

# mythPRINT



**Quarterly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society with Book Reviews, Short Articles, Event Information, and More!**

VOL. 59 NO. 2

SUMMER 2022

WHOLE NO. 401



## Quarterly Bulletin of the Mythopoeic Society

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*Mythprint* is the quarterly 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 discussion groups.

#### MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Mythopoeic Society membership: \$15/year includes an electronic subscription and \$30/year includes a paper subscription to *Mythprint*; either entitles you to members' rates on publications and other benefits.

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The easiest way to join the Mythopoeic Society and subscribe to our publications or join our annual conference is to visit our website. We take personal checks as well as PayPal, which is the easiest way for overseas members. Back issues of *Mythprint* are available for purchase at our website.

Reviews of mythopoeic media, discussion group reports, news items, letters, art work, notes or short articles, and other submissions for *Mythprint* are always welcome. In return for printed pieces, contributors who are not already subscribers will receive an electronic copy of the issue in which the item appears. Contributors who are already subscribers will not receive an additional copy. Please contact the editor for details on format, or send materials to:

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The Mythopoeic Society also publishes two other magazines: *Mythlore* (subscription \$30/year for U.S. Society members) and *The Mythic Circle*, an annual magazine publishing fiction, poems, etc. (\$8/issue for U.S. addresses). Subscriptions and back issues of Society publications may be purchased directly through our web site (using PayPal or Discover card), or you may contact:

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Visit The Mythopoeic Society online at [www.mythsoc.org](http://www.mythsoc.org).

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## Registration and Hotel Booking Still Available!

Registration remains open for Mythcon 52 at [mythcon.org](http://mythcon.org), and attendees can now book a room at our hotel.

## A Note 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, Rachel Briggs, Dawn Catanach, Sarah Collins, Lynne Darga, Alicia Fox-Lenz, Tim 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!"

## MYTHCON 52: THE MYTHIC, THE FANTASTIC, AND THE ALIEN

Albuquerque, NCO

~~July 31 - August 3, 2020 [Cancelled]~~

~~July 30 - August 2, 2021 [Online]~~

FINALLY:  
July 29 - August 1, 2022

## Conference Theme

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 dis-

ussion 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 who deal 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 (*Contact*, *Arrival*, HBO's *Watchmen*, etc.); developing constructed languages truly different from those of Earth-based humans; fantastical Others in Indigenous myths (such as Coyote and Spider Woman); and American folklore about the alien (flying saucers, alien abduction, Area 51, Roswell).

## 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 - \$90

Nonmembers - \$115

Students\* - \$70

\* For children attending with parent(s) or 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 Option

Those who cannot or do not wish to attend Mythcon in person are invited to participate remotely in our virtual option. Our virtual option will include (likely via Zoom and Discord, as with Online Midwinter Seminar 1 and Mythcon 51) livestreaming the Guest of Honor speeches from David Bratman and Rivera Sun and one track of paper and panel presentations on Saturday and Sunday. The cost of "attending" Mythcon 52's virtual option is \$25.

## Papers and 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*.

## 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.

## Hotel

The Mythcon 52 planning committee is delighted to welcome you back to Albuquerque, New Mexico, and back to conferencing in per-

son! 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. The Hampton Inn will honor the reduced room rate for anyone who arrives earlier or stays later.

## Conference Venue

The Hampton Inn, unlike more expensive hotel options, does not have meeting space that fits our needs, but we have reserved 21st Century Public Academy, a local charter school for our conference panels and presentations.

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!), but free transportation will be provided for those 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.

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!

## Meals

The Hampton Inn includes free hot breakfast with their reservations. At this point, Mythcon 52 has not planned any communal meals, apart from the Sunday banquet, in order to allow attendees full choice of dietary needs and comfort level with COVID transmission risks. So, although conference-organized communal meal options are still in the works, we hope to offer some flavor of our usual gatherings—but they 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 a wide variety of food options with counter service, including Burgers, Barbecue, Pizza, Pho, Smoothies, Coffee, Ice Cream,

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 or 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 any material needs, a Walmart Supercenter is .6 miles away.

## 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.

Rivera Sun  
Author Guest  
of Honor

MYTHCON 52 GUESTS OF HONOR

David Bratman  
Scholar 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 in Middle Grade Fiction.

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](#).

David Bratman has been reading Tolkien for over fifty 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 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.



## Questions

If you have questions or ideas about Mythcon 52, please email [chair@mythcon.org](mailto:chair@mythcon.org) and [co-chair@mythcon.org](mailto:co-chair@mythcon.org).

## 2022 MYTHOPOEIC AWARD FINALISTS

### Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature

- Katherine Addison, *The Witness for the Dead* (Tor, 2021)
- Ryka Aoki, *Light from Uncommon Stars* (Tor Books, 2021)
- P. Djèli Clark, *A Master of Djinn* (Tordotcom, 2021)
- Susanna Clarke, *Piranesi* (Bloomsbury, 2020)
- Garth Nix, *Terciel and Elinor* (Katherine Tegen Books, 2021)
- Jo Walton, *Or What You Will* (Tor 2020)

### Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature

- Sayantani DasGupta, *The Kiranmala and the Kingdom Beyond* trilogy (Scholastic, 2018–2020)
- Regina M. Hansen, *The Coming Storm* (Athenium, 2021)
- Lori M. Lee, *Pahua and the Soul Stealer* (Rick Riordan Presents, 2021)
- Eden Royce, *Root Magic* (Walden Pond Press, 2021)

### Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies

- Paul S. Fiddes, *Charles Williams and C. S. Lewis: Friends in Co-inherence* (Oxford UP, 2021)
- John Garth, *The Worlds of J.R.R. Tolkien: The Places that Inspired Middle-earth* (Princeton UP, 2020)
- Peter Grybauskas, *A Sense of Tales Untold: Exploring the Edges of Tolkien's Literary Canvas* (Kent State UP, 2021)

- Holly Ordway, *Tolkien's Modern Reading: Middle-earth Beyond the Middle Ages* (Word on Fire Academic, 2021)

### Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies

- Philip Ball, *The Modern Myths: Adventures in the Machinery of the Popular Imagination* (U of Chicago P, 2021)
- Hadas Elber-Aviram, *Fairy Tales of London: British Urban Fantasy, 1840 to the Present* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2021)
- Daniel Ogden, *The Dragon in the West: From Ancient Myth to Modern Legend* (Oxford UP, 2021)
- Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, *The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination from Harry Potter to The Hunger Games* (New York UP, 2019)
- Joseph Rex Young, *George R. R. Martin and the Fantasy Form* (Routledge, 2019)

The Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature is given to the fantasy novel, multi-volume, or single-author story collection for adults published during 2021 that best exemplifies the spirit of the Inklings. Books are eligible for two years after publication if not selected as a finalist during the first year of eligibility. 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 beginning readers to age thirteen, 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. Books for mature "Young Adults" may be moved to the Adult literature category. The Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies is given to books on Tolkien, Lewis, and/or Williams that make significant contributions to Inklings scholarship. For this award, books first published during the last three years (2019–2021) 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.

The winners of this year's awards will be announced during Mythcon 52, to be held July 29th through August 1st, 2022, at Albuquerque, NM. A complete list of Mythopoeic Award winners is available on the Society web site: <http://www.mythsoc.org/awards/>. The finalists for the literature awards, text of recent acceptance speeches, and selected book reviews are also listed in this on-line section. For more information about the Mythopoeic Awards, please contact the Awards Administrator: Dennis Wise, [awards@mythsoc.org](mailto:awards@mythsoc.org).

## TIME TRAVEL WITH A TWIST

By Jessica Dickinson Goodman

One of the odder entrants in this year's Hugo packet is no stranger to regular readers, but takes a bit of explaining. *Galactic Journey*, or *The Journey* to its friends, is a project started by Gideon Marcus in 2009 and published publicly starting in 2013. In its nine years of publication, this fanzine has been nominated for a Hugo four times – including this year. It started as a way for him to connect to his late father through his voluminous collection of science fiction and fantasy magazines, carefully collected from the mid-1950s onwards.

But rather than cherry-pick stories, Gideon took a completionist's approach: reading them and anything else from that period he could get his hands on in its very own context. He was strict with his timeline, reading and reviewing pieces from *Astounding and Galaxy* and *Fantasy and Science Fiction* exactly 55 years to the day after publication.



There's an essential sweetness to this exercise, a love of the genre and the people it's brought together, that still floods through the broader community *Galactic Journey* has created. With more than a dozen regular volunteer writers, including Hugo-finalist fan writer and science fiction Cora Buhlert, Hugo-finalist fan artist Lorlei Esther, and your own correspondent, the fanzine is currently exploring June 1967 through a genre lens.

This month, we've had articles on the technology used in and the poetry used to describe the 1967 Six Day War; a review of June's edition of *Fantastic* using the Beatles' 1967 release of *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver* as a frame; an on-the-ground report on the June 2nd shooting of student Benno Ohnesorg in West Berlin during the visit of the Shah of Iran; a delightful review of the *Doctor Who* episode "The Evil of the Daleks [Part 1]"; and an overview of the brewing Biafran war in what is now Nigeria; and the monthly feature *Galactoscope*, which is a regular review of "newly" released SFF novels.

And we're only half-way through June 1967.

Other memorable articles this year have included an analysis of the role of faith in C.S. Lewis's *The Space Trilogy*, a scathing review of the CBS News documentary "The Homosexuals," a celebration of the first Marvel comics to reach the UK, and reviews of *Analog*, *Doctor Who*, and, of course, *Star Trek*, which began airing in 1966.

One of the most popular new features of the fanzine are our Wednesday night watch-alongs of *Star Trek*, with period-typical commercials and in-period chat through the Discord server. Just like on the MythSoc Discord server, people discovering fiction from this period for the first time cheerfully rub elbows with those who experienced it when it first came out. Kandy Fong drops into our chats to give fun background stories about developing the first fanvids using slides and Gideon Marcus reads

"newly" published fanzine articles aloud to the group, often to cheers and hoots from the in-person party at his home in Vista, CA.

Those of us who grew up with *Next Generation* or *Deep Space 9* or, God forbid, *Enterprise* get to experience the culture shock that comes with arriving 10 minutes early to watch *Star Trek* only to find the phenomenally racist *Daniel Boone* is still playing, as it did on most stations during *Star Trek*'s original first season. The power of Nichelle Nichols, George Takei, and other performers' work stands out all the more in the original context.

We're currently in reruns until "Amok Time" airs on September 15th, 1967, so there's time to catch up with us on Wednesday nights. Once we're in new episodes again, a group of us will be back to writing weekly reviews; you can find two of them from "1966" in your Hugo packet this year, including one on the "Mythopoeia of Star Trek."

It is not always easy writing as if it's 1967. Words I use daily to describe myself – queer, feminist, geek – didn't exist or were barely coming into vogue. There are patterns of speech, allusions, and ways of thinking that have evolved in the past 55 years and, for me, it is a deep exercise in em-

pathy to try to make my points understood while using a vernacular ever-so-slightly shifted to the left of my own. Words I grew up understanding were offensive in the extreme were still widely used, and I have to work around them to both maintain my modern integrity and play the role I've cast myself in.

But things were not so different. There's still *Star Trek* on TV and poetry about war; modern conflicts still inspire fantastical settings; readers complain about writers and writers complain about readers and everyone complains about publishers (and reviewers!).

And there is community. Community in the #staff-room channel, where we cheer on each other's articles and help each other understand

But things were not so different.  
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our historical sources; community with our readers, who leave comments letting us know when we've done a good job or missed the mark; and the far-off-but-ever-present community that comes from loving stories that have grown and sustained people for generations.

As I sit at home on my computer on a Wednesday night, watching Spock make eyes at Kirk, I imagine myself shoulder-to-shoulder with the first women to write modern fanfiction. I can feel how revelatory this story would feel after a lead-in episode of *Daniel Boone* where stories involving Mingo – played by Ed Ames, both of whose parents immigrated to the U.S. from Ukraine – rot from within with stereotypes about Native Americans. And then *Star Trek* starts with that electric violin and those horns and the episode includes a complex conversation about colonialism or the justice system, or gender, and it feels – well, it feels new.

Wonderfully, gloriously, new.

*Galactic Journey* is not your typical fanzine; the premise takes a bit of getting used to. But once you commit to the bit, once you start to realize how much there is to read and enjoy and scoff at and dive back into from the world-of-tomorrow as seen from 55 years ago, you'll find, as I did, that it is well worth the journey.

*Galactic Journey* is a finalist for the Hugos, which will be awarded at *Chicon 8*, the World Science Fiction Convention, September 1-5 in Chicago, Illinois. If you're interested in joining their *Star Trek* watch parties Wednesday nights, please email [gideon@galacticjourney.org](mailto:gideon@galacticjourney.org). To read some of the articles listed above, please check out your Hugo packet or adventure on over to [galacticjourney.org](http://galacticjourney.org).



## REVIEWS

Katherine Addison. *The Witness for the Dead*. TOR, 2021. 256 pp. \$16.99. Reviewed by Megan B. Abrahamson.

Set in the world of *The Goblin Emperor* (which I reviewed in *Mythprint* #374), Katherine Addison's new novel follows the story of elven cleric Celehar, a minor but intriguing character appearing briefly in *The Goblin Emperor*. The title of the book, *The Witness for the Dead*, describes Celehar's supernatural duties as a prelate of the deity Ulis: he can speak with the dead, and "witness" for them, or represent them, in legal and religious matters. Now, maybe I'm just too dedicated to the cleric class in *Dungeons & Dragons*, but deity-granted vaguely necromantic superpowers are metal as heck, so I was sold from the initial concept.

The steampunk world has a chance to shine now that we follow Celehar through daily city life in a fantasy world revolutionized by steam power (more so than when our protagonist was an emperor). Celehar lives in an apartment block, he feeds stray cats, he reads trashy novels and takes his meals at tea houses, when he takes them at all. Living in the middle of a large city, he walks everywhere, and has to deal with the expense of a train ride, carriage, or horse rental if he needs to get somewhere further afield (or is just tired of walking).

This novel does not focus on a single driving plot, but covers the day to day life of Celehar. This means solving several mysteries and entanglements related to his office, the chief of which is solving two separate murder mysteries. Celehar becomes embroiled in a witnessing for the dead that grows political, when in witnessing for a dead nobleman reveals a fraudulent will: like the rich and powerful tend to do, the accused calls Celehar's piety and office into question through powerful friends. This gets Celehar sent on several dangerous missions that require him to confront ghosts and ghouls as a trial of his faith before the witnessing can be verified and the accused arrested. When an airship explodes and kills hundreds, Celehar is called in to witness for the dead, in case sabo-

tage was the reason for the explosion, as was the case in *The Goblin Emperor*. Intrigue abounds in the murder mysteries: one surrounding an opera house singer who was drowned in the river, and the other a case of stopping a serial murderer who marries and kills young women for their money.

This book is much easier to pick up and enjoy than *The Goblin Emperor*, with a reduced cast of characters, and slightly less political and courtly intrigue. I mentioned in my previous review that reading stories set in this world feels a bit like being thrown into *The Silmarillion*, where characters may have multiple names but also fantasy forms of address replacing more familiar titles.

The appeal of this book was adding to the already intriguing worldbuilding in this universe. For me in particular, I love a good undead-fighting heroic cleric as much as the next person, but what makes this cosmology compelling is how *sad* the ghosts and ghouls are, and that Celehar “fights” them by essentially reminding them who they used to be. Celehar, too, is sad, traumatized by his past and by existing as a queer man in a homophobic world—but instead of being irritatingly brooding, he always makes room for kindness in his daily life, nurturing others while reserving no softness for himself. Generally reserved, Celehar manages to make friends with the flamboyant opera house owner, a relationship which swings flirtatious and I would like to see develop into something more. Celehar has other friends, too, mostly extroverts who show their friendship by bullying him into taking care of himself.

The goblin-elf racism is less pronounced among working class characters here than among the nobility in *The Goblin Emperor* (though it’s possible our elven protagonist simply doesn’t notice these issues as much as our biracial emperor did). Issues of class and classism, and in some cases thinly veiled homophobia, are necessarily a bigger problem for Celehar. After addressing these other “-isms,” I would personally love to see Addison deal with gender more in a future novel in this universe, perhaps featuring a female protagonist. All in all, I was excited to read a new story set in the world of *The Goblin Emperor*, and *The Witness for the Dead* did not disappoint, featur-

ing exciting new magic and cosmology, a new perspective on the world, and an admirable new protagonist to fall in love with. Though I mention *The Goblin Emperor* a lot in this review, this isn’t the MCU: it’s definitely not required reading before jumping into *The Witness for the Dead*.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Mythopoeic Society Stewards Meetings

In accordance with our Bylaws, to ensure all Mythopoeic Society members are aware in good time the schedule of meetings, so that any member of the Society can propose a topic to be placed on the agenda of the next Council meeting, the following is the tentative schedule of the Council of Stewards Quarterly Meetings remaining for 2022 and planned for 2023:

- July 29 (in person),
- November 5 (Zoom)
- February 4th, 2023 (Zoom).

### Save the Date! Mythsoc’s Online Midwinter Seminar 2

Mark your calendars and start working on those abstracts, the Mythopoeic Society’s Online Midwinter Seminar (OMS) is back, January 28th, 2023. The theme is “Fantasy Goes to Hell.” Keep an eye on our website and social media for updates!

**Submit to Mythprint!**

*We are always accepting reviews of any mythopoeic media, but we also publish letters to the editor or society, short articles and notes on Inklings topics, art, meeting discussion reports, and more! We are especially interested in reviews of mythopoeic works by creators of color and other historically underrepresented perspectives. Submit to: [mythprint@mythsoc.org](mailto:mythprint@mythsoc.org)*

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**MYTHCON 51:**  
**THE MYTHIC, THE FANTASTIC, AND**  
**THE ALIEN**

Albuquerque, New Mexico

July 29- August 1, 2022

It's not too late to  
register, and book rooms and banquet  
tickets at [Mythcon.org](http://Mythcon.org)!