

EDITORIAL

IN HIS ESSAY “ON FAIRY-STORIES” (1947), English writer J. R. R. Tolkien famously defined “fantasy” as “the making or glimpsing of Other-worlds,” as seen in myths, legends, and folklore. Bulgarian-French critic Tzvetan Todorov also defined the “fantastic” as the ambiguous appearance of seemingly supernatural events within otherwise realistic narratives. Both of these concepts thus refer to imaginative or speculative works of literature, although they differ in terms of the ontological certainty of their imaginative visions.

Our autumn issue features a special section devoted to this theme, and it begins with an interview with Canadian fantasy writer Guy Gavriel Kay, who discusses his recent work on the legend of Merlin and Nimue. The section also includes Michelle Wamboldt’s modern folk tale “Meeres Rausch” and Richard Brait’s poem “The Night Troll at the Window,” which is based on an Icelandic folk tale collected by the nineteenth-century folklorist Jón Árnason. The section continues with Lawrence Millman’s “The Last Journey of Baron Munchhausen” and Robert Kostuck’s “Carlos Argentino Daneri,” which reimagine the lives of two famous fantasy characters—the former from German writer Rudolf Erich Raspe’s novel *Baron Munchhausen’s Narrative of his Marvellous Travels and Campaigns in Russia* (1785) and the latter from Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges’ story “The Aleph” (1945). David Sheskin’s “The Plump Boar,” Chris Benjamin’s “Contaminated Blood,” Amanda Peters’ “Reclamation,” and the excerpt from Gary Barwin’s *Folktales from the Library of New Planets* also provide glimpses into other worlds that each have their own magical qualities. The section then concludes with Malka Daskal’s “Antimatter,” Patrick Doerksen’s “The Backdoor Lock,” and Catherine Austen’s “Down the Drain, which clearly illustrate the concept of the “fantastic,” as it remains somewhat unclear whether the characters are experiencing supernatural events or mental hallucinations.

Our autumn issue also features two new chronicles: Stephen Low’s review of Simon Stephens’ stage adaptation of José Saramago’s novel *Blindness* (1995) and Jerry White’s review of several new films included in the streaming program of this year’s Vancouver International Film Festival.