

The Rowling Library
Magazine



The Legacy

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PRELIMINAR POSTERS FOR THE STONE

Phil Bates is an award-winning designer who worked as a senior art director for major broadcasting and cable networks, motion picture production companies, music labels, and design firms that support the industry. You probably saw a film poster made by him, and among his clients are big corporations like Fox or Warner Bros. In 2009, he was added to the Art Institute of Colorado's Hall of Fame.

Recently, he shared some posters he worked on for the first Harry Potter film: *Harry Potter and the*

Philosopher's Stone (*Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* in the United States). Although these film posters had never seen the light of day until now, they are proof of all the unknown work behind the Harry Potter films (and especially the first one). We had the chance to talk to Mr. Bates, we asked him a few questions about the creative process and how he worked on the posters, which despite not having been used, they did serve as an inspiration for the ones that were chosen by Warner Bros. and are known at a worldwide level.



How were you approached to do this job? Did you know Harry Potter at the time, or was it an unknown saga for you?

I was working for a design agency and we were given the project of working on the international campaign for the first film. I was so excited, as I had read the books and was a huge fan.



NOVEMBER 16



The first poster is very iconic, and now it is easy to associate the rounded glasses to Harry Potter, but at the time it could have been risky (they may have been associated with John Lennon). How did you take that decision?

I did worry that people would associate the glasses as "John Lennon glasses", but I figured that Harry Potter was such a huge phenomenon and so widely known that people would recognize them from the book art, plus I used the font from the books for NOVEMBER and put the logo as a reflection in the glasses. But in the end, it was too risky for them to have this be the first art for the movie series, even as a teaser poster.

Why did you choose to include Hagrid showing the Wizarding World to Harry Potter for the second one?

To me, Hagrid showing the Wizarding World to Harry was an iconic moment in the first book. Of course, he showed Harry Diagon Alley, not Hogwarts, even though he was with Harry when they arrived at Hogwarts. But that moment in Diagon Alley always stood out to me, because not only Harry but the reader is also introduced to the magic world. I thought it made a great moment and poster, but they didn't shoot that idea and we didn't have the right photography to support it. I pieced that together from many

unit photography shots but it just wasn't high enough quality to go any further than a comp and we couldn't find the right expression of Harry and needed to see his face a bit more.

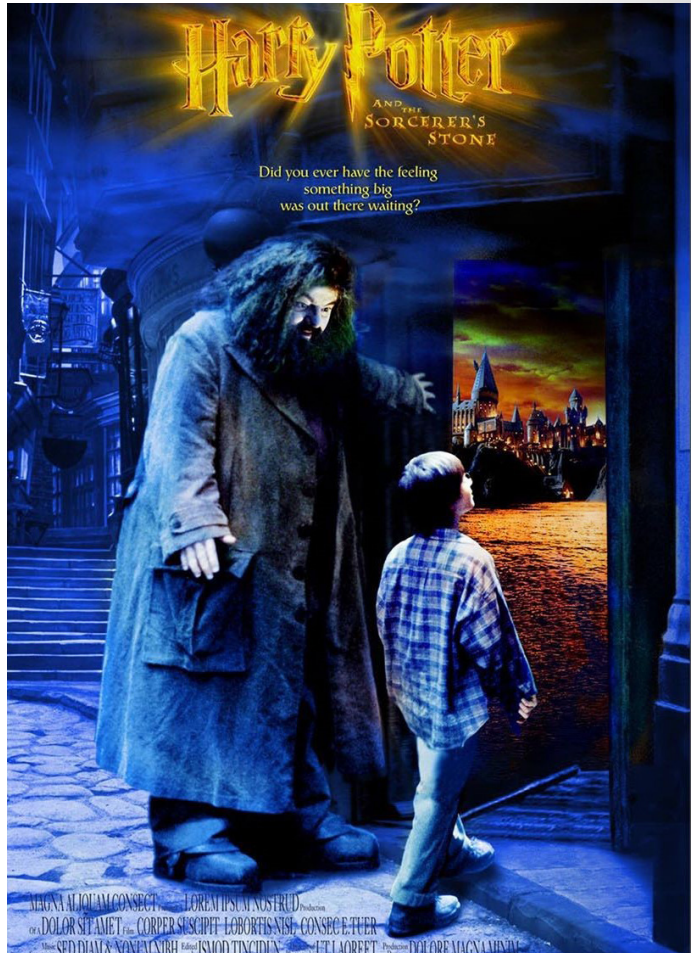
Were you able to watch the film before working on posters, or you were provided with the material?

We didn't get to watch the film but we were able to read the script and I was thrilled that they stuck very closely to the book. Plus we got to go through tons of unit (on set) photography which really gave a pretty good picture of how the film looked. It was exciting!

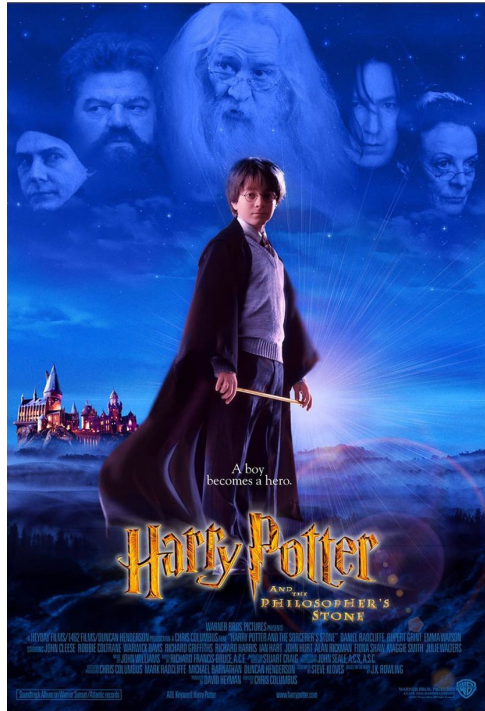
Did you choose the taglines and slogans that appear on the posters? Any special reason for them?

We had copy written and I did choose the lines for the comps you saw. People seeing the movie probably read the book, or at the very least they knew the story, so I didn't feel any pressure to tell a story with the copy. I just wanted to create a mood and give people seeing the art something to be excited about.

Do you know why Warner Bros. decided not to use them widely?



The art they went with was designed by another art director at the design firm. It had the same feel as the art of Hagrid showing Harry Diagon Alley but this art had a lot more scope and looked bigger, more magical. It was a nice way of introducing the film to the millions of Harry Potter fans around the world. We also did a theater display that showed Harry looking into the Mirror of Erised. And the mirror portion of the standee was a lenticular design and showed different things when you viewed it from different angles. It was pretty cool.





PORTKEY GAMES

HOGWARTS LEGACY

IS IT
J.K. ROWLING'S
LEGACY?



And in the end, it was announced. There were many months of waiting and anxiety for the Harry Potter fandom, or at least for the part that was asking for something since forever. A Harry Potter role-play game (RPG) looked like a million-dollar idea and there were not many reasons why a videogame like that did not exist. In fact, many followers of the series tried to do it themselves: a few amateur projects organised some campaigns to create a non-official Harry Potter roleplay video game, but even the ones that were released were not close to what Warner Bros. Games finally revealed.

What they showed originated a few years ago, probably between 2016 and 2017. It was in October 2018 when the first leak appeared online. This leak, which confirmed Avalanche Software as the studio in charge of the development,

exposed some things that today we know are part of the final game. This revelation appeared as a video on Reddit and showed us The Great Hall, a Hogwarts uniform that seemed to be from a past era, a screen with different spells, and even another screen to create a character. The user who uploaded it to Reddit said they watched the trailer in a shopping mall and were asked to complete a survey for a small payment. Obviously, cameras and phones were not permitted but the ones carrying out the survey never took their phones away, so there you have it: the first Harry Potter video game footage.

Back then, this leaked video triggered a lot of theories, and it was soon confirmed as true a few hours later when Warner Bros. asked YouTube to take it down - where it had also been uploaded - mentioning it was copyrighted

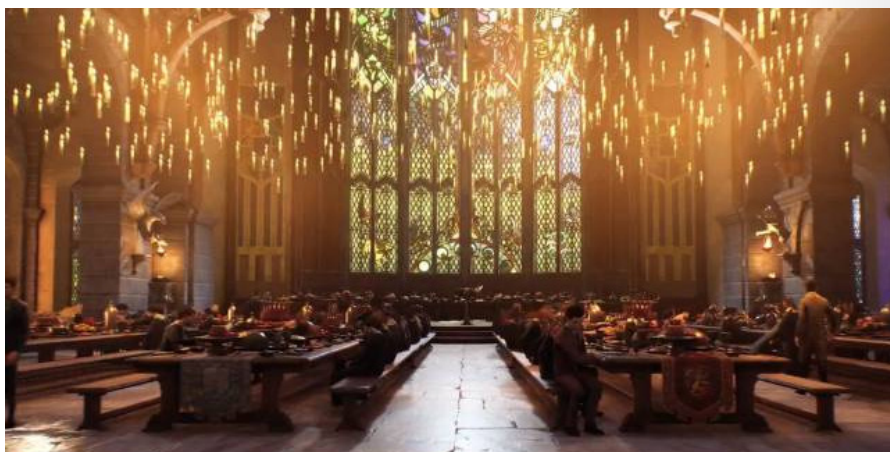




material. This meant only one thing: the video was real and the studio was working on this video game. However, the “confirmation” brought up more questions: was it really an RPG? The personalization screen from the leak was not enough to confirm this. Was it going to have an online mode? In which year was it going to be set? Would we be able to visit new places? Although we had seen The Great Hall, the other locations were not clear and neither was the map that was shown only for a few seconds and only exhibited a small village alongside a mountain chain.

The person who shared the leak also shared some details of the game description that was provided to him (and all the people who participated in the survey). According to this person, some passages were “Set in the

19th Century (1800's) Wizarding World, this 3rd person open-world action RPG centers around your character with unique abilities and who has earned a late acceptance to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry”, and “Upon arrival, strange events begin to materialize in the Forbidden Forest and trouble begins to brew within the castle walls. Together with Professor Eleazar Fig, you embark on a journey through both familiar and never-seen-before locations to bring to light the truth behind these mysterious occurrences.”, and “On your quest you will craft potions, master new spells, and discover fantastic beasts. You will battle Dark Wizards, Goblins, and other supernatural enemies and uncover the truth about your destiny – the Fate of the Wizarding World lies in your hands.”



Obviously, not many people believed this. And it was okay, why should we trust anonymous people on the internet? All the doubts were dissipated in September 2020, almost two years after the leak. Those two years were filled with theories and rumours, until Warner Bros Games decided to share a trailer that quickly became viral and a trending topic in the most popular social networks. The information that came with the leak coincides with what Warner Bros. officially released last month: *“Hogwarts Legacy is an immersive, open-world, action role-playing-game set in the 1800s wizarding world, which puts players at the centre of their own adventure.”*, and continues, *“The story has players experiencing life as a student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry like never before, as they live the unwritten and embark on a dangerous journey to uncover*

a hidden truth of the wizarding world.”

Having taken place in the 19th century, many fans started to ask what relationship it could have with the plots or character that we already know, from sharing Hogwarts classrooms with Albus Dumbledore (who was born in 1881), to the war with the non-wizarding world that is mentioned in the Fantastic Beasts films (*“The wizarding and non-wizarding world have been at peace for over a century”*). Other fans waited for confirmation from Adrian Ropp himself, Head of Story at Avalanche, who ensured that J.K. Rowling was not involved in a creative way in the project, and that the whole team who worked in the video game had complete freedom crafting the story, the characters and locations.

This was celebrated by those who

want to detach themselves from J.K. Rowling after her controversial sayings, though the fact that Rowling is not creatively involved in the game raises other topics, more interesting to debate. The canonicity of the Wizarding World projects was always very important to the fans, to the point of drawing a parallelism between quality and canonicity, which I personally do not share. When the fans try to belittle Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, “it is not canon” is the most used phrase, alluding to the fact that it was not written by J.K. Rowling (although she said that she came up with the story and that it is canon). Usually, that is the excuse used to justify that some creative project does not deserve to be appreciated by the entire fandom.

But something different happens with Hogwarts Legacy, and it is

that despite the author not being creatively involved, it was very well received by the Harry Potter community. In a poll that we did a few weeks ago, half the fans were more excited by this video game than for the third Fantastic Beasts movie. Maybe we have reached the point where Harry Potter and his Wizarding World are not dependent on Rowling, her creations and her ideas, and the public is more open to new endeavours, paying attention only to the stories’ quality and not the authors behind them.

What is happening with Hogwarts Legacy is not normal, but it is welcomed. As it happens with other franchises (like Star Wars, for example), in which all the story-based products do not depend on only one person, that was translated into more stories and new characters all the time:



something that is appreciated by the fans who are hungry for more from this magical world. And when this takes place and becomes the new normal, The Wizarding World will become J.K. Rowling's legacy, and new creators will take her baton and will be able to create more stories based on her characters and world, but without the fear of not being accepted by the fan community.

For now, Hogwarts Legacy promises a lot. We will have to wait until its release (still without

a confirmed date, although we know it will be sometime in 2021) to know if it meets the high expectations. But if it does - and we think it will, just by having seen the trailer - it can be a turning point for both the fandom and the Wizarding World as a brand. A good brand, one that will open doors for more projects like this, without having J.K. Rowling's constant supervision. What will be canon and what will not is another discussion for another time.





SUPPORT US

If you liked this issue of The Rowling Library Magazine, please consider supporting us with a small monthly donation.

For only \$2 per month, you can become a Patron - even though for some people \$2 may be not much, it means a lot to us.

And all our patrons also receives The Daily Prophet two times a week in their email inbox, with the latest Harry Potter news and commentary, which means that you are paying less than €30 per Daily Prophet edition.

Our current supports - to which we are really grateful - are:

Sean McLennan, John Granger, Annie A., DMBMW, Connor Foley, Marlica , Jess Kebbell, Paola Campana Aguilar, Jaye Tomas, Cindi Shannon, Vicky, Judy Coleman, Lyn Arey, James Greenhill, Ellen Bailey, Alvaro Palomo Hernandez, Cynthia , Sherri Rawstern, Patricia Klose, Christian Shahmardian, Margaret Conway Flowe, Rena Klein, Josephine Glazov, Renjie Fu, Mary Beth Murphy, John Livingston, Stephanie Varnell , Jeffrey Leyh, Susan Sipal, Rachel Hammer, Kenneth Montfort, Vicky McKinley and Suzanne Lucero.

BECOME A PATRON

(K)NOX

THE ROB KNOX STORY

Actor Rob Knox appeared in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* as Marcus Belby, a Ravenclaw student who joined Harry and others in Professor Slughorn's famous dinner party. Knox was just getting started with his acting career when he became a victim of a knife attack in 2008 and was murdered.

But his life will still live on thanks to the documentary “**(K)nox: The Rob Knox Story**”, directed by Aaron Truss, a close friend of Rob who has taken the lead in showing the world his friend's story. We talked with Truss to learn more about his upcoming documentary and what it means to him.

MY FRIEND, MARCUS BELBY

BY AARON TRUSS

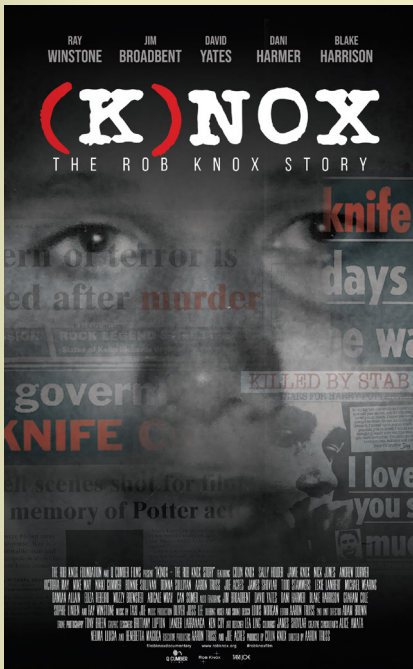
(DIRECTOR OF (K)NOX: THE ROB KNOX STORY)

Of course, I didn't know him as Belby - to me he was my close friend Rob. In fact, during his time on *The Half Blood Prince*, we never actually discussed his big break. To this day, I can't think why we never discussed what it was like filming a big Warner Bros movie or what Daniel Radcliffe was like in person. It just never came up. And while I wish I could go back and ask him all sorts of questions, what I miss most about Rob, is his friendship.

On 24th May 2008, we woke to

the news of another teenager murdered in a knife attack, but it wasn't until later that day that I learned that the victim was my friend. Now, twelve years later, I find myself helming the most important documentary of my life - Rob's life story.

While the core of this documentary focuses on the life and death of my friend, we also explore the wider concerns of knife violence in the UK. This isn't a new topic; knife crime has now cemented itself



into British culture whether we choose to accept it or not. When Colin Knox (Rob's father) approached me to take over this project in 2018, I not only wanted to tell Rob's story from my own experiences, but I also wanted to mould the film in his personality, his humour and his love for life. The same can be said of his death, I wanted the audience to experience the nightmare his family and friends went through, and still go through to this day.

Rob was a young, cheeky lad with his whole life ahead of him.

His ambition to be a successful actor was admired by his friends who supported him every step of the way. He got his first television appearance as a child, through his own ingenuity and without representation. Soon after, while Rob and I would film movies with my parent's video camera, he started getting roles in real TV and film, eventually leading to his big break in *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*.

Rob and I would see each other for the last time in 2008, when we were filming for a university project of mine called *Employee of the Dead*. Our last moments with him were captured accidentally on film as we said goodbye to him, not knowing the events that would soon follow just weeks later.

The opportunity to tell Rob's story and shine his light on the issue of knife crime was the most daunting task I've ever embarked on. On the one hand, I didn't want to compromise the integrity of the documentary with my own personal feelings, but at the same time, I knew it would be my own experiences of Rob that would eventually shape the movie.

With over 44,000 knife related incidents reported in 2019, it's hard to believe that these

senseless acts are not only cutting down future generations, but also destroying whole communities. Though our documentary is not the first to cover the topic, it is the first to explore the knife crime from the point of view of a family and the victims themselves. I also hope that our film will be the first anti-knife crime film to be shown on television screens around the world, because a topic of this importance needs the biggest possible platform and the largest possible audience.

Since starting out, we've been very fortunate to have such amazing support from local communities and members of the film industry. People have not only donated their time on this film for free but feel just as passionately invested in telling Rob's story. Behind the scenes, film composer Lorne Balfe (Mission: Impossible Fallout, The Lego Batman Movie) provided advice and insight into the execution of the soundtrack with our composers, the band Taxi Joe. Other members of our production team had also taken time out of their busy schedules to help on the documentary from James Shovlar (Colourist on Black Mirror and Peaky Blinders) to director David Yates (Harry Potter and Fantastic

Beasts). It's so hard to wrap my head around this incredible journey that I've taken with Rob's family, close friends and industry professionals, it's insane! Never in my wildest dreams did I think we would have so much support from the cast of *The Half Blood Prince* to David Heyman himself.

So, if you're reading this article, then I thank you from the bottom of my heart on behalf of Rob and his family and friends. The Harry Potter fan community is truly a remarkable one, filled with kind hearts and love for one another, and one that will always have time for Marcus Belby and his pudding.

I truly believe that this documentary is a fitting testament to Rob's life, to his talent and to his friendship.

(I would like to thank the following: Hannah Goodier, Nick Jones, Alice Amata, Joe Acres, Louis Morgan, Devid Dell'Aiera, James Shovlar, Todd Stammers, Adam Brown, Allie Sumners, Nick Kenton, Damian Allain, Michael Wearing, Mugglenet.com, The Midi Music Company, Lives Not Knives and everyone who has supported us and the Rob Knox Foundation)

**You can find more information about the documentary on their
Twitter profile @robknoxfilm
and their Facebook Page facebook.com/robknoxdocumentary**



HARRY POTTER DIRECTOR DAVID YATES IN “(K)NOX - THE ROB KNOX STORY”



INTERVIEW WITH AARON TRUSS

What was the hardest moment when you were doing the film?

I think the hardest part for me in terms of making this film, were the interviews with Jamie Knox (Rob's brother) and Nick Jones (Rob's friend) who recounted the night of Rob's death. I'd never known what had really happened that night and to relive it with them was a very harrowing experience. It was painful for them and it made me feel absolutely terrible having to be the one to ask the questions.

You mentioned you wanted to show Rob's humour and his love for life, but at the same time the nightmare it was for the family. Was it difficult to find the proper balance?

I don't think it was that hard to find the balance between light and dark in this documentary. Purely because we tell Rob's story as honestly as we can and the light and dark look after themselves, I think both benefit from each other in a narrative sense because we really show Rob for who he was, so when we lose him in the documentary, it makes the nightmare all the more real for audiences.

Can you tell us more about the research process you have done about knife violence in the UK?

We've been blessed with a lot of resources on this film, especially when it came to researching knife violence in the UK. The main research process took almost a year for us on the production team and to be honest, it never stopped. Knife crime is an ongoing culture to this day and our understanding developed as we pushed on, it's really sad actually as there were days on the shoot where we'd update each other on another stabbing and it just makes you stop and think. We visited a lot of communities that are going through this on a daily basis and you begin to realise that the problem (and solution) isn't as black and white as some people may think.

Now that the documentary is finished and soon to be released, is that a closure for you? Is there anything else that you'd like to pursue in the future?

I don't think this documentary has brought myself or Rob's father (Colin) closure in terms of Rob and his legacy, in fact I think this is just the beginning. Once the documentary is released, it will be our job to keep pushing it and making sure people see it. I think I'll have closure when our film makes an impact on the people we're trying to help. In terms of future projects, my team have just finished work on a short horror/comedy film called 'The Understudy' which will be released online for Halloween. I think this was something we needed to get out of our system after working for two years on such a serious subject. We've also been tapped by a certain someone (whom I can't mention at this time) to work on a second documentary film after they watched the trailer for (K)nox: The Rob Knox Story, so hopefully we'll be going into 2021 with a new production.



ROB KNOX AND AARON TRUSS

WAVE A WAND

BY ALAN DELL'OSO

SERAPHINA PICQUERY'S

This is the first *Fantastic Beasts* wand that I'm going to write about in *The Rowling Library Magazine*.

Seraphina Picquery was the President of MACUSA (Magical Congress of the United States of America) during the 1920s. She was a powerful witch from Savannah, Georgia, who attended Ilvermorny School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the state of Massachusetts. A curious thing is that we haven't been able to spot Seraphina's wand in any *Fantastic Beasts* movie yet, but it was featured in the *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* promotional posters.

The *Harry Potter* series wands are amazing, but when we talk about

Fantastic Beasts wands, that's big words. I think that the prop department has improved a lot over the years, and (at least for me) FB wands speak for themselves, describe the characters to perfection, and are exquisitely made.

About the Movie Prop

This is a very fancy wand, of course, because every political-high-range character has one, always with luxurious and finely made designs.

The first thing that may caught your attention is that huge purple/pink stone in the handle, and let me tell you that Seraphina's wand



is the only wand at the moment in the Wizarding World with a handle fully made of a gemstone. Here we're talking about an amethyst. As you may notice, amethysts are usually purple, but in every clear picture of this wand, the gemstone looks a little bit pinkish. There is a kind of amethyst that fits in that description and that is the Rose de France amethyst, and yes, it is one of the most expensive kinds of amethyst. This is only an assumption, but I think that's pretty accurate.

Now, what's holding that amazing amethyst together with the shaft? The answer is more luxury,



obviously: a very fine crafted silver grid with an amazing Art Deco pattern. Oh, before I forget, Art Deco designs are going to be very much involved in Fantastic Beasts wands, props, buildings, and almost everything, because it was the art movement from 1920s to almost 1940s.

Finally, the shaft is made of ebony. I know what you are going to think: why doesn't that ebony wood look black (ebony's most characteristic color is black)? Well, we live in this amazing world that gives us many different kinds of things, and that ebony is exactly that, another kind of ebony. Usually African ebony wood is of that black color wood which is one of the densest woods in the world. In this case, I think that they may have used Asian ebony wood which can have that brownish color.

As a side note, I want to say that the prop department may or may not have crafted this wand using the detailed materials, but at least they were inspired by those materials to build this wand. We know that for the Wizarding World movies, many wands are made and with different kinds of materials for each specific take because they usually save the ones made of the fanciest materials only for the foreground scenes.

The Wand in the Story

In the USA, we are way out of range of Ollivander's crafts. Here we have some other wandmakers, and each one has a distinctive and unique way to make wands.

Seraphina's wand is from Violetta Beauvais, a famous wandmaker from New Orleans. Madame Beauvais has always used swamp mayhaw wood to make her wands, so we can assume that Seraphina's wand is made out of swamp mayhaw wood, but the wood is not the only thing that Beauvais used for all of her wands. The core was always the same one, and she wanted to keep it a secret... Eventually it was discovered that they contained Rougarou hair.

So to wrap it up, at the moment the movie scripts that we have at home to read, have no information at all about materials, wandmakers, and wands specifications. All that information comes from J.K Rowling's articles published on WIZARDING WORLD Digital (ex Pottermore) in an effort to expand this captivating Fantastic Beasts universe.





“Incidentally,
that thing
you are dreading –
it will happen
on Friday
the sixteenth
of October.”

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban
J.K. Rowling

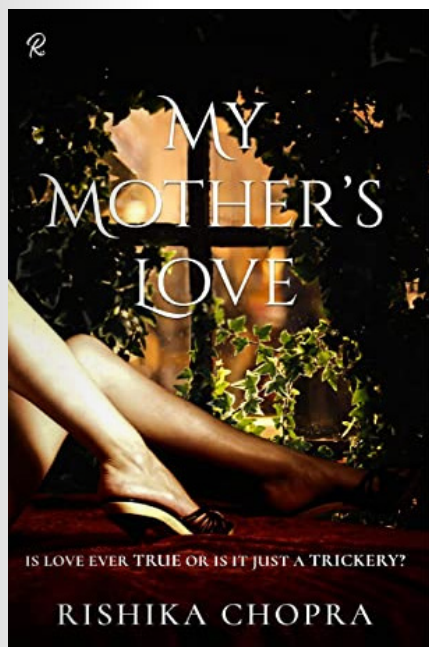


BOOK REVIEW BY AYELÉN VEGAGIL ESPÓSITO

MY MOTHER'S LOVE

RISHIKA CHOPRA

WHITE FALCON PUBLISHING - 2020



I have to say that I was lured by the author, Rishika Chopra, to read the book. She was very nice and the summary was somewhat interesting, it keeps you wondering about the mystery that awaits you in the story, and as I love thrillers so much, I thought “why not?”

Fist of all, thanks to NetGalley for the copy of this book, here is my honest review about it:

MY MOTHER'S LOVE

FACADE, that which is worn by every individual to cover his realest nature which lets them stay disconnected to their deepest disturbing desires all their lives. But very few, a rare lot gets the

chance or the mischance of facing theirs. This mischance shatters their very appearance of what they supposed they were and they end up doing the unimaginable.

'My Mother's Love' has some interesting plots, but there's a lot of drama that is in a way more proper of a soap opera rather than a novel. In the beginning the story was engaging, but suddenly there were flashbacks inserted here and there that made you get a bit lost whether you were reading something from the past or if it was in the present of the story. The way it was written is another thing that made me wonder if the story was not more suited to be a script rather than a novel. Every characters' names were written in Caps or Italics, just like in a screenplay. I don't know if this was somewhat a mistake from the ARC that I received, but it was a bit hard to read the transition between italics, Caps and normal text. I found myself rereading some paragraphs because it was not very clear at which point of the story I was, if it was in the past or in the present... and the excessive use of Caps in dialogues made it look like the characters were shouting at each other all the time.

I noticed too that every character finished their sentences with the word "oki", again I don't know if this was done for some reason for

the story or it was not edited by the publishers.

Even when the story has somewhat interesting plots, the flatness of its characters was just a no go for me. They didn't have great development, I was really disappointed about it, because the main character had the opportunity to be more complex, but Chopra didn't write her as mysterious as she was described in the book. Something that I must point out is how the author described the art that this character made, I think that it was the only interesting thing about Alicia Frankfort.

As I said, the author likes to describe some details of the story with much more context than others, being the dialogues the ones that are more flat. One of the most over detailed scene that Chopra wrote was a rape scene. The book doesn't have a trigger warning at the beginning about it. It was brutal, very gorey and very descriptive in a way that made me want to stop reading for a while. Unfortunately when I decided to give it a second chance there appeared a murder scene that was as descriptive as the rape scene. It was too much for me to read and I confess that in order to complete this review I had to skip almost everything reading the Caps to know what was going on with the

characters until I reached the end.

The twist that comes in that journey is somewhat a moral and controversial topic that I think was not well developed. In a way I feel as if Chopra tried to imitate the famous novelist V. C. Andrews, involving a major plot on incest in between all the mystery, just as it happens in Andrews' *"Flowers in the Attic"*. The only thing is that Chopra was a way more detailed in this topic, specially in the sex scenes. It was really hard to read even when I did it just skipping pages.

I think that Chopra had some interesting ideas for this story but I really don't think that it was very well edited, as it was chaotic and cringey. I really cannot give you a good quote from this story as I always do. 'My Mother's Love' is not a book for everyone.

Without further ado... Mischief Managed!



A QUOTE BY JO

***Which word or phrase do you overuse -
in writing or in life?***

J.K. Rowling: I'm not proud to say that it's probably swearwords in every day life. Writing the Harry Potter books, I got sick to death of the words 'passage', 'corridor' and all other relation to my heroes' endless movement around Hogwarts castle.

(Words with Jam, 2011)

THE DARK SIDE OF MINERVA MCGONAGALL

BY ROWENA PANKHURST

The first statement I wish to make is that I do not hate Professor McGonagall. I simply wish to correct the prevailing view that she is a loving, fierce lioness and one of the best teachers at Hogwarts. She is often viewed as one of the few characters without any real flaws, which is a false assumption to make.

Head of House

As I said, Minerva is often made out to be a fair and caring head of house, but I am not sure if this image is accurate. Her attitude towards Neville is disappointing. McGonagall actually treats

Neville quite harshly. It is clear that she does this because he is unexceptional. He is not as bright and talented as Hermione to gain her respect or as notable as Harry to gain some of her sympathy and attention. Indeed, I often remember her description of Peter, when she thought he was innocent, mind you, and cannot help think that she regarded Neville along a similar line.

What I cannot forget is how she punishes Neville during the third book. Neville clearly meant no harm; it was an innocent mistake and she did not need to risk his life when there was a (supposed) threat

to the lives of the pupils. What was the point of her punishment? There was no logical point to risking Neville's life to punish him.

Yes, she was nice to Neville once, when she tells him that Augusta Longbottom should be proud of the grandson she has, not the grandson she wishes she had. But she herself could have tried to be more encouraging towards Neville or at least not so caustic.

McGonagall likes Hermione because Hermione is intelligent and hardworking. She does seem to be interested in her. She also takes an interest in Harry Potter (well, everybody does). But I do not see her actively taking an interest in the Gryffindors as a whole. What I mean is that she does not seem to put a lot of effort into being Head of House. Of course, being Deputy Headmistress is a significant responsibility. But she did not seem to devote a lot of time into the Gryffindors, beyond Quidditch. For example, she allowed Ronald Weasley to use a broken wand during the second book. An attentive head of house would have looked into the matter. The idea that she is a loving and passionate advocate of her "cubs" is a myth.

Even in regard to the pupils of Hogwarts as a whole, McGonagall takes points more frequently and more severely than Snape does,

but nobody takes issue with this because she is friendly towards Harry and Snape is not.

Her Prejudice Against Slytherin House

Initially, I wanted to give Minerva the benefit of the doubt and assume that she simply has a competitive nature in regard to Quidditch. However, her feelings of rivalry against Slytherin, as playful as they may seem, are quite serious. This makes one wonder what trauma Slytherins must have caused her to merit this. I was shocked to read on Pottermore (now Wizarding World) that Minerva's prejudice against Slytherin stems from an incident when she was in school during which a Slytherin fouled her during a Quidditch match. This was decades ago.

This rivalry against Slytherin causes her to make an exception to the rule against first-years joining Quidditch for Harry. This hardly seems like the fair and impartial head of house we all know in "fanon". You could certainly argue that Snape would bend the rules for his Slytherins if he could. However, Snape does not pretend to be a fair person, does he, as head of Slytherin House? McGonagall is head of Gryffindor, a house which takes pride in being chivalrous and honourable, but she very unfairly bends the rules for one of her pupils. Again, there

is the argument that she does not bend the rules for all Gryffindors, which simply reinforces the idea that she does not care very much for unexceptional pupils in her house.

She does not do much as Draco is physically punished by the fake Alastor Moody. In fact, she herself dragged Draco by his ear once in the first book, something which I do not recall Flitwick, Snape or Sprout doing.

What I really cannot forgive her for is her comment to Horace Slughorn.

'But if any of you attempt to sabotage our resistance or take up arms against us within this castle,

then, Horace, we duel to kill.' (Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows)

Slughorn is many things, but he is no Death Eater. He has had many opportunities to join them, but he has refused. Slughorn did not ally himself with Snape and the Carrows, although he could have. Slughorn did not deserve that sort of comment from McGonagall. To warn your colleague that you are willing to kill him, simply because he is a Slytherin (because, to be honest, Slughorn has given her no cause to believe him sympathetic to the Death Eaters, beyond the fact that he is a Slytherin) is very reprehensible. Even worse is her threat to kill her own pupils. You may dislike them, but Snape



MINERVA MCGONAGALL, PLAYED BY MAGGIE SMITH
HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE (WARNER BROS, 2001)

and Dumbledore would not have made such a threat. Harry notes that Dumbledore would not have harmed the Slytherins (though he was perfectly willing to give Gryffindor extra points for insubstantial reasons). This is what I cannot forgive her for. This sort of statement makes her completely unsuited to the role of Headmistress.

Apart from her role as a teacher, McGonagall appears to be a morally lacking person. One of her main problems is her blind loyalty and obedience to one Albus Dumbledore. She knows the Dursleys are not fit to raise Harry, but defers to the superior wisdom of Dumbledore, as always. I understand that Dumbledore helped her during a trying time, but she appears to almost worship him. It is irritating and Harry's life could have been improved if she had shown capability for independent thought in regard to Harry and the war. Furthermore, she is supposed to be an intelligent adult worthy of emulation, but she seems to be hypocritical. The main objections to the Death Eaters are their use of unforgivable curses. When Harry uses the Cruciatus curse on Amicus Carrow because Carrow was rude to McGonagall, McGonagall commends Harry's action as "gallant". The level of hypocrisy in this statement is

astounding. The Cruciatus is evil when used on people that McGonagall likes, but is perfectly fine when used on a Death Eater. I should think that the same moral standard would apply to everybody. Of course, she then even uses an unforgivable herself: the Imperious curse. As a general rule, things are bad when done by Slytherins and Death Eaters, but good when done by Gryffindors and members of the Order of the Phoenix.

Professor McGonagall comes across as a rather self-righteous and, ultimately, hypocritical person. I can respect her for her intelligence and knowledge, but her black-and-white view of the world and unfair and inattentive approach to her charges are off-putting.

RIDDIKULUS!

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ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATION BY MARY GRANDPRÉ FOR
HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE
(SCHOLASTIC, 2000)



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