

Pullman

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 08 Sep 2002

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Alice K. Turner — 08 Sep 2002, 03:25

Surprise today! Opened Vanity Fair, a glossy US mag usually obsessed with celebs and scandals (usually rather well done, I must say), to find, of all things, a piece on Philip Pullman, written by Christopher Hitchens, VF's resident gadfly on the left. A rather *reverent* piece, if you can imagine such a thing from Hitchens (for whom kiddie lit is rather a stretch from his usual snide political beat). I was agog. The interview info was not new for anyone who has tracked Pullman down on the net, as I have done. Anti-Lewis, anti-Tolkien, anti-Milne (well, that was new). Quite explicit about the unbeliever aspect of the series, which worried me till I realized that the VF audience is not likely to have him stoned to death.

A ray of hope: though I have grave doubts about a movie (or series, as kiddie flicks now seem to be), it turns out that Tom Stoppard is busy on a script. That could be...well...awesome. Or that is the opinion of an erstwhile English major who screamed with manic appreciation during Shakespeare in Love every time the pre-pubescent John Webster was shown torturing small animals or pulling the wings off flies. There were two bylines on that movie, but such hysterically apt literary savvy seems to me to be pure Stoppard, and I would trust him more than any other screenwriter on Pullman. Hoping that he would rein in his instinctive irony for the many deadly serious moments--but I trust him here too. I'm so emotionally invested in this series that I'm really proud that so eminent a writer as Stoppard is involved.

Oh, boy, now fantasy casting! Given that Mrs. Coulter is the most charming creature who ever was, could Nicole Kidman handle her? Lord Azazel, Anthony Hopkins, I guess. I hope not James Earl Jones as the bear--it would be so disconcerting to have him sound like Darth Vader. And how about Serafina Pekkala? Glamour beyond even Mrs. Coulter!

-alga

p.s. Oh, funny thing, same issue, a small preview of the new Harry Potter movie. What does this mean?