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Reviews

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Reviews

Abstract

Tolkien's World: Painting of Middle-earth. Published by HarperCollins. Reviewed by Glen GoodKnight.

1994 J.R.R. Tolkien Calendar. Art by Michael Kaluta. Reviewed by Glen GoodKnight.

Celtic Calendar 1994. Art by Patrick Wynne, Laurie Frasier Manifold, and Victoria Palmer. Notes by Alexei Kondratiev. Reviewed by Glen GoodKnight.

Dorothy L. Sayers. Barbara Reynolds. Reviewed by Nancy-Lou Patterson.

The Painted Hallway. Nancy-Lou Patterson. Reviewed by Gracia Fay Ellwood.

REVIEWS

A Wide World

Tolkien's World: Painting of Middle-earth. London and New York: HarperCollins, 1992. ISBN 0-261-10276-1.

Here, at last, is a full color quality book of artwork, not by one but by nine Tolkien artists: Inger Edelfeld, Carol Emery Phenix, Tony Galuidi, Roger Garland, Robert Goldsmith, Michael Hague, John Howe, Alan Lee, and Ted Nasmith. These nine artists give us 60 color pieces of artwork, all illustrations from Tolkien's works. Many of the pieces have been seen before in the Tolkien Calendars (or with Garland, his cover illustration to *Smith of Wotton Major*); works by Edelfeld (7 pieces), Garland (9), Hague (7), Howe (10), Lee (10), and Nasmith (8). Edelfeld, Nasmith, most of Howe, and even some of Lee's works shine brightly forth from the pages. The three hitherto unknown artists also have pieces: Phenix (2), Galuidi (2), and Goldsmith (2). These three appear to be slightly less satisfying. Galuidi's "Saruman" is non-textual and comic-bookish. Goldsmith's watercolor technique is similar to Lee's.

The book is nicely produced, with each illustration on the right and a passage from the text it comes from on the left, inside an attractive border. The illustrations follow roughly the order of *The Hobbit* (11), *The Lord of the Rings* (40), *The Silmarillion* (8), and *Smith of Wotton Major* (1).

As an added feature, the book concludes with a page given to each artist, with each writing his or her own bio or *vita*, relating it to his or her illustrating Tolkien. It makes interesting reading, and helps us understand more of each person.

The book unto itself is worth noting. It is published by the new British Tolkien publisher, HarperCollins, who bought out Unwin-Hyman (which in J.R.R. Tolkien's time was called Allen & Unwin). The book is dated 1992, but did not actually appear in England until the Spring of 1993, and in September 1993 in the USA. American Tolkien art lovers should rejoice that the book is also available in the USA, since I was told in 1992 that Houghton Mifflin had passed over the opportunity to publish it in the USA, and it seemed questionable that HarperCollins would use its trans-Atlantic publishing status to distribute here. It is a last minute delight that HarperCollins has gone ahead with USA distribution. What this means to the previous Houghton Mifflin USA hard-bound monopoly on Tolkien remains to be seen.

This book deserves a much longer review, with comments made on each picture. Here I will only say nearly all the art is very well produced. Warmly Recommended.

— Glen GoodKnight

A New Tolkien Artist

1994 J.R.R. Tolkien Calendar. Art by Michael Kaluta. London: HarperCollins. ISBN 0-261-10286-9; New York: Ballantine, ISBN 0-345-38383-4.

Things seem to move more slowly these days in the USA compared to England, at least where it touches the appearance of Tolkien related material scheduled to be printed in both countries. The 1994 Calendar has been out in England for several months. The Ballantine version appeared late this year, and just came out a day before this issue went to press. Ballantine usually has their Calendar out by mid-August.

The new American artist, Michael Kaluta, will surely generate controversy over his execution of Tolkien-related artwork. His work appears to be done in watercolor wash, and is at times either colorful or slightly drab; either exciting or flat. Word has it that his previous experience comes from illustrating comic story books, and this does show in his approach to Tolkien. This is not to say he is more lurid or sensational than previous Tolkien illustrators; in comparison to the illustration of Ralph Bakshi's film, *The Lord of the Rings*, he is positively inspired. Nevertheless, his work is distinctly different from other Tolkien artists we have known to this time. His art is as follows:

- January — "Gandalf the Grey Arrives at Hobbiton." A colorful sweeping view of Gandalf with his cart of treasures. Yet again, as in other artists, all the hobbits look like little children, even the adults.
- February — "Elrond Recalls the Host of Gil-galad." Very heroic in tone. Regrettably Elrond looks like a cross between Prince Valiant and Snow White.
- March — "Legolas Draws the Bow of Galadriel." Good composition, except for the non-elf-like face. Legolas looks like one might imagine Quentin Crisp looking as about the age of 30.
- April — "The Entmoot." The ents seem too anthropomorphic and small compared to the hobbits.
- May — "Eowyn Before the Doors of Meduseld." As if to suggest sunset, everything is seen through a plum colored filter.
- June — "The First Stroke of Lightning at Helm's Deep." Poor background detail. Plum and turquoise in this foreground make this unpleasant and unbelievable.
- July — "The Black Gate is Closed." Impressive background, but the figures in the foreground are

almost invisible among the convoluted rocks.

August — "The King Recrowned." A very effective depiction of the last rays of the sun. The hobbit faces, as in the other drawings, seem to have a craggy combination of Italian and Germanic characteristics, such as you see in male characters in fashion drawings, set atop the slim bodies of three or four year old human children. The total effect of the combinations of these faces and bodies is disconcertingly out of place and grating, and in my opinion the largest problem of this artist.

September — "Théoden Espies the Serpent Banner." To cut off the nose of Snowmane, Théoden's horse, in the composition of the picture is regrettable. Théoden looks more in contemplation than in battle.

October — "Eowyn and the Witch-King of Angmar." A collection of all the interpretations of this scene could fill a book in its own right. This version is neither the best nor the worst. It has the feeling of an illustration from a children's book of fairy tales, especially in the head of the Witch-King's steed, Eowyn's posture, and the Rackhamesque background.

November — "Arwen and King Elessar." This a portrait of these two characters, presumably after their marriage. While technically fine, neither faces captures the essence of character.

December — "Meridoc the Magnificent and The Children of Samwise Hamfast." The most off-putting is reserved for the last. Merry appears to have eaten a piece of Alice's mushroom, since his large figure seems barely to fit into the room. The children seem off in their body proportions, being much too thin for the usually stout build of hobbits. The picture is so crowded, it pushes one out of it in claustrophobic frustration, instead of drawing the viewer in.

Comparing the HaperCollins and Ballantine versions of the Calendar produces these observations. The HaperCollins version continues to follow the English tradition of a larger format: here 1358" wide by 15" tall pages; art is usually 1234" by 834", with a section at the top taken out for the name of the month. The American format by Ballantine has pages of 11" by 12" and artwork 958" by 858". By looking at the two version side by side one sees immediately that the English version of the artwork has been cropped, in some cases with large sections taken out on both the top and bottom, to fit the format. The American versions seem to be the complete pictures as the artist painted them, without any cropping or sections cut out to accommodate the names of the months. I can imagine how artists feel when they see their work cropped in this manner. However, the English art appears to be clearer, its colors slightly more vivid, whereas the American versions seems slightly more subdued and less crisp. This may be

due to their reduction from the original size. They look like they have been made from duplicate plates, a process which is always tricky because slight color variations can occur in the process. This alteration is especially apparent in the work for May. For January the English Gandalf is walking to the left, whereas in the American he is walking to the right!

All in all, I wish Michael Kaluta well. He is arguably a better Tolkien artist than Carol Emery Phenix or Roger Garland, and shows promise for future attempts.

— Glen GoodKnight

A Celtic Year

Celtic Calendar 1994. Art by Patrick Wynne and Laurie Frasier Manifold; cover art by Victoria Palmer; mythological notes by Alexei Kondratiev. Published by the Celtic League American Branch, Bronx, NY.

The calendar follows the Celtic year, which begins on November 1, 1993, and ends on October 31 "Calan Gwaf," 1994. Each day on the calendar has important events in Celtic History noted. Regrettably this does not leave much space for hand written-in notes. But this is not meant to be a heavily used, every-day calendar, rather a collector's item, both for its arts and its Celtic information.

Note: the six Celtic nations presented on the back cover are Éire (Ireland), Alba (Scotland), Mannin (Isle of Mann), Cymru (Wales), Kernow (Cornwall), and Oreizh (Brittany).

Those of you who love everything that Patrick Wynne produces, will not be disappointed. We are given six of his drawings: December, "The Discovery of Sadhbhii," February, "Brigit," April, "Áine na gClair" (sic); August, "Lugh and Balor," and October, "The Three Cats of Cruachu." Wynne's art is delightful and superb both in conception and in execution, as always. This is not the first Celtic Calendar that Wynne has been involved with, and we hope it will not be the last. Highly recommended.

— Glen GoodKnight

Euclid's Tennis Court

Barbara Reynolds, Dorothy L. Sayers: Her Life and Soul (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1993), 398 pp. ISBN 0-340-58151-4.

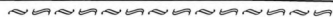
When I wrote my biographical essay about Dorothy L. Sayers' Bloomsbury years for *Mythlore* LXXIII, I was well aware that the long awaited and (I hoped) truly definitive biography by her friend and colleague Barbara Reynolds was about to be published. But deadlines are deadlines and I had to go into print without it, mistakes of my own or not. Therefore I can say from the heart that this new and authoritative biography really does dot the "I" and cross the "T" of nearly everything, and that where I had to guess, based upon the ten previous biographies¹ of Miss Sayers,

Barbara Reynolds has filled in the gaps. I have only one caveat, and that is that readers who have not yet read Dr. Reynolds' previous study of Miss Sayers' encounter with Dante will find that it is still essential reading; the present biography devotes only a brief and summarizing chapter to this massive and culminating period of Miss Sayers' life.

I'm happy to report that Dr. Reynolds is at work on an edition of Miss Sayers' letters, which will be, I am certain, equally essential reading. In the meantime, *Dorothy L. Sayers, Her Life and Soul* tells us in the fullest possible terms the story of Miss Sayers' personal life. We not only learn the full name of her son's biological father, we see a photograph of him, as dashing as one would have hoped, astride his motorcycle in full leathers (mercy!). And there are plenty of other new photographs too, as well as long, detailed descriptions of the places Miss Sayers lived, the clothing she wore, the schools she attended, and, equally delicious, even longer quotations from her wonderfully personal letters, many of which are new to print. Don't misunderstand, I wouldn't recommend scrapping the previous biographies, only making very sure to place this one in a particularly prominent position among them. There can be no such thing as a finally definitive biography of anybody, and in the case of Miss Sayers, every encounter with her life adds to her status as a major 20th century icon.

In what roles is this multifaceted woman cast? She is a daughter, a schoolgirl, a teacher, a woman, a friend, a lover, a mother, a wife. On these matters the present biography is richly forthcoming, authoritative, and convincing. Among other things, it convinces me that Miss Sayers was right (as well as compelled by circumstances) to leave her son with his foster mother/cousin rather than taking him away in mid-childhood. She is also a poet, a copywriter, an autobiographer, a playwright, a novelist, a translator, a scholar, an essayist, a social commentator, an apologist, and a theologian. Of these achievements we learn much but certainly not (nor did Dr. Reynolds attempt or intend to write) all. Many other studies of Miss Sayers' "work" as well as works have been and will continue to be written, not least Dr. Reynolds' own study, *The Passionate Intellect* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1989), to which I have referred above. And, in line with this latest biography's title, there is still one more category, by no means fully explored, the subject of Miss Sayers' soul. On this subject, the definitive study has yet to be written, but very much to her credit, Dr. Reynolds has defined the categories and pointed the way: Miss Sayers as a daughter of the Church of England, squarely placed upon the *via media*, both catholic and protestant; Miss Sayers as an exemplar of and theorist upon the sacramentality of one's own work; Miss Sayers as a follower of the Affirmative Way, which (as her life so richly and poignantly demonstrates) is as difficult and costly as the more widely known *via negativa*; Miss Sayers as a champion of orthodoxy, explicator of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and

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ARTIST'S COMMENTS

"Doubt Not the Power of Morgoth Bauglir! Is It Not Worthen the Power of Finduilas?"

Then the heart of Finduilas was turned from Gwindor and against her will her love was given to Túrin; but Túrin did not perceive what had befallen. And being torn in heart Finduilas became sorrowful; and she grew wan and silent. But Gwindor sat in dark thought; and on a time he spoke to Finduilas, saying: 'Daughter of the house of Fianrfin, let no grief lie between us; for though Morgoth has laid my life in ruin, you still I love. Go whither love leads you; yet beware! ... [T]his Man is not Beren. A doom indeed lies on him, as seeing eyes may well read in him, but a dark doom. Enter not into it! And if you will, your love shall betray you to bitterness and death. For hearken to me! Though he be indeed *agarwaen* son of *úmarth*, his right name is Túrin son of Húrin, whom Morgoth holds in Angband, and whose kin he has cursed. Doubt not the power of Morgoth Bauglir! Is it not written in me?'

Then finduilas sat long in thought; but at the last she said only: 'Túrin son of Húrin loves me not; nor will.'

— *The Silmarillion*

Fate has handed Gwindor a very raw deal. Once a lord of Nargothrond who was young and strong, he now has become, under Morgoth's cruel torture, a "bent and fearful shadow of his former shape and mood," and "seeming as one of the aged among mortal Men." When he escapes from Angband and returns with Túrin to Nargothrond, his own people fail to recognize him — all except for Finduilas, who was Gwindor's lover before his capture.

I like the psychodrama of this scene: the torn Finduilas, loathing herself for falling out of love with Gwindor and in love with Túrin — yet knowing that Túrin will never love her; and the defeated Gwindor, who, although willing to release Finduilas from any obligations of the heart, can't resist (out of jealousy) an urgent (and in the end all-to-accurate) warning to avoid the object of her desire — or else.

Tolkien does not describe Gwindor as leaning on a cane, but I thought that, at least in this scene, it would help depict the utterly broken nature of the elf. It also gave me something to do with his left hand. Gwindor is drawn hunched over, with deeply lined face and hands, defining not only his physical torture, but also the merciless labor he was forced to endure. His former strength and attractiveness are gone, never to be regained. I considered giving him some gray hair, but finally decided to leave it dark. His hair color is the only thing he retains from his former "youth of the Eldar." There was no point begrudging him this small shred of dignity.

— *Paula DiSant*



Notes

1. In *Fairy Tales and After*, Roger Sale suggests a connection between the formal cohesiveness of a fairy tale or children's story and the version of growth and integration that it projects. He points out, for example, how the fragmentary nature of the narratives of *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* reflect Dodgson's negative attitude about the process of maturing from childhood to adulthood.
2. This and subsequent reference to "The Golden Bird" and "Brother Gaily" will be taken from the Lore Segal-Maurice Sendak selection of Grimm's *Fairy Tales in The Juniper Tree*.
3. This is just one example of a long literary tradition — the *selva oscura* that begins Dante's *Commedia*, the wood of Error in Book One of Spenser's *The Faery Queen*, the woods in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the woods in Milton's *Comus* are obvious examples — in which journeys into woods or forests can suggest unconscious processes.
4. The fact that the various kings in the story are given no distinguishing names or attributes further supports the idea that they are all different stages or aspects of the same thing — the mature autonomy that the hero seeks.
5. The word "straight" has special significance in "TGB." We are repeatedly told that the fox "straightened his tail" when carrying the youngest son, and the fox repeatedly directs the youngest son to go "straight" to where the bird, the horse or the maiden are. And once he has won the maiden, the youngest son traces a path straight back to where he began.

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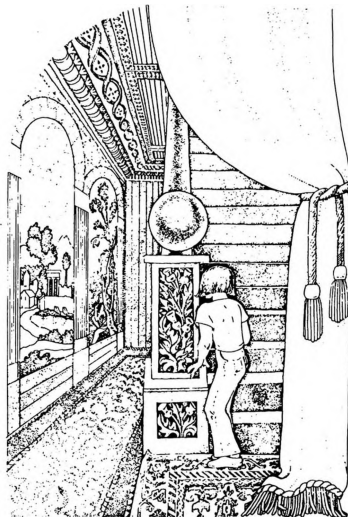
delighter in the intellectual riches of the creeds; Miss Sayers as explorer of what is still the greatest work of Christian Fantasy, *The Divine Comedy*; Miss Sayers as the self-convicted and repentant sinner; Miss Sayers as one for whom the dominical command to love one's God with all one's heart, strength, soul, and mind was both taken literally and enacted with passion; and finally, despite her own saying to the contrary, Miss Sayers as (dare I say it?) mystic and saint.

Pointings, identifications, suggestions, and hints, yes; definitive revelations, not yet. Maybe the truth is too obvious, too blatant, too blazingly intense to be called by name. Maybe the peculiar modern (and, I regret to say, post-modern) notion that sanctity cannot exist in the life of one so robustly physical, engaged, opinionated, and entertaining has rendered readers unable to see the real thing. And maybe such matters can only be exhibited, being, finally, incapable of analysis. Dr. Reynolds has provided in an appendix entitled "Euclid's Tennis Court," a quotation from Miss Sayers' unpublished autobiographically-based unfinished novel *Cat o' Mary*, in which Katherine Lammas (universally agreed to be Dorothy L. Sayers) discovers (by applying Euclidean geometry to the task of locating a grass-covered tennis court) "that magnificent moment when the intersecting circles marched out of the pages of the Euclid book and met on the green grass in the sun-flecked shadow of the mulberry tree." (p. 386) This quotation, as close to the final few verses of *The Divine Comedy* in meaning and intent as makes no never mind,² can stand as a metaphor for Miss Sayers' passionate, joyous, painful, devout, and astonishingly revelatory life.

— Nancy-Lou Patterson

1. With the present review I have reviewed, by my count, 22 books about Miss Sayers (for *Mythprint* and *Mythlore*) including 11 biographies, 2 books of essays, 3 bibliographies, and 6 books touching upon her work as a detective novelist, a playwright, and a theologian.
2. This reads in part:

As the geometer his mind applies
To square the circle, not for all his wit
Finds the right formula, howe'er he tries,
So stand I with that wonder — how to fit
The image to the sphere; so sought to see
How it maintained the point of rest in it.



mind, and I wouldn't for the world spoil the moment of revelation by revealing it in advance! (Dorothy L. Sayers and Barbara Reynolds, *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri, Cantica III, Paradise* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), Canto XXXIII, ll. 133-138).

GENTLE HAUNTING

The Painted Hallway by Nancy-Lou Patterson. Ontario, Canada: The Porcupine's Quill. 205 pages, paperback.

The blurb on the back cover of this, Nancy-Lou Patterson's second fantasy novel, reads

Who painted the mysterious murals in the hallway of Thistle Manor? When Jennifer Scott spends her thirteenth summer exploring a faded mansion in which not every door leads to the present, and not every occupant is alive, she finds her search for the past leading to an unexpected future.

This is a good nutshell description of the story, but it does not tell us that *The Painted Hallway* is much more than the usual gothic tale of the Girl and the House. Why, indeed, would one find numinous scenes of high fantasy — an Arcadian paradise — covering the hallway walls in a solid mid-Victorian house? There are the usual records of the financially successful ancestor who built the house for his young wife, but no apparent trace of the very mythopoetic artist who created these doors to another world.

And not only is the House out of the ordinary, so is the Girl. The young protagonist still has some of a child's fear of dark empty rooms, and need for her absent mother, but she displays uncommon courage in facing them. She is also very bright. Her sophistication in responding to the art and architecture of her ancestral house is clearly traced to the influence of her artist-cum-scholar mother, but Jennifer makes astute connections on her own.

She is also a mystic in the making. At one point, looking from the belvedere at the top of the house, she experiences "something so bright and fresh and intense" about the cityscape and landscape below that it gives her "a shocking stab of joy so sharp she gasped" (p.66). This sudden joy of course reminds the mythopoetic reader of C.S. Lewis' recurrent experiences of being Surprised by Joy, and perhaps of Hopkins' "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things." Jennifer is an incipient contemplative of the Glory.

Nancy-Lou brings her artist's eyes and mind to her literary task, as is clear not only from her choice of the central mystery to be resolved in her story but from the ways in which her language on every page calls up all our senses to give a full-bodied awareness of her characters and their surroundings. We see vividly the shape and texture of a leaf or the vista of the Ontario countryside, we hear "the whispering of spicules of snow blowing... against the windowpane," we smell the lavender sheets or the mustiness of old letters, we taste the mugful of warm milky coffee as we share the grown-up feeling that drinking it gives Jennifer. All these physical things are not only made real, they are loved.

What appealed to me as a researcher in parapsychology particularly was the knowledgeability and sensitivity of

Nancy-Lou's depictions of otherworldly events. Here is no overwrought, Disneyland-type Haunted Mansion but events such as have actually been reported. Fantasy writers have long been fond of the return-to-the-past motif, but in employing it they usually strain parapsychological credibility by making visits to the past quite protracted, with extensive physical and verbal interaction between the time traveler and the past characters. Nancy-Lou conveys the numinous chill all the better by making her retrocognitive scenes comparatively brief, without explicit interaction between Jennifer and her ancestors, but with intimations that behind these visionary episodes is a mind or minds seeking to communicate with Jennifer. It was "meant." In this regard the sequence of retrocognitive scene is reminiscent of several historical cases: Kate Wingfield's 1889 vision of seventeenth-century scene in Salisbury Cathedral, and Anne Moberly and Eleanor Jourdain's interpretation of their 1901 vision of 18th-century scenes at Versailles. The motionless apparition of a young girl that Jennifer sees at one point, and the contrast of seasons between present and past, suggest Coleen Buterbaugh's 1963 vision at Nebraska Wesleyan University of a scene fifty years earlier. Other comparisons could be made. Nancy-Lou confirmed to me that she has in fact learned from these and other cases.

Historical ghosts and retrocognitions tend to be tied in with earlier events of pain and violence, of archetypal transformation. In this regard *The Painted Hallway* is true to the pattern, but is gentler than most. Old wrongs and griefs and terror there are, but no battle or murder. It is possible to identify to some extent with all the characters; no one is beyond the overarching compassion of Nancy-Lou's chief characters, or indeed of her own world.

One unsolved mystery is the question why the publishers of this book, who earlier issued Nancy-Lou's first fantasy *Apple Staff and Silver Crown* with her many fine illustrations, decided against including her proffered drawings for this book. These include the picture of Jennifer in the painted hallway reproduced here on page 45, as well as a floor plan which makes it easier to follow the action at a few points. The illustration on the cover of this book, a picture of the house, is by someone else. It is pleasant picture but it is slightly inaccurate, and certainly neither the building nor the dull sky beyond convey anything of the hidden Freshness that the story celebrates. If we readers make our preferences known, we may hope for a second edition illuminated by Nancy-Lou's best.

Significantly, there is more than one Jennifer in this story. There is an infant Jennifer in the framing prologue. The protagonist's quest to solve the mystery of the house brings her into contact with another, mysterious Jennifer central to the events of a hundred years past. And the book is dedicated to "Jennifer Maurya Patterson, 1954-1964." It adds to the poignancy of the story if one realizes that this departed child, Nancy-Lou's daughter, was and is also a gifted soul who had glimpses into the Infinite.

— Gracia Fay Ellwood