

# MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 44 No. 4

April 2007

Whole No. 301



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## Illustrations

Cover Art: "Gandalf" by Gail Barton

"Shirriff" by Sylvia Hunnewell © 1994 (p.5)

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See inside back cover

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DEADLINES for receiving material for each issue of *Mythprint* are the 1<sup>st</sup> of the preceding month (eg, May 1<sup>st</sup> for the June issue).

# 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 Rhymer* 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. 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).

## Conference membership

Feb. 2–July 15, 2007

Mythopoeic Society members	\$75
Non-members	\$85
Registered students, age 12 and up	\$50
Children under 12	free

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

or make checks payable to The Mythopoeic Society, and mail to: Bonnie Rauscher, [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

## Room and Board

Rates are per person, for Friday dinner through Monday breakfast, including banquet, and three nights lodging. Payment must be received by July 15, 2007.

- \$275 for residence hall, double occupancy
- \$335 for residence hall, single room
- \$290 for suites, double occupancy
- \$365 for suites, single room

Online registration (using Paypal): [REDACTED]

## Member News and Views

The Kent State University Press announces the publication of Mythopoeic Society member Diana Pavlac Glyer's study on the Inklings: *The Company They Keep: C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as Writers in Community*. This analysis challenges the standard interpretation that Lewis, Tolkien, Williams and the other Inklings had little influence on each other's work, by analyzing primary source materials (diaries and letters) and by a comparison of manuscript drafts with the final published works. The book is widely available online; look for a full review in an upcoming issue of *Mythprint*.

Joan Marie Verba announces that all of her Darkover stories are now available through Fictionwise. For links, go to Joan's web site:

John Rateliff reports on the newest film adaptation of an Ursula K. Le Guin novel:

The *Tales of Earthsea* movie is now out in Japan and doing very well, although reviews are apparently mixed. The general consensus seems to be that it's very pretty but that as a director Miyazaki Jr. is no Miyazaki. A recent issue of *Anime Insider* magazine (#37, Oct. 2006, pages 10-11) mentions Le Guin's disappointment in the results (although she admits it's better than that Sci-Fi Channel horror) and includes some interesting background. Turns out Miyazaki himself approached her some twenty years ago about making an *Earthsea* film and she turned him down, having never heard of him at the time. A few years ago she changed her mind and

contacted Studio Ghibli, but by then Miyazaki, who keeps talking about how he's going to retire, wasn't interested in doing it himself. Too bad; a missed opportunity.

The film won't be out over here until 2009 at the earliest, but recently I saw an elaborate artbook at an import store, and what I suspect is a "making of" book (neither of which I could examine because they were shrinkwrapped). Also recently heard the CD-single of the theme song, which I found hauntingly beautiful.

And last but not least, Don Williams offers this poetic review of a recent fantasy film:

### Terabithia

It was waiting there  
For them to come at last and set the  
captives free.  
The bond of friendship they had come to  
share:  
That was the key.

Now you must "Close your eyes,  
But keep your mind wide open." That  
was how to see  
The giant troll, the warriors in the skies,  
The castle tree.

Across the river lay  
The land you enter by an all too fragile  
swing;  
A broken heart, the price you have to pay  
To be the king.

*Don Williams*



## MYTHPRINT Wants You!

Dear *Mythprint* readers,

With the December 2007 issue of *Mythprint*, I will be resigning as editor of the Society's bulletin. The completion of Volume 44 of the newsletter will end an 11-year tenure as editor, and it's time to turn this task over to someone else. It's a big job, but also a very rewarding one, and I have had many enjoyable experiences working with the publication (although folding and stapling is probably not up there at the top of the list...). In addition, serving on the Society's board with the other Stewards has been a real pleasure; this is a dedicated and generous group of people whose efforts largely go unnoticed. So, thank you, Council of Stewards!

If any *Mythprint* readers are interested in taking over the editorship of the bulletin, or even in just finding out more information about the publication process, I encourage you to contact me. I'd be delighted to find someone who can apprentice through the rest of 2007 to help make the editorial switch a smooth transition. I would also like to take this opportunity to give my heartfelt thanks to all of the *Mythprint* contributors—of reviews, articles, art, poems, letters, and more. Without you, there would be no Society bulletin.

Finally, with a postage increase in just a few weeks, I would also like to ask for opinions on whether the Society should consider changing *Mythprint* from a monthly to a bi-monthly (or even quarterly) publication, and whether we should explore adapting an electronic format. Again, please contact me (or any of the other Stewards) directly with your comments.

Thanks again,

Ellie

Eleanor Farrell  
Mythprint editor



# Activity Calendar

Marion VanLoo

Membership & Discussion Group Secretary

## Prospective Groups

### CALIFORNIA

*LOTHLORIEN*

Linda Sundstrom,

### FLORIDA

*HOBBITON*

Paul S. Ritz,

*ERYN GALEN*

B.L. McCauley,

### INDIANA

*CERIN AMROTH*

Ellen Denham, E-mail:

Web:

### MISSOURI

*THE KHAZAD*

Gary & Sylvia Hunnewell,

E-mail:

### NORTH CAROLINA

*THE CAROLINA TOLKIEN SOCIETY*

Matt & Renita Peeler

### OHIO

David Staley

Web site:

## Chartered Groups

### CALIFORNIA

*MYDGARD*

Lee Speth,

April: *Quest for a Maid* by Frances May Hendry

May: *The Phantom of the Opera* by Gaston Leroux

June: *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman

*KHAZAD-DÛM*

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe,

E-mail:

Web:

June: *Swordpoint* 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

*FANUIDHOL ("CLOUDY HEAD")*

Patricia Yarrow,

E-mail:

Web:

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

*KNOSSOS*

Mimi Stevens,

April: *The Hill of Dreams* by Arthur Machen

May: The Great Romeo and Juliet Taste Test

June: Virgil's *Aeneid*

July: *Stories of Your Life and Others* by Ted Chiang

August: *Dracula* by Bram Stoker

### HAWAII

*SAMMATH NAUR*

Steve Brown,

E-mail:

Web:

April: "Share a Book"

June: *The Book of Lost Things* by John Connolly

July: *The King Must Die* by Mary Renault

August: *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien

### ILLINOIS

*THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMIAL*

Mike Foster,

E-mail:

April: *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien (Ch. 21)

May: *The Children of Hurin* by J.R.R. Tolkien

June: *The Silmarillion* (Ch. 22)

July: *The Silmarillion* (Ch. 23)

## IOWA

[REDACTED] *ALFHEIM*

Doug Rossman, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

## LOUISIANA

[REDACTED] *ROKE*

Sally Budd, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [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]

April: *Something Rich and Strange* by Patricia A. McKillip

## NEW YORK

[REDACTED] *HEREN ISTARION*

(*THE NEW YORK TOLKIEN SOCIETY*)

Anthony Burdge/Jessica Burke, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

## OREGON

Donovan Mattole, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] *BYWATER INKLINGS*

Gary Lundquist, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

## PENNSYLVANIA

[REDACTED] *C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS*

Neil Gussman, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

## SOUTH CAROLINA

[REDACTED] *THE COLUMBIA C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY*

Nina Fowler, [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

## WASHINGTON

[REDACTED] *MITHLOND*

Matthew Winslow, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

April: *The Ladies of Grace Adieu* by Susanna Clarke

May: *Tales of the Otori* (Book I) by Lian Hearn

June: *The Children of Hurin* by J.R.R. Tolkien

## WISCONSIN

[REDACTED] *THE BURRAHOBBITS*

Jeffrey & Jan Long, [REDACTED]

April: *Thud* by Terry Pratchett

### Special Interest Group

*THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP*

Carl Hostetter, [REDACTED]

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

### Correspondence Group

*ONCE UPON A TIME (children's fantasy)*

Laura Krentz, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

### Online Discussion Groups

*MYTHSOC E-LIST*

Society activities and general discussion. Sign up:

[REDACTED] or contact Joan

Marie Verba: [REDACTED]

*COINHERENCE*

Online discussion of Charles Williams

David Davis: E-mail: [REDACTED]

## Book Reviews

LOIS MCMASTER BUJOLD, *The Sharing Knife: Beguilement*. New York: Eos, 2006. ISBN 0061137588, hc, 368 pp., \$25.95.

Lois McMaster Bujold is best known for her multiple-award-winning science fiction series, the **Vorkosigan Saga**. But when she turns her hand to fantasy, as she has several times in recent years, readers are treated to the same careful craftsmanship that raked in the Hugos and Nebulas: well-thought out worlds inhabited by well-rounded people, many of whom one would either love to meet in person or shudder away from encountering in real life; action that arises from, illuminates, and influences character; actions that have real consequences that aren't ignored or glossed over in the next installment, but become a part of who that person is and how the world works; and deep themes handled with grace, good will, intelligence, and just the right amount of humor. It's not for nothing that Bujold won the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for *The Curse of Chalion* in 2002, and was chosen as author Guest of Honor for Mythcon 37.

That said, be warned about *The Sharing Knife: Beguilement*. If you are the type of reader who cannot start reading a series until you have all the books in hand, you will want to wait until summer of 2007, when *The Sharing Knife: Legacy* is published, before you crack the spine of *Beguilement*. It is very much the first part of a two-part story, and at the end of the volume leaves you hanging half-way up the slope of the story arc.

Feisty young Fawn Bluefield has left home and is traveling to the city through a landscape distinctly unfriendly to inexperienced farm girls on their own. On the way she runs afoul of a blight bogle, or "malice," and is rescued by a Lakewalker named Dag, a veteran member of the ranger-like clans that hunt the malices infesting the landscape after some never-fully-explained

disaster in the distant past. During the fight with the bogle, Fawn activates Dag's "sharing knife." These knives, made from human bone and "primed" by the death of a Lakewalker, are the only things that can permanently kill bogles. Fawn is gravely injured in the fight, and Dag must get her back to his patrol for healing.

Inevitably, shared danger, adventure, and loss create a bond between these two unlikely people, and the remainder of the novel is concerned with how they fall in love and deal with the clash of their two very different cultures, mutually suspicious worlds which rarely intermingle. Fawn must gain the acceptance of the Lakewalker patrol, and in turn Dag must escort her back to her family and gain their consent to their marriage. This is a romance as much as a fantasy, and some readers may find the switch from the action-packed first part to the second half, more concerned with characters and relationships, a bit abrupt. But it's delightful to see a battle-scarred ranger, who shares a literary kinship with Tolkien's Aragorn, fall giddily in love, and watch Fawn blossom into a confident young woman with a distinct character and strengths of her own.

At the end, it's pretty clear the next book will have to deal with Dag's family and home clan and Fawn finding her place there. We can also hope for more background on the world Dag and Fawn inhabit, and an explanation of some hints of unexpected powers in Fawn and her family. As Fawn says to Dag at a crucial moment, "You make my eyes happy." With her quirky, prickly, and very real characters, Bujold, as always, makes her readers' eyes very happy indeed.

*Reviewed by Janet Brennan Croft*





CLIVE CUSSLER, *The Adventures of Vin Fiz*. New York: Philomel Books, 2006. ISBN 0399244743, hc, 144 pp., \$15.99.

This is one of the strangest fantasies that I've read in a long time. It seems to be Clive Cussler, the author of several adult best sellers, trying to recreate the kind of story that he would have read as a kid. It reminds me of Edward Eager and other older children's authors, anyway.

The basic premise is that twins Lacey and Casey are given a magical device that can turn a toy into a real object. After turning a toy tractor into a real tractor, to help their family farm, they turn a model airplane into a real airplane and have a very dreamlike adventure, travelling cross country. At the end of the adventure, they could easily have believed it to be a dream—but then a reward check showed up, based on a good deed they had done during their cross-country trip.

If he feels like it, Cussler can continue the story with other converted toys, or even use the airplane again. It's not great literature, but for kids who have read the Oz books and the Edward Eager books and want something else along those lines, this might work. It's not serious literature, and the dreamlike atmosphere will not be to everyone's taste, but I thought it was a good and worthwhile little book.

*Reviewed by Nick Smith*



LYNN FLEWELLING, *Tamír Triad*: Book 1: *The Bone Doll's Twin* (2001, ISBN 0-553-57723-9), Book 2: *Hidden Warrior* (2003, ISBN 0-553-58342-5), Book 3: *The Oracle's Queen* (2006, ISBN 0-553-57723-9). All: New York: Bantam Spectra, pb, \$7.50.

Lynn Flewelling's *Tamír Triad* is some of the most inventive and emotionally gripping fantasy to come down the pike in years. Flewelling's muscular prose has matured like fine wine over

the decade since her first *Nightrunner* novel, *Luck in the Shadows*, was a Locus First Novel Award nominee in 1997. Flewelling has honed her craft, and her history of the restoration of the Skalan queens, set centuries before the events of the *Nightrunner* books, is an epic feast. That history comes vividly to life as the *Tamír Triad*, so named for Tamír the Great, a warrior queen who is equal parts Joan of Arc and Celtic Boudicca.

The crux of the trilogy is the Oracle of Afra's prophecy that "So long as a daughter of Thelátimos' line defends and rules, Skala shall never be subjugated." From that point onward, as long as the rule remained matriarchal, the country flourished. But whenever a usurping prince managed to take the throne, the land became blighted with plague and famine. Such is the state of affairs when the begins. Cursed kings have made certain that no females who might inherit the throne have survived ... until now. In a collusion of wild earth magic with intellectual Orëska wizardry, the current king's newborn daughter is secretly saved by changing her into a boy at the moment of birth.

Flewelling's writing is both intelligent and visceral, with an unflinching detail that compels readers to turn pages in wide-eyed fascination, riveted by scenes they might wish to look away from but can't. At the same time, however, a strong sense of poetry runs through her narration, filling the mind's eye with images of great beauty amid the terrors of war and personal cruelty. Immersing readers in sensory detail, her description of desolate rural keeps haunted by spirits and stinking teeming cityscapes redolent of medieval London reveal the breadth of her imagination. By the end of the trilogy, we know Skala as if we had lived there.

Book 1, *The Bone Doll's Twin*, begins on familiar ground for fans of the author's *Nightrunner* series, opening with the graying wizard Iya and

ner young apprentice Arkoniell, on their way to the Oracle at Afra in the mountains of Skala. But readers don't need to have heard of Plenimaran necromancers, Skalan warrior women, or Aurënfaië magic to be immediately and completely pulled into the plight of Tobin, the ensorcelled child on whom the hopes of a civilization ride. Character development is Flewelling's strength, and the terrible dual nature of young Tobin, who is male in body yet female in soul, unfolds with gentle humor and disturbing psychological drama. We watch in fascination as he moves toward his destiny—to shed his boy's skin in an incredibly rendered scene) and become Tamír II who will restore the line of queens and heal the land.

In addition to Tobin, Flewelling introduces Brother, one of the most chilling characters in recent fantasy fiction. Brother is Tobin's male twin, whose body and soul are sacrificed in order to return a female heir to the throne. Brother's shadow life, attached by magic gone awry to his living twin, is by turns sorrowful and hateful in the first two books. But in Book 3, *The Oracle's Queen*, Flewelling pulls out all the stops. We are equally sorry for and repulsed by him, as is his sibling Tobin/Tamír. It's Brother's haunting of and eventual revenge upon the wizards, the hill witch, and everyone else who helped create his pitiful state that fully reveal Flewelling's dark-fantasy style.

The growth of Tobin and his squire Ki from solitary children in the isolated hill fortress of Book 1 into seasoned young warriors who face death together in Book 3 is wonderfully wrought. Even the peripheral characters who surround them are given complexity, so that we get to know them as people rather than two-dimensional figures of the supporting cast. For example, the villainous wizard Niryn is given a backstory that softens his wickedness and Machiavellian depravity. His manipulation of

King Erius and his ill-fated son Korin make sense, as much as we may despise his methods.

Tobin's cousin Korin, the king's teenaged son, appears on the surface to be a charismatic wastrel whose appetite for wine and women is eclipsed only by his skills as a swordsman. Even so, he's basically good-natured, and his Royal Companions look up to him and see him as the future king, brave and true. As Korin's life turns sour, however, we begin to discover other aspects of his personality. In *The Oracle's Queen*, we see his best traits turn to cowardice, guilt, envy, and self-doubt even as he begins to show some genuine regret over the way his second consort, Nalia, has been used to ensure his claim to the throne. The final moment when he meets his old companion Tobin, now Tamír, on the battlefield for control of Skala is genuinely tragic.

Flewelling takes the stock trappings of the sword and sorcery genre—good and evil wizards, a hidden heir to the throne, the loyal sidekick, war between rivals, invasion by barbaric hordes, a sacked city, and a coming-of-age tale—and turns them into a riveting epic story that is unique, disturbing, and enthralling. The mark of a successful work of fiction is that it effortlessly pulls you into its world and stays with you long after the last page is read. Flewelling's *Tamír Triad* does this in spades. Is it MFA-worthy? Absolutely.

*Reviewed by Anne Petty*



*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:



The Mythopoeic Society

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