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## **Salem Press Announces a New Addition to the *Critical Insights* Series** ***Critical Insights: The Lord of the Rings***

J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* quickly became one of the most popular and influential novels of the twentieth century. It inspired not just one film but a series of well-received movies that brought Tolkien's highly imaginative fantasy epic to life on the big screen. This volume about the novel discusses the work from numerous points of view, employing biographical, historical, cultural, mythic, and aesthetic approaches, among others.

This volume, like all others in the *Critical Insights* series, is divided into several sections. It begins with an essay titled "The Emotions of a Tolkien Reader" by Franco Manni. This is followed by a Biography of J.R.R. Tolkien written by volume editor Robert C. Evans.

A collection of four critical contexts essays are intended to treat the novel

- 1) From a historical vantage point
- 2) In terms of its critical reception
- 3) Using a specific critical lens
- 4) And by comparing and contrasting it with another important work.

This section opens with an essay by Nancy Bunting titled, "Speak Memory: Some Biographical Sources of *The Lord of the Rings*," followed by a piece by Brandon Schneeberger, "Teaching Tolkien: An Overview of Approaches," This essay provides practical suggestions on teaching Tolkien's works to make them accessible to a wide variety of students. The following two articles are written by John R. Holmes and Robert C. Evans respectively. The first, "The Departure of Boromir": A Close Reading," illustrates the benefits of paying close attention to specific textual details when approaching literature. The final essay, "Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* Trilogy and Victor Fleming's *The Wizard of Oz*," compares and contrasts film adaptations of *The Lord of the Rings* to the classic *Wizard of Oz*.

Following these four Critical Context essays is the **Critical Readings** section of this book, which contains the following essays:

- Reading and Understanding Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*: A Survey of Critical Responses, by Robert C. Evans
- Tom Shippey on *The Lord of the Rings*: The Legacy of a Major Tolkien Scholar, by Robert C. Evans

- Critical Responses to Peter Jackson’s *The Lord of the Rings* Film Trilogy, by Joyce Ahn
- Tolkien as a Craftsman: The Literary Value of *The Lord of the Rings*, by Courtney Petrucci
- “A Dream of Music”: The *Eärendil Poem* in *The Lord of the Rings*, by John R. Holmes
- Eldest: Tom Bombadil and Fintan mac Bóchra as Memory Keepers, by Kris Swank
- Shelob’s Origins in Tolkien’s Cats, by Nancy Bunting
- Religion in Tolkien’s Works, by Franco Manni
- Pity, Malice, and Agency in Tolkien’s Subcreation, by Matthew M. DeForrest
- The Power That Dare Not Speak Its Name: Tolkien, Magic, and the Occult, by Matthew M. DeForrest
- Mythic People of Fire and Tolkien’s Southern Races in *The Lord of the Rings*, by Larry Swain
- Tolkien’s Alleged Anti-Semitism and the Diaspora, by Larry Swain

In the final section, **Resources**, easy-to-follow lists are provided to help guide the reader through important dates and moments in the author’s life. A selection of further reading is then provided. Each essay in *Critical Insights: The Lord of the Rings* includes a list of **Works Cited** and detailed endnotes. Also included in this volume is a **Chronology of J.R.R. Tolkien’s Life**, a list of **Additional Works by J.R.R. Tolkien**, a Bibliography, biographies of the **Editor** and **Contributors**, and an alphabetical **Index**.

The *Critical Insights* Series distills the best of both classic and current literary criticism of the world’s most studied literature. Edited and written by some of academia’s most distinguished literary scholars, *Critical Insights: The Lord of the Rings* provides authoritative, in-depth scholarship that students and researchers will rely on for years. This volume is destined to become a valuable purchase for all.

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