

MYTHPRINT

The Monthly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

Vol. 44 No. 12

December 2007

Whole No. 309



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Illustrations

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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).

2008 Mythopoeic Awards Announcement

Individual members of the Mythopoeic Society are invited to nominate books for the 2008 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, 2008**; 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 2008 Mythopoeic Awards will be announced at the **39th Annual Mythopoeic Conference (Mythcon 39)**, to be held from **August 15–18, 2007**, at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut.

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

David Oberhelman

Email: [REDACTED]

Musings from *Mythprint* Readers

Back in October Ellie Farrell invited people who had contributed material to *Mythprint* during her time as editor to submit something more informal and personal to the last issue she would be assembling. My first reaction to her request—and one of the things that I most appreciate about being a member of the Mythopoeic Society—was to think of all the books I've read over the years as a result of some aspect of the Society (a person, a discussion group, an awards committee) that I might otherwise not have read, or read as soon.

In some cases, such as *War in Heaven* and *The Greater Trumps* by Charles Williams, I found that I didn't have any desire to read more works by that particular author (my apologies to the Williams admirers in the Society). Or in the case of A.S. Byatt, I found myself admiring the technical skill without being engaged emotionally by the writing. I haven't read any of her works since *The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye* and *Elementals*.

But there were other books that still stand out in my memory, even though in some cases it has been more than a decade since I read the work. Volunteering for the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award committee led me to read Ellen Kushner's *Thomas the Rhymer*, one of the best fantasy novels published in the 1990's and well worth reading over a decade later. While I had heard of Connie Willis, I hadn't read any of her work until *Doomsday Book* was nominated one year for the MFA and I found myself engaged in a novel that both told a compelling story and reflected on the impact of plagues on human culture. When I first volunteered for the committee, I looked over the finalists from previous years to get a sense of what the award recognized and through that found *Unicorn Mountain*, Michael Bishop's haunting reflection on AIDS. I would have eventually read Jane Yolen's *Briar Rose* simply because it was part of the Tor Fairy Tale

series, one of the few series that I paid attention to at that time. But since that book was a finalist (and eventual award recipient) one year, I certainly read it much sooner than I would have otherwise. Serving this past year as a member of the committee again brought some unexpected pleasures. There was Susan Palwick's novel *The Necessary Beggar*, which used our own world as the "mythopoeic" setting for a family exiled from another realm. Peter Beagle's *The Line Between* provided several examples—particularly "Two Hearts" and "Quarry"—why Beagle is one of the best of our modern fantasists. And it's not just the finalists that I have enjoyed reading. Ian McDonald's *King of Morning, Queen of Day*—nominated on the preliminary list one year but not a finalist—was a thought provoking exploration of the interface between our world and the world of myths, reminiscent in some ways of the approach taken by Robert Holdstock in the *Mythago Wood* cycle.

The encounters with "books unexpected" for me hasn't been limited to the MFA committee. For several years I was part of the *Butterbur's Woodshed* discussion group, which every other month sent out a compilation of reflections by individual members. Through that group I read Neal Stephenson's *The Diamond Age*—an interesting hybrid of science fiction and mythic themes—along with Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*, Indian magical realism set in northern California. And then there are all the books that have been reviewed over the years in *Mythprint*...

The Mythopoeic Society describes itself as a "literary and educational organization for the study, discussion, and enjoyment of fantastic and mythic literature, especially the works of Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams." While the works of the Inklings hold a special place for many Society members (including me),

I know from first hand experience that my involvement in the Society has certainly expanded my enjoyment of fantastic literature. That has been more than ample return for the membership dues I have paid over the years!

Matt Fisher

Remembering Lloyd Alexander

One of the longest literary relationships I can boast has been with the children's fantasy author, Lloyd Alexander. Only my relationship with J.R.R. Tolkien is longer, but in that case, the relationship could only be one-sided; Tolkien died when I was only three years old. But with Lloyd Alexander, once I discovered his work, I was able to greet each new book like a new letter from old friend. And I did just that, reading most of Alexander's forty or so books over the past twenty-five years. And trading metaphorical letters for real ones, I even corresponded with Alexander briefly in the summer of 1985. His recent death was, to me, a very profound loss. But rather than dwell on what has been lost, I would like to spend a little ink now to celebrate what Lloyd Alexander left behind.

I first met his fiction in elementary school, at the urging of a fourth grade teacher who knew of my penchant for fantasy. Wherever you are, Mrs. Abdou, I owe you enormous thanks for the introduction! I devoured *The Prydain Chronicles*—many times over, then *The Marvelous Misadventures of Sebastian*, *The Foundling and Other Tales of Prydain*, *Time Cat*, *The First Two Lives of Lukas-Kasha*, *The Westmark Trilogy*—indeed, everything I could lay hands on. Within a couple of years, I'd read almost everything Alexander had published up to that time. In July of 1985, I decided to write him a letter. With the insouciance of childhood, I even sent him several poems I had written. He responded immediately—I would learn, many years later, that even

into his failing years Alexander continued to respond to every letter he received the same day it arrived. His letter to me was charming, convivial, and droll—typewritten on an old manual typewriter and signed in blue ink. He praised my poems (more than they deserved) and told me that he had once dreamt of becoming a poet himself, but that over the course of time his poems had been lost, “which,” he added, “was probably all for the best.” Instead, he channeled his love of poetry into some of the first (and best) translations of Paul Eluard, as in the collection, *Ombres et Soleil*. Alexander also made award-winning translations into English of Jean-Paul Sartre, including the first English translation of his existential novel, *La Nausée*.

I wrote to him again immediately, and he surprised me by replying just as quickly. Four letters had traveled the distance between Dallas, Texas and Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania in less than one month. Those were the days. In his second letter, he gently warned me that if he was not always the quickest of correspondents, it was only because he was hard at work at something “new and different” (this turned out to be *The Illyrian Adventure*)—but he was, of course, just being modest. The rest of the Vesper Holly series followed, and was in turn followed by many more novels: *The Remarkable Journey of Prince Jen*, *The Fortune-Tellers*, *The Arkadians*, *The Iron Ring*, *Gypsy Rizka*, *The Rope Trick* (just to name a few)—and most recently, Alexander's final novel (and a fitting bookend to an impressive career), *The Golden Dream of Carlo Chuchio*, which I reviewed in last month's *Mythprint*.

In all of his works, Alexander conveyed important lessons in tolerance and diversity, perseverance and loyalty, friendship and love. (Though aimed primarily at children, some adults I know would do well to pay attention.) He set his novels in many different locales, many times, many places, reflecting diverse mores and

cultures that readers might otherwise never have discovered. We, his audience—both the young and the young at heart, as he himself was—were fortunate indeed to have been able to turn to Lloyd Alexander for fifty years of delightful, captivating, and rewarding stories—and a kind of literary friendship that is all too rare these days. At the risk of becoming overly bathetic, let me close by saying that Lloyd Alexander will be missed, deeply, but he left the biggest part of his soul here with us, in our libraries, on our bookshelves, and in our hearts.

Jason Fisher

Reading the Scull and Hammond Chronology

Last spring, like most serious Tolkien lovers, I purchased the two-volume *J.R.R. Tolkien Companion and Guide (Chronology and Readers' Guide)* by Christina Scull and Wayne Hammond. I knew the *Chronology* was intended as a reference work, not a biography. Nonetheless I began reading it at the first entry (21 January 1889 Edith Mary Bratt... is born in Gloucester England) and continued over the next few weeks straight through to the last item (17 November 1973 A memorial service for Tolkien is held...).

From beginning to end it was utterly engrossing. I already knew a fair amount about Tolkien's life and work. What fascinated me page after page was the minute particularity of people, places, and activities that filled the life of this extraordinary man. His days were packed with teaching, work on long- and short-term scholarly research projects, academic meetings, advisement of students, family matters, the pursuit of close friendships, and innumerable letters to relatives, colleagues, publishers, and of course

fans. I was newly astonished by his integrity and passion for excellence. I ached for his despair when he failed to meet deadlines, and empathized with his constant battle for peace of mind amid the relentless pressures of work. I was especially interested to read entries on topics like the saga of his efforts to complete his work on the *Clarendon Chaucer* and the *Ancrene Riwe* (abortive in both cases). I loved reading that his students found him always affable, kind, helpful. I found almost incredible his serving on seemingly every possible academic committee and taking responsibility for endless administrative tasks. And still year after year he worked on what we now call his *Legendarium*—poems, tales, languages, mythology—always with the excruciatingly high standard of perfection that is his hallmark.

As could be expected, the cumulative effect of all this detail was: to marvel again and again at the unique convergence of skill, erudition, imagination, love and devotion that brought us Middle-earth and *The Lord of the Rings*—and to feel a new surge of gratitude.

What I did not expect from reading the *Chronology* was to be moved by a kind of revelation, or glimpse (to use a Tolkien word) of the miracle of any individual human life.

For we all lead lives that, like Tolkien's, are full to the brim with joy and sorrow; good friendships and complicated relationships; domestic joys and crises; professional and self-imposed work obligations; moments of epiphany; challenges met or evaded or deferred; steady, sometimes faltering steps toward self-knowledge; and finally, increasing frailties and needful letting go as we grow old. More than a reference work, then, the *Chronology* will always be for me a reminder (for which I thank its authors) of the day-to-day heroism of living an ordinary life.

Sara Ciborski

Tales of a Reviewer

In the first issue of Eleanor Farrell's editorship of *Mythprint*, I reviewed the reissue of E.A. Wyke-Smith's *The Marvellous Land of Snergs*; in the next issue, I reviewed the last volume of *The History of Middle-earth*, *The Peoples of Middle-earth*. I've been keeping busy since then, too. By my own rough count, I've reviewed nine books by Tolkien, including new books like *Roverandom* and *The Children of Húrin* as well as new editions of older books, 22 novels and other works of fiction, a staggering 52 books about Tolkien, 18 other nonfiction books, six musical recordings (all Tolkien-related), and eight films. There's a lot of good books covered in those reviews. More depressingly, I've also written ten obituaries, from Paul Edwin Zimmer and Marion Zimmer Bradley to Rayner Unwin and Humphrey Carpenter.

Among the fiction I have particular warm thoughts for Peter Beagle's collection *The Rhinoceros Who Quoted Nietzsche*, Douglas A. Anderson's anthology *Tales Before Tolkien*, and five books by Ursula K. Le Guin. In general non-fiction I still use John Clute and John Grant's *Encyclopedia of Fantasy* almost daily. And there have been so many excellent books on Tolkien, by Tom Shippey, Wayne Hammond and Christina Scull, John Garth, Matthew Dickerson, and others. Of course they haven't all been that good, but it's been a rewarding eleven years to be a *Mythprint* reviewer. I learned my craft at this trade during my own stint as editor, and have been happy to maintain my connection with the magazine since retiring from the post in 1995. I look forward to covering more books, great and otherwise, in the future.

David Bratman

Letter

Dear Ellie,

First, the grateful congratulations from one of the legion who wrote for you over the 11 years of your steady and sure-handed editorship of *Mythprint*. Your tenure was characterized by a professional publication that always arrived on time and was often more well-edited than some of the books reviewed therein. Above all, you embodied the best aspects of both scholarship and fandom. So many memories swirl together like the sleet falling here in Illinois today: your unforgettable masquerade appearance with Lynn Maudlin at the Tolkien Centenary at Keble College, Oxford, in 1992 (no one who witnessed this has ever been able to describe it without using his hands); your droll and well-pitched talk on baseball and fantasy at Ann Arbor in 2004; your ubiquitous presence at Mythcons, seeing to it that what needed to be done was done. Like many, I delighted in your Not-Ready-for-Mythcon Players Mythcon skits; we always knew the last night of the conference would be merry with laughter.

We hope that your retirement from the helm at *Mythprint* will not preclude your continued authorship of those daffy gems of unreadiness. George Sayer once said to me that he was grateful to Tolkien and Lewis because they had given him so many friendships that he would not have had without them. We agree. Each year Mythcon is like a family reunion of friends who have enjoyed each other for many years while meeting but once a year. *Mythprint* was a bit like getting a monthly newsletter from a favorite aunt. Thank you for that.

Cheers,

Mike Foster

Activity Calendar

Marion VanLoo
Membership & Discussion Group Secretary

Prospective Groups

CALIFORNIA

San Diego: LOTHLORIEN

Linda Sundstrom, [REDACTED]

FLORIDA

Tampa Bay: HOBBITON

Paul S. Ritz, [REDACTED]

North Central Florida: ERYN GALEN

B.L. McCauley, [REDACTED]

INDIANA

Central Indiana: CERIN AMROTH

Ellen Denham, E-mail: [REDACTED]

Web: [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 site: [REDACTED]

Chartered Groups

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles/Pasadena: MYDGARD

Lee Speth, [REDACTED]

December: *Millions* by Frank Cottrell Boyce

San Francisco Bay Area: KHAZAD-DUM

Amy Wisniewski & Edith Crowe, [REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

December: Annual Reading & Eating Meeting

COLORADO

Denver area: FANUIDHOL ("CLOUDY HEAD")

Patricia Yarrow, [REDACTED]

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington & Suburbs: KNOSSOS

Mimi Stevens, [REDACTED]

December: Christmas Party

HAWAII

Oahu: SAMMATH NAUR

Steve Brown, [REDACTED]

ILLINOIS

Peoria: THE FAR WESTFARTHING SMIAL

Mike Foster, [REDACTED]

December: *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman

IOWA

Decorah: ALFHEIM

Doug Rossman, [REDACTED]

LOUISIANA

Baton Rouge: ROKE

Sally Budd, [REDACTED]

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor area: GALADHREMMIN-ENNORATH

Dave & Grace Lovelace, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis-St. Paul: RIVENDELL

David Lenander, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

December: Annual Readings from Rivendell meeting

NEVADA

Reno: CRICKHOLLOW

Joanne Burnett, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

NEW YORK

New York: HEREN ISTARION

(THE NEW YORK TOLKIEN SOCIETY)

Anthony Burdøe/Jessica Burke, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

OREGON

Mid-Willamette Valley Area

Donovan Mattole, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web: [REDACTED]

Portland: BYWATER INKLINGS

Gary Lundquist, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PENNSYLVANIA

Lancaster Area: C.S. LEWIS AND FRIENDS

Neil Gussman, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia: THE COLUMBIA C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY

Nina Fowler, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

WASHINGTON

Seattle: MITHLOND

Matthew Winslow, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee: THE BURRAHOBBITS

Jeffrey & Jan Long, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

December: Don & Rich's Ab Fab Christmas Party

January: The King in the Window by Adam Gopnik

Special Interest Group

THE ELVISH LINGUISTIC FELLOWSHIP

[REDACTED] Newsletter: *Vinyar Tengwar*. Carl

Hostetter, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Journal: *Parma Eldalamberon*.

Christopher Gilson, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Correspondence Group

ONCE UPON A TIME (children's fantasy)

Laura Krentz, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Online Discussion Groups

MYTHSOC E-LIST

Society activities and general discussion. Sign up:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

LIVEJOURNAL MYTHOPOEIC SOCIETY FORUM

Society activities and general book-related discussion

Sign up: [REDACTED] or contact Lisa Deutsch Harrigan: [REDACTED]

COINHERENCE

Online discussion of Charles Williams

David Davis: E-mail: [REDACTED]



Film and Video Reviews

Beowulf, a Warner Bros. production, directed by Robert Zemeckis, script by Neil Gaiman and Roger Avary.

In a hole in the ground there lived a harlot.... That is not the first line of *Beowulf*, the brawny Dark Age hero's epic, but it is the central theme of the new movie that is currently doing very well in theaters. In the Saxon poem, Beowulf fights two monsters (Grendel and his mom) in Denmark, then, later, a dragon in his native Geatland (don't check your globe; that's now somewhere in southern Sweden). In the movie, he fights Grendel and the dragon (both in Denmark—we never see Geatland), but has a lascivious interlude with Grendel's mother and lies about killing her. Lo, Grendel's mother (who still doesn't get a name) has gone from being a bog-dwelling horror to being Angelina Jolie with a braid as long as the coast of Maine and she lives in an underground lake waiting for drop-in lovers who can't — poor thing! — be all that frequent (we do learn at movie's end that she does get out sometimes). She has borne Grendel to (revelation!) King Hrothgar, whose mead hall Grendel despoils, with thwacking of thanes, as some kind of oedipal retribution, and then she bears the dragon to Beowulf. At the end of the movie, Beowulf, who has been making eyes with Hrothgar's queen, has inherited her as his wife but is also making time for a cute girl about the castle. I fear that the impressionable young who come to the poem after seeing this movie are going to be disappointed in how sexless all 3,183 lines are.

What was interesting to me in this adaptation (co-scripted by a former Mythcon Guest of Honor, I note) was how the northern material was reworked with a southern sensibility—after all, it's in the mythology of the Greeks and other Mediterranean peoples that we usually have these sirens and lamias and enchantresses like

Circe who allure and delude and generally mess with straightforward macho heroes. In deference to my aging eyes, I didn't see *Beowulf* in the 3D version. I'm a curmudgeonly flat-screener. Still, something should be said about the technique. A number of well-known actors were motion-captured and studied from all angles and then reproduced on screen in animation that is sort of life-like and sort of not, like the animatronic figures at Disneyland. The afore-mentioned Jolie and Anthony Hopkins (Hrothgar) seemed to me the most recognizable, followed by John Malkovich (a Danish courtier) most of the time. British character actor Ray Winstone (Beowulf) has had his body idealized along *ubermensch* lines, while I only knew who Robin Wright Penn (the Queen of Denmark) was because I had seen the cast in a review. Crispin Glover (Grendel) has been thoroughly Gollumed into a monster, and he even has Gollum's scraggly hair. But for all the animation skills and photowizardry, I couldn't help but wonder, why not just do it live-action and blend in the monsters as is regularly done in fantasy films now? I had the same problem about an earlier Zemeckis production, *Polar Express*, where I couldn't grasp the advantage of the animated Tom Hanks over the real Tom Hanks. Still, as in *Polar Express*, there are fine things in *Beowulf*—ultimately it was the monsters who got to me. The dragon is a terrific dragon indeed, even if I couldn't quite remember all that castle-smashing from the poem (and did they have castles in sixth century Denmark?). Oh, well, after all the inserted romance and lust, and psychologizing, the fight scenes are rousing. And—a tip—bet on the hero.

Lee Speth

Terry Pratchett's Hogfather. Adapted and directed by Vadim Jean. A Mob Film Co. Production for Sky Television, 2006. UK DVD, Region 2 encoding, 2007; US DVD, Region 1 encoding, 2007. 185 minutes, live-action.

"HUMANS NEED FANTASY TO BE HUMAN..."

A holiday delight for the mythically inclined, this outstanding adaptation of Terry Pratchett's 1996 Discworld novel *Hogfather* is both a rousing comic adventure and an exploration of how believing the stories we tell ourselves makes us human. Pratchett fans in the US have been ordering the British DVD since it came out in April 2007, but now an American version is available exclusively from Borders. The two-disc British limited edition includes deleted scenes, a "making of" featurette, and twelve cameos on different characters and settings. The American version features an extended interview with Pratchett and a trailer. There is also a single-disc British edition. The same team is now at work on a production of *The Colour of Magic*, the first Discworld novel.

On the eve of Hogswatch, a mid-winter holiday much like our own Christmas, the Auditors (who find all life, and particularly human life, an untidy blot on the cold perfection of the universe) approach the Head of the Assassins Guild with an unusual commission: to "inhume" the Hogfather. Like our own Santa Claus or Father Christmas, the Hogfather, though sanitized over the centuries, is at heart close to the ancient bone of seasonal myth—blood on the snow bringing the rising of the solstice sun. Lord Downey has just the apprentice for the job—Jonathan Teatime (tay-a-TIM-eh, as he insists it is pronounced), who is frighteningly keen but lacks elegance, not to mention a nodding acquaintance with sanity. As played by Marc Warren, his humorless laugh is even scarier than his mismatched eyes. On Discworld, anthropomorphic

personifications like the Hogfather are kept alive by belief, so Teatime's convoluted plan involves taking over the Tooth Fairy's castle and using sympathetic magic on the innumerable teeth stored there to eliminate belief in the Hogfather. But he reckons without Death, wonderfully voiced here by Ian Richardson. Death has figured out that someone is trying to kill the Hogfather, but he is too late to prevent his disappearance. Death has a certain soft spot for humanity, and working out what this will all mean, he determines to take on the Hogfather's job for the night—with the able assistance of his sidekick Albert (David Jason)—to make sure the sun rises in the morning. But since Death can't enter the Tooth Fairy's castle, he needs to find someone who can get to Teatime, and his (mostly) human granddaughter, Susan Sto Helit (portrayed to absolute perfection as a Goth Mary Poppins by Michelle Dockery) is just the person for the job. In spite of the help of the bumbling professors of Unseen University and the feckless Bilious, the Oh God of Hangovers, will she figure out the plot in time, save the Hogfather, and defeat the Auditors? *Hogfather*, though "done on a budget that would just about pay Arnold Schwarzenegger's cigar bill in a Hollywood production," according to Pratchett, is lushly presented with magnificent sets (Death's library is particularly impressive), wonderful costuming, casting that is near perfection, and award-winning special effects. Pratchett's unique blend of humor, social commentary, and mythic depth is well represented; the script is a fine distillation of the book. If you enjoy both *A Christmas Carol* and *The Addams Family*, this will be right up your alley. And if you are already acquainted with Pratchett, this will not disappoint you—settle down with your sherry and pork pie and enjoy. A Happy Hogswatch to all!

Janet Brennan Croft

Katrina Aftermath: Three Laments

Flood

Come down darkness, hide the handiwork
of wind and tide that scoured our hearts with sand
dredged off that muddy river bottom, river
held against its will and not allowed to climax
till the tourniquet was off.
Come down darkness, come on down,
we stand spent and done, we're all done in.
Blackwater rising, beats against the door,
demands its due in daylight streaked with muddy
gray.
Our road to safety seen through a windshield darkly,
off the road and sinking under.
Where's that muddy river bottom now?
All that I was, swept swiftly downstream—
images, words, visions, dreams,
now floating, rushing out somewhere safe at sea.

Left Behind

Brother, mother, sister, father
Lost you on the tide
Wet come rolling, cold come chilling
No one left inside
Fang and horn and claw and feather
Prisoned on the line
Cold rain falling, storm come squalling
Bite the wind and whine
Rip the cage and break the tether
Death for those confined
Sun come stinking, no one's thinking
Who's been left behind.

Midnight

Dead dog by the side of the road,
glazed eyeshine caught in the headlights.
Black matted fur and lolling red mouth
ravage my thoughts heading homeward:
it should have been more cautious
or the driver more careful.
What child's call will go unanswered in early dawn,
standing alone, waiting for the light?

Anne Petty



Mythopöetics

Some say that Zeus with brightest Hemera lay,
begetting Mousai, who sang the clearly seen:
of Hektor's death, when none dared intervene—
his body dragged in dust to close that fray:
thus sang Kalliope. A later day,
of Bennet girls, when grown to marry men
or foolishly or wisely, as all might ken:
thus Kleio sang (or some, thus she would say).
Some claim with Nux in starless dark Zeus lay,
begetting Mousai, who sang the darkly seen:
of Lilith's sleep, at last, in Raven's house;
of Psyche's angry sister, who'd inveigh
her charge against the gods, venting her spleen:
thus Oneiris sang, of ire that truth would douse.

Joe R. Christopher

The 39th Annual Mythopoeic Conference

Theme: "The Valkyrie and the Goddess: The Woman Warrior in Fantasy"

Guests of Honor: Sharan Newman and Marjorie Burns

Central Connecticut State University
New Britain, Connecticut, August 15-18, 2008



Call for Papers

Our theme is the use of female imagery in the traditionally masculine realm of battle, as expressed in the literature of myth and fantasy. More broadly, it can include fantasy writers' depictions of women in heroic roles, women responding actively and positively to situations of conflict and danger, and the questions of aesthetics and narrative structure that such issues can raise. Papers dealing with these conference themes 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 for questions, but individual papers should be timed for oral presentation in 40 minutes maximum. Two presenters who wish to give short, related papers may also share a one-hour slot. 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 edition).

Paper abstracts (250 words maximum), along with contact information, should be sent to the Papers Coordinator at the following address (e-mail is preferable) by 15 April, 2008. Please include your AV requests and the projected time needed for your presentation.

Submissions should be sent to: Alexei Kondratiev, Mythcon 39 Papers Coordinator, 35-12 161st Street Flushing, NY 11358. E-mail: [REDACTED]

Mythcon XXXIX Conference membership

Mythopoeic Society members	\$50
Non-members	\$60
Registered students, age 12 and up	\$40
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: Emily Rauscher, Registrar, [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Clerihew Corner

Our editor Eleanor
never could be called a bore;
she informed and entertained us with *Mythprint*
and now she's finished her stint.

Eleanor Farrell
is more fun than a barrel
of hobbits; I think
I should buy her a drink.

Lynn Maudlin

Eleanor Farrell
Is singing a joyous carol.
After years of editing *Mythprint*
She's spent.

David Emerson

Eleanor Farrell
presided over many dramas where sheets were
the preferred costume apparel.
Though she's retiring from *Mythprint*, I'm
glad that she'll still be ready for Not Ready for
Prime Time.

Mike Foster

Thanks, guys! I'll be happy to accept that drink any time....

Anti-Editorial

I dislike editorials, seldom read them and avoid writing them as much as possible. But I had to do an introduction in my first issue of *Mythprint* (you may notice that I did not title this!), and figure it's expected for my last. So ... I've enjoyed putting together these 120 issues of the Mythopoeic Society's bulletin. Working with the members of the Council of Stewards has been a pleasure, and I've met a lot of really great people, many of whom are now good friends, as part of my Stewardly duties. I would like to thank all of you for your support, for contributing articles, reviews, essays, poems, artwork, news and letters, and even for just renewing your subscriptions and reading the issues, or recycling them in the bottoms of bird cages or whatever. This month I would particularly like to thank my wonderful and talented brother Kevin for an amazingly fast and appropriate—and seasonal!—cover to cap my tenure as editor. I hope you will all continue to enjoy *Mythprint*, and help out incoming editor Ginger McElwee by sending her stuff. Me, I may even write a review or something, when I'm not too busy being famous in Shanghai as a result of some of my other, um, endeavors. (Don't worry, Mike, the Not-Ready-for-Mythcon Players will continue to confound audiences during Society conferences, for hopefully many more seasons!)

As a farewell, I wish you all the happiest of holiday seasons, and health, fellowship, and good fortune throughout the coming year!



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.

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	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

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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).

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:

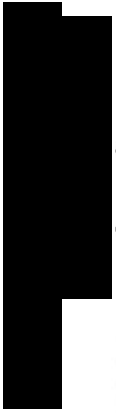
Mythprint

Ginger McElwee, Editor



MYTHPRINT

The Mythopoeic Society



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



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