

## Progress Report #2

### Mythcon 52: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Albuquerque, New Mexico

July 29 - August 1, 2022

(in-person and virtual attendance options)

#### [Registration link](#)

Registration prices will increase after June 1!



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### Notes from Mythcon 52 Organizing Committee Co-Chairs

Megan Abrahamson and Leslie Donovan

We hope you are as excited as we are for an in-person Mythcon! Our program is shaping up to be a diverse one, with good Inklings coverage as well as explorations of newer Mythopoeic multimedia. See Papers/Panels and Special Programming, below, for more information on this year's presentations.

We are looking forward to welcoming everyone to sunny Albuquerque, NM, for this long-expected Mythcon, where our food and our weather are HOT! Attendees will want to prepare for warm weather, and err on the side of cool and comfortable clothes and shoes rather than professional. Sunblock and hydration will be important, as temperatures can range in the 90s during the day, but cool down to 60s overnight (Fahrenheit). And even though it's a dry heat, an umbrella for the .1 mile walks wouldn't be a bad idea. Also related to safety, our COVID safety policy remains in effect with minor revisions, so please read through that and start to plan accordingly.

Continued thanks goes out to our planning committee:

Cami Agan

Dawn Catanach

Lynne Darga

Tim Lenz

Rachel Briggs

Sarah Collins

Alicia Fox-Lenz

Pat Yarrow

Until such time as we ask the perennial question "what do you do with a drunken hobbit?" we the Mythcon 52 Committee remain "at your service!"

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### Theme: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Mythcon 52's theme provides multiple opportunities to explore the Other in fantasy and mythopoeic literature. Tolkien spoke in "On Fairy-stories" of "the desire to visit, free as a fish, the deep sea; or the longing for the noiseless, gracious, economical flight of a bird." We invite discussion about the types of fantasy that are more likely to put us into contact with the alien, such as time portal fantasy and space travel fantasy. In addition to Inklings, some writers dealing particularly well with the truly alien who might be discussed include Lovecraft, Gaiman, Le Guin, Tepper, and others. Other topics that might be fruitfully explored are: depictions of the alien Other in film and television (*Dune*, *Loki*, etc.); developing constructed languages truly different from those of Earth-based humans; fantastical Others in indigenous myths (such as Coyote and Spider Woman from Native American mythology); and American folklore about the alien (flying saucers, alien abduction, Area 51, Roswell).

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## Conference Registration

Registration rates through May 31, 2022, are as follows. On June 1, rates in all categories will increase. Payments for Mythcon 52 registration (in-person and virtual) and banquet tickets may be made through PayPal from the [Mythcon 52 registration page](#).

### In-Person Conference Registration

Mythopoeic Society Members - \$75 (\$90 after June 1)

Nonmembers - \$90 (\$115 after June 1)

Students\* - \$65 (\$70 after June 1)

\* *Students are those taking 12 or more credit hours per semester/quarter at an accredited college or university. Must present a current, active student ID at check-in. For children attending with parent(s) or legal guardian(s), 12 and under are free, 12 to 18 pay the student rate.*

Virtual only - \$20 (\$25 after June 1)

1-Day pass - \$45 (available only onsite)

2-Day pass - \$75 (available only onsite)

Join the Mythopoeic Society and then register for Mythcon 52 at the Society Members rate to save money and receive other member advantages (including reduced Mythcon registration for next year!). See the [Mythopoeic Society's website](#) for details. If you are uncertain of your membership status, please contact our Membership Secretary, Lynne Darga, at [membership@mythsoc.org](mailto:membership@mythsoc.org).

### Virtual Registration Option

Those who cannot or do not wish to attend Mythcon in person are invited to participate remotely through our virtual option. Our virtual option (via Zoom and Discord, similar to Online Midwinter Seminar 1 and Mythcon 51) will include livestreaming Guests of Honor speeches from David Bratman and Rivera Sun and one track of paper and panel presentations on Saturday and Sunday.

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## Guests of Honor

### Rivera Sun - Author Guest of Honor

Rivera Sun is a change-maker, a cultural creative, a protest novelist, and an advocate for nonviolence and social justice. Her young adult fantasy series, the Ari Ara Series, has been widely acclaimed by teachers, parents, and peace activists for its blending of fantasy and adventure with social justice issues. Going beyond dragon-slayers and sword-swingers, heroes and sheroes in Ari Ara's world stop wars and wage peace. In all her works, Rivera Sun advocates that if we want to build a culture of peace, we have to tell new stories that still appreciate, but go beyond the old myths, epics, and legends that rehash outdated war and violence narratives. *The Way Between*, the first book in the Ari Ara Series, has been read by numerous groups of all ages, while the second book in the series, *The Lost Heir*, won the 2019 Nautilus Award Silver Medal. Rivera Sun's essays have been published in hundreds of journals nationwide. She is a frequent speaker and presenter at schools, colleges and universities, where her novel *The Dandelion Insurrection* has been taught in literature and political science courses. Rivera Sun is also the editor of Nonviolence News, an activist, and a trainer in making change with nonviolence. Her essays and writings are syndicated by Peace Voice and have appeared in journals nationwide. She lives in an Earthship house in New Mexico. For more about Rivera Sun, visit her website at [www.riverasun.com](http://www.riverasun.com).



## David Bratman - Scholar Guest of Honor



David Bratman has been reading Tolkien for over 50 years and has been writing Tolkien scholarship for nearly as long. His earliest contribution to the field was the first-ever published Tale of Years for the First Age, right after *The Silmarillion* was published. Since then he's published articles with titles like "Top Ten Rejected Plot Twists from *The Lord of the Rings*," "Hobbit Names Aren't from Kentucky," and "Liquid Tolkien" (on Tolkien and music). He's been co-editor of *Tolkien Studies: An Annual Scholarly Review* since 2013, and has written or edited its annual "Year's Work in Tolkien Studies" since 2004. David edited *The Masques of Amen House* by Charles Williams and contributed the bio-bibliographical appendix on the Inklings to Diana Pavlac Glyer's *The Company They Keep*. He has also written on C.S. Lewis, Ursula Le Guin, Mervyn Peake, Neil Gaiman, and others.

For the Mythopoeic Society he was editor of the monthly bulletin *Mythprint* for fifteen years, and has worked on many Mythopoeic Conferences, including serving twice as chair. He's a retired academic librarian and an active classical music reviewer who lives with his wife, Berni (a soprano and violinist), and two cats in a house they call Minnipin Cottage.

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### Papers/Panels

Our deadline for papers and panels has passed and our schedule is shaping up nicely. It will feature presentations on Inklings Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams, as well as papers that explore the works of Gloria Anzaldúa, Phillip K. Dick, N. K. Jemisin, Madeleine L'Engle, Ursula K. LeGuin, H. P. Lovecraft, Seanan McGuire, and others! Some of the multimedia topics being explored include Arthuriana, *Cleopatra in Space*, The Grateful Dead, *Hollow Knight*, and *Roswell, New Mexico*.

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### Special Programming

Special programming includes running some *Dungeons & Dragons* games, a *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* reading, a viewing and discussion of Disney's *Encanto*, and Q&As with Mythopoeic Society members about the history of the society. We will hold the Masquerade costume "contest," Golfimbul, Bardic Circle, and Auction as usual.

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### Alexei Kondratiev Award (Student Paper)

At Mythcon 41, the Society introduced an award for the best paper presented at Mythcon by an undergraduate or graduate student. This award was named in honor of Alexei Kondratiev, long-time Society member and a scholar of wide-ranging interests in mythopoeic and related studies, who passed away in 2010. The winner of the award receives a certificate, a one-year subscription to *Mythlore*, and half-off registration for the next Mythcon he or she attends. The winner will be announced at the Mythcon banquet, on the Society's website and in *Mythprint*. Winners are strongly encouraged to submit their paper to *Mythlore* for publication. More information, a list of past winners, and the award application can be found [on our website](#).

To be considered for the award, the application form must be submitted to the committee chair, Janet Croft, at [mythlore@mythsoc.org](mailto:mythlore@mythsoc.org) no later than July 1, 2022, and the finished paper must be submitted electronically by July 22, 2022. The paper must follow [Mythlore submission and style guidelines](#) and should be 4000–9000 words long. Applicants must be accepted in or currently enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program at the time their abstract is submitted. Applicants must attend Mythcon and present the paper to qualify for the award.

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## Hotel

The Mythcon 52 planning committee is delighted to welcome you back to Albuquerque, New Mexico, and back to conferencing in person! During the pandemic, many businesses and business models have changed, so we were forced to change venues at a late date—thus many of the delays! However, you can rest assured that Mythcon 52 is happening, the dates are set, and we have sleeping and conference locations confirmed.

Mythcon 52 sleeping arrangements will be at the [Hampton Inn University/Midtown](#). The room options of two queens or one king can currently be reserved for a special rate of \$88 per night (plus tax currently at 13.25%). Connecting rooms are also available if booked together, and accessible rooms may be requested. Amenities include: Free hot breakfast, free parking, free wifi, outdoor pool, and fitness center. Located in Albuquerque's midtown, it allows easy access to the I-40 freeway and is a 14-minute drive, taxi, or rideshare from the airport.

Since the Hampton's online reservation link has proven somewhat unpredictable, we recommend phoning the hotel directly at 505-837-9300 to get the correct rates and dates. If you prefer to try the online link, [visit this link](#). (You may need to click on the Special Rate button, insert CHHMYT into the Group Code box, and then click Update.) If you have problems making reservations, please email Leslie Donovan at [chair@mythcon.org](mailto:chair@mythcon.org).

Conference attendees are encouraged to room with family or close friends and to plan room sharing according to vaccination status and comfort level. Because the planning committee cannot commit to pairing up people according to their safety preferences, first-time attendees or those who want to share rooms are encouraged to reach out on Discord, Facebook, and our Mailing list on Groups.io to solicit roommates. For those who want to pack a room tight, rollaway beds can also be reserved.

Attendees will want to reserve rooms for the night of Friday, July 29 (half-day programming), Saturday, July 30, and Sunday, July 31, with half-day programming on Monday, August 1. As rooms are available, the Hampton Inn will honor the reduced room rate for anyone who arrives earlier or stays later.

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## Meals

The Hampton Inn includes free hot breakfast with their reservations. Although conference-organized communal meal options are still in the works, Mythcon 52 has not planned any communal meals at this point, apart from the Sunday banquet. Our reasons for this are to reduce cost to attendees, allow you full control of dietary needs, and encourage individual choice of comfort levels with COVID transmission risks. While we hope to offer some flavor of our usual gatherings, any such offerings we may add will certainly look different this year! Stay tuned for more information.

[Banquet tickets are now available](#) on our website at \$40 each. Our banquet will be held at the Daily Grind, a local favorite only .4 miles away (we will provide free transportation for any who wish it). The [Daily Grind](#) features a tasty and varied menu, lots of outdoor seating, and beer/wine offerings.

The Hampton Inn is conveniently located near many fantastic local food options for lunches and dinners. Across the street (not even .1 miles) is [Green Jeans Farmery](#), a local outdoor eatery, where Mythies are invited to take meals. In addition to having ample outdoor seating for safer, maskless interactions, Green Jeans has many food options with counter service, including Burgers, Barbecue, Pizza, Pho, Smoothies, Coffee, Ice Cream, Tacos, and Craft Beer (and local wine)!

A little further afield, determined walkers or those with cars can access even more options. In addition to the Daily Grind where we will hold our Sunday night banquet, local chains Rudy's Barbecue and Blake's Lotaburger are only .3 miles away (if across a busy street). A strip mall with Einstein Bagels, Chello Grill (Middle Eastern),

Thai Vegan, and Juani's Kitchen (Mexican) is .8 miles away. Ample time will be built into the schedule to allow for lunch travel.

Whole Foods (.3 miles) and Walmart Neighborhood Market (.7 miles) are also nearby to stock hotel rooms. For other material needs, a Walmart Supercenter is .6 miles away.

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## Conference Venue

The Hampton Inn, unlike more expensive hotel options, does not have meeting space that fits our needs. So, we have reserved 21st Century Public Academy, a local charter school for our conference panels and presentations. The school, whose mascot is a purple dragon, is a great fit for us, evoking past Mythcons held in university classrooms, but with the added perk of not sleeping in university dorm rooms!

The school is .25 miles or a 5-minute walk from the hotel on a road with very little traffic. It's a flat, easy walk for the able-bodied, even in the summer (It's a dry heat!). We are working on arranging free transportation between the hotel and the school for attendees who need or want assistance. Still, attendees are encouraged to consider their footwear and remember any needed assistive devices such as canes or braces when packing.

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## COVID Safety Policy

Our Organizing Committee has worked hard to ensure the safest possible environment for our presenters and attendees during this time when COVID variants are still a concern. Only in the event of an unavoidable circumstance (such as a state government ban of all gatherings over a certain number) would we consider canceling Mythcon 52. So, rest assured we are going forward. However, participating in any kind of gathering poses some risk of infection. Developed from input in a survey sent to members and approved by the Council of Stewards, our COVID Policy for Mythcon 52 participants requires:

- Proof of Vaccination or Negative COVID PCR test;
- Masks that fully cover the mouth and nose worn indoors during all presentations and panels, unless actively eating or drinking. Speakers who are actively presenting may remove their masks.

Beyond these requirements and others outlined in our [full COVID Policy](#) (now slightly revised), participants are encouraged to follow their own risk/comfort levels when choosing among events to attend. The Mythopoeic Society accepts no responsibility for any spread of COVID-19 (or any other communicable health risk) as part of travel to, from, or participation in Mythcon 52.

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## Attendees *(registered for either in person or virtual attendance)*

If your name appears in the list below, then you are officially registered for Mythcon 52. If you think you registered earlier, but your name is not in the list, please contact Lynne Darga, who is handling our registration, at [membership@mythsoc.org](mailto:membership@mythsoc.org).

Bethany Abrahamson  
Megan Abrahamson  
Anne Acker  
Cami Agan  
Edward Alexander  
Sarah Beach  
Tim Bolton  
David Bratman  
Berni Phillips Bratman  
Janet Brennan Croft

Matthew Breth  
Dusty Brooks  
BG Callahan  
Tim Callahan  
Joe Christopher  
Vandy Christopher  
Sarah Collins  
Anne Coopersmith  
Edith Crowe  
Daniel Darga

Lynne Darga  
Julia DaSilva  
Margaret Dean  
Jessica Dickinson Goodman  
Paula DiSante  
Leslie Donovan  
Thomas Emanuel  
David Emerson  
Carl Emmons  
Jason Fisher

Stephen Gaddis  
Victoria Gaydosik  
Christopher Gilson  
Ron Green  
Leah Hagan  
Lisa Harrigan  
Christopher Henrich  
Scott Hodgman  
Gwenyth Hood  
Carl Hostetter  
Gary Hunnewell  
Sylvia Hunnewell  
Joel Hunter  
Malcolm Hunter  
Sophia Hunter  
Sylvia Hyde  
Linda James  
Mary Jo Kapsalis

Inderjit Kaur  
Carol King  
Romuald Lakowski  
David Lenander  
Bruce Leonard  
Sean Marlow  
Nancy Martsch  
Lynn Maudlin  
Elise McKenna  
Grace Moone  
Mem Morman  
Jeanell Pelsor  
Karla Powell  
Bonnie Rauscher  
Eric Rauscher  
Robin Anne Reid  
Josiah Riojas  
Vicki Ronn

John Rosegrant  
Arden Smith  
Robert Stauffer  
Willard Stone  
Rivera Sun  
Michael Toregrossa  
Rebecca Umland  
Marion VanLoo  
Brynn VanLoo  
Joan Marie Verba  
Stuart Whitehouse  
Donald Williams  
Amy Wisniewski  
Neil Wright  
Melissa Wright  
Patricia Yarrow  
Joseph Rex Young

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### For more information

If you have questions or ideas, please email [chair@mythcon.org](mailto:chair@mythcon.org) and [co-chair@mythcon.org](mailto:co-chair@mythcon.org).

*We look forward to seeing you in July!*

