantasy Award and was nominated for several other awards. This one continues in that fine tradition, with some very strange stories that are as hard to categorize as some of Ray Bradbury's early work. Most of this collection could be called science fiction, if you need a label, but one story appears to be a mainstream journal told from the viewpoint of a warrior ant, or something very similar. How do you classify that?

The title story is about the people who have to clean up little holes in space-time that are probably caused by time travelers—but that isn't quite clear, and the proximity to those holes seems to eat away at the very being of the person fixing the problem, sort of. Another is about a war that just won't end, and one is about the beginning of a new war, or at least a revolution.

A very good book for adults or teens who want to read short stories.

Reviewed by Nick Smith



LOIS LOWRY, *Gossamer*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. ISBN 0618685502, hc, xx pp., \$16.

This is a very nicely-done story, blending fairy tale dreamweavers and real world problems. It matches a young creature, whose job it is to bestow good dreams, with a very angry 8-year-old boy. The boy's father abused him and his mother in ways that he still doesn't understand or know how to deal with. As the story begins he's still at the stage where he thinks he deserved to be beaten and otherwise abused by his father for being "bad" and he takes it out on the rest of the world.

The realms of dreams and nightmares are interwoven with the touching solidity of the tale of the boy and his tormented mother, and of the older woman who is trying to help him to heal for a while.

I'm not a big Lois Lowry fan, but I couldn't put this one down. One of the things that helped is that she made the dream makers so ethereal and undefined that young ones only slowly become solid enough to cast a shadow. Never once does she attempt to describe them in concrete terms [although we know that they do have fingers but they don't have tails—you'll have to read it to find out why we know that].

The main characters, human and canine, are also not described thoroughly in physical terms. You know what they are thinking and feeling much better than you know what they look like. This seems right, since the whole story is about dreams and feelings.

Reviewed by Nick Smith



CHERIE PRIEST, *Wings to the Kingdom*. New York: Tor, 2006. ISBN 0-765-31309-X, tp, 399 pp., \$14.95.

Wings to the Kingdom, a sequel to *Four and Twenty Blackbirds*, gets off to a slower start than

Cherie Priest's first novel. There's less tension here, and less otherworldly fear. There are some wonderful characters, though, and thoroughly enjoyable prose. Eden's interpersonal relationships, whether with the living, the dead, or the undetermined paranormal, continue to be intriguing. She's as smart-mouthed as ever. Plagued by yet another person who wants her to talk to his dead, she imagines that somewhere on a wall there's a sign saying, "Biracial Southern girl chats up dead people."

There are plenty of those. We begin with ghosts appearing before "aggravatingly credible" witnesses in broad daylight. A group of Sons of the Confederates and their families is having a picnic at the Chickamauga battlefield park when a true Confederate ghost appears.

Priest creates a wonderfully sympathetic ghost in a few paragraphs. His confusion and frustration come through clearly, though his message doesn't. Thereby hangs the tale.

Wings suffers a bit from middle-book syndrome. We're clearly going to see more of Eden's formerly homicidal half-brother in the next book. Some of her last actions in the current book will have consequences later. It will be interesting to find out what they are.

Reviewed by Jane M. H. Bigelow



MICHELLE ROWEN, *Angel with Attitude*. New York: Warner Books, 2006. ISBN 0-446-61699-0, pb, 347 pp, \$6.50.

Everyone has a bad day, now and then, but it would be hard to top the bad day Valerie Grace was having. One moment, she's an angel in heaven—she was even Angel of the Month not too long ago—and the next she's stark naked in the killer whale pool at MarineLand at Niagara Falls.

Thus begins the delightful adventures of Val, a fallen angel trying to work her way back to heaven while working as a maid at a seedy motel. Being human is so hard! And to make matters worse, the odds are deliberately stacked against her by the Other Side having assigned her a personal Tempter Demon—an incredibly hot guy named Nathaniel.

Saying this paranormal romance is a light-hearted romp sounds clichéd, but it's true. The book is fun and fast-moving. Valerie is a wonderful character: innocent and naïve and unconsciously selfish all at the same time. She's very human, seemingly more so than the born-humans she's surrounded with. Her friend Reggie, a sleazeball who can't help two-timing the girl he loves, gets turned into a rat by his lady love, who practices witchcraft when she's not dishing up fries at McDonald's. Val's other friend, Becky, works for a child psychic named Seraphina, who is not the helpful conduit Val was hoping she would be. Even a romance novel-writing demon, Lloyd, becomes one of Val's new friends.

What propels most of the action in this book is the quest for the key to heaven. Another demon reveals that Lucifer made a key as a way to get back into heaven. Val figures that if she finds that, she can go home and all this earth stuff will fade away as an unpleasant memory. So down into the Underworld Val goes to find the key, accompanied by talking rat Reggie and too-sexy Nathaniel.

Kick off your shoes on a cold winter's night and relax with this. You'll be glad you did.

Reviewed by Berni Phillips Bratman



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

Membership and Subscriptions

Mythopoeic Society membership: \$20/year includes a subscription (postage extra for non-U.S. addresses) to *Mythprint*; basic membership \$10/year without newsletter; either entitles you to members' rates on publications and other benefits.

Postage and Non-member Subscription Rates

	Members	Institutions and non-members
First class U.S.	included	\$20/year
Canada (air)	\$7/year additional for postage	\$27/year
Overseas (air)	\$16/year additional for postage	\$36/year

The number in the upper right corner of your mailing label is the "Whole Number" of the last issue of your subscription. Checks should be made out to the Mythopoeic Society. Foreign orderers should use U.S. funds if possible; otherwise add 15% to the current exchange rate. Back issues of *Mythprint* are available for \$1 each (U.S. postage included)

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).

Subscriptions and back issues of Society publications may be purchased directly through our web site (using PayPal or Discover card), or you may contact:

Mythopoeic Society Orders Department

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

E-mail:

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To join the Mythopoeic Society, go to: <http://www.mythsoc.org/join.htm>

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The Mythopoeic Society



*Number on label is the whole number of
your final issue.*