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Fantasists On Fantasy: A Collection Of Critical Reflections By Eighteen Masters Of The Art



Synopsis

18 of the finest fantasy writers share their secrets of their craft in essays, excerpts, and letters. Candid, controversial, and often highly personal, here is a unique glimpse into the author's singular imagination, as the real experts in the field explore the theory, technique and aesthetics of fantasy literature. From the magical realms of Middle earth to the Eldritch darkness of the Cthulhu Mythos, the most prominent writers of fantasy invite the reader into their enchanted worlds. Writers include: J.R.R. TOLKIEN / C.S. LEWIS / H.P. LOVECRAFT / AUGUST DERLETH / GEORGE MACDONALD / JAMES THURBER / SIE HERBERT READ / PETER S. BEAGLE / FELIX MARTI'-IBANEZ and many more.

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Customer Reviews

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An excellent investigation for anyone who enjoys fantasy.

Editors Robert Boyer & Kenneth Zahorski had already published four exceptional fantasy anthologies in the late 1970s/early 1980s, all concentrating on fine storytelling, genuine mythic power, and high literary quality. For their fifth volume, they went right to the creators of superb fantasy, gathering essays from some of the masters of the craft. Published just before fantasy really broke wide open & became a best-selling genre unto itself -- complete with the decrease in quality that any glut must bring, alas -- this is an indispensable volume for anyone who loves fantasy as an art form. They cast their net far & wide, starting with George MacDonald in the 19th Century, and including such literary luminaries as Sir Herbert Read & James Thurber, as well as major authors such as H. P. Lovecraft, C. S. Lewis, J.R. R. Tolkien, and some of the finest Young Adult fantasy writers, such as Lloyd Alexander, Mollie Hunter, and Susan Cooper. These and others all write from a distinctly personal viewpoint, placing literary fantasy in proper context. For them it's not so much about escapism -- although they'll be the first to admit that there are things worth escaping from -- as it is about using fantasy to explore & illuminate the human psyche. Or the soul, if you will -- its needs, its values, its healing properties -- though not in any shallow New Age sense of those words. These days fantasy is a major mass-market industry, often reduced to D&D-style formula, with plenty of how-to books explaining the best ways to make poor copies of other fantasy novels. You won't find that here. This is for the serious reader & writer of fantasy as enriching art, something always entertaining but far more than just a quick read. In short, it's not about churning out cheap fast food, but creating gourmet cuisine for the discerning palate -- most highly recommended!

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