

# Lord of the Rings-1800 Pages and Still Too Short



the book worm  
dave macrae

As a change from the half-rate books that have been reviewed of late I have decided to take a look at what has to be the epic of the twentieth century, J.R.R. Tolkien's trilogy-with-prelude, The Lord of the Rings. (As a side note regarding half-rate books, I am amazed at the reaction of the student body to the Harlequin Romance, The Guarded Gates. Comments ranged from "that was a satire, wasn't it" to "how come you praised that?". One person even wanted to know where she could buy it!)

But at any rate, to return to The Lord of the Rings, for sheer breadth of imagination it cannot be equalled. No writer that I know of

has been able to create an entire world and provide it with a four thousand-year history, let alone introduce it skillfully enough that the reader is not overwhelmed by it. One has to go back to the works of Homer (such as Ulysses) to find a comparable effort. He begins with a small hole in the ground and one hobbit (small creatures much like rabbits except that they are intelligent and stand upright) and gradually spreads your horizons until you suddenly realize that you have been introduced to an entire continent complete with at least six intelligent species (the actual number depends on your definition of intelligent), each with its own sub-

groups and history. By the end of the book you have the feeling that you have always known Middle Earth. Despite having read the series for the first time only two years ago I cannot picture a time when it was not a part of my view of reality. I was filled with an overpowering desire to know more; in the best sense to return. Indeed letters to the author of this 1800-page work have consistently voiced one complaint - it is too short!

In a novel where the setting receives such heavy treatment it might be expected that the plot and characters get short shrift. But no. The characters are true to life, human with both faults and strengths. The only ones which are stereotypic such as Mithradir, the wizard, appear to be that way by design. This image fits the story best. Likewise the action moves well with few slow points. Indeed virtually the only dull spot is the second chapter of the first book where it reads more like a history text. But

the chapter is not necessary and can be skipped by all but those who (like myself) have been bitten by hobbit mania.

Despite the fact that it can be read and enjoyed without any consideration of the deeper questions that it raises (it makes a much better children's story than that old mis-used favorite Alice in Wonderland) it applies itself to virtually anything - from the nature of good and evil to insights on human nature to the concept of "just wars" to the mechanics of a (true!) communist state.

Of all the books I have reviewed (and virtually all I have read) this is the only one I can find no fault. If I can say it without sounding cliché The Lord of the Rings is simply incredible. I can fairly say that it is a "must" to read".

P.S. This will be the last book review I'll be doing this year so goodbye (no tears please).

# Izzurd Goate Show - The Red Island Road Review With A Twist



Can a group of local talent working with no budget, a minimum of sets and rehearsal, and lacking much solid direction, plan and perform a three hour benefit concert that is both a box office & an artistic success?

All things considered the answer is, surprisingly enough, an emphatic YES.

On the evening of February 2 nearly one thousand people joined together at the Confederation Centre for what is sure to be termed the greatest Red Island Road Revue ever: The Izzurd Goate Show.

The Red Island Road Revue has in the past been

basically a straight concert but took a different turn this year when, in the hands of the Island's well known apocalyptic buffoon, Reverend Izzurd Goate, it was built around the "All the world's a stage" speech from Shakespeare's "As You Like It".

The show was well conceived but the quality was somewhat irregular. With a few pleasant exceptions the theatrical framework was weak. The exceptions were the mime and dancing of John Giler, Erskine Smith and Blaine Vany, and with some reservations, the death & resurrection scenes. Deserving honorable mention was Izzurd Goate's

rendition of The Slithery Dee.

In spite of some obvious weak links, any sins committed were more than atoned for by some of the finest musical performances ever witnessed by a Charlottetown audience. The featured groups were Take Ten, a jazz band, Taquila, a rock band, and the Rock Island Line.

Take Ten and Taquila both gave excellent efforts, but played a little too long. However the audience could not get enough of the Rock Island Line. This group, comprised of eight local and primarily single entertainers who banded together solely for the evenings performance, left many people wishing it was a permanent fixture in the Charlottetown area.

Of the solitary performers, Laurel Smythe & Sharon Duffy would have, in this case, been better seen and not heard, but Bonnie LeClair was easily the high point of the ev-

ening. This lady's contribution, both within the Rock Island Line and by herself should have confirmed once and for all that she is not just a singer but a very professional entertainer.

The calibre of the show would have been greatly improved by removing about thirty minutes of the weaker acts. As a result it would not have been so tiring and the quality higher.

The third annual Red Island Road Review was a threefold benefit concert. It benefited the very enthusiastic and exhausted audience, and it also gave Island entertainers another opportunity to reiterate to audiences and promoters alike that Prince Edward Island, if not yet, may one day be a musical Mecca.

If you missed this show you may get a reprise. It is rumored that there'll be a "Second Coming" at Easter, and if there is you are well advised to be there.

Michael Jardine