Lloyd Alexander: A Film by Jared Crossley

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In a career that would span over seven decades, Lloyd Alexander would be best known across the world for his tale of an Assistant Pig Keeper, a strong-willed princess with reddish gold hair, and deathless warriors who serve a dark and mysterious death lord.

Jim Jacobs Interview (0:25): He was the first American, who wrote high fantasy that the British, that could stand up against the British fantasy,... he sort of put America on the map more solidly in the area of high fantasy.

Narration (0:22): Although it’s where he would enjoy the most success, Lloyd Alexander didn’t always write children’s fantasy. He started his career in the 1950’s writing novels for adults. However, in the early 1960’s Lloyd began writing for children, and soon realized that it was through this medium, that he was best able to express himself.

Lloyd Alexander Interview (0:33): And this is how it turned out to be that I found myself able to deal with things that I could never even express when I was writing for adults. And this may seem quite surprising. Uh, that you think a book for young people, no you can’t deal with, with serious things- far from it. I found I could deal with much more serious, much more profound things than I could ever do writing for grown-ups.

Narration (0:23): His first fantasy novel was the story of a cat who takes his young owner with him to his 9 lives, each taking place in a different historical setting. Lloyd planned on having one of the 9 lives take place in Wales, but as he was researching Welsh history, he came across “The Mabinogion” an ancient collection of Welsh legends.

Mike Tunnell Interview (Aug. 6) (0:45): (Mabinogion and needing more than one chapter)

Narration (0:26): The Chronicles of Prydain was the result. Originally planned as a trilogy, the series grew to become a five book series.

Shortly after beginning the third book, Lloyd realized that another book was needed. After finishing book 3, Lloyd wrote the conclusion and sent the manuscript to his editor.
Ann Durrell Interview (0:32): He sent me the last one, and I said Lloyd, there’s a book missing. Because the first chapter referred to Taran having this adventure and year and so on. I said, You didn’t write that book yet, so we put, he locked that manuscript up in the bank, lest anything happened to it, in a bank vault, and then he went to work and wrote “Taran Wanderer”.


Mike Tunnell Interview (Aug. 6)(0:45): (The Newbery Award)

Narration (0:16): Lloyd Alexander continued to write children’s literature for another 40 years. Over that time, his writing would influence many authors, and forge the way for the next generation of American fantasy.

Rachel Wadham Interview (0:27): he, established in the United States a really great foundation for the history of American fantasy, and truly uniquely American fantasy. And the tradition that built on other great fantasy writers that came after him, making it a part of who we are as an American culture.

Shannon Hale Interview (0:19): It’s amazing how he wrote decades ago, and yet children who may not even read him now are influenced by those who read him and keep writing. So that, he’s like a grandfather of children’s literature. That his offspring just keeps on growing and growing.

Narration (0:45): Lloyd Alexander passed away on May 17, 2007, but his influence continues to be felt. Every year hundreds of school children visit Arlington Cemetery in Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania to learn about Lloyd Alexander, and to visit the final resting place of Lloyd and his wife Janine. When he died, he donated many of his belongings to Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. A re-creation of his office is housed in the Harold B. Lee Library on campus, and is available for students, researchers, and fans of Alexander to come and learn more about him.

And of course, his legacy will forever live on through his books.

George Nicholson Interview (0:13): What Lloyd’s private life was, is his, and it’s what is in the books that counts. And that’s what will survive. Because I think the very best part of himself is in those books.

Kemie Nix Interview (0:26): You can enter his writing with any book, and then you are off and running. I don’t think that you can read... I don’t think a child could read him without falling in love with his book. And then branching out into the rest of his writing.

Sandy Limont Interview (0:17): Lloyd used to say, that he was writing adult fiction disguised as children’s literature. And his primary interest was in educating his readers.
Sharyn November Interview (0:30): Read all of his books. Learn about him. Read the stories behind his books. Read the Welsh legends. Read the Indian legends. Read when, read the people that influenced him... He was such an interesting person, and he was everything that his books are and more. And, I think it’s important to keep that alive,

Christopher Tripoli Interview (0:33): What he did in his books, all of his books really, is tell a story, in many ways a universal story, from within about human nature. The conventions that he used, whether it was a child’s story, a picture book, a novel, those were his tools for telling that story. They are great stories, they have great character and great heart. And that’s what I think anyone who’s looking for a good read should take some time to find out more about Lloyd Alexander.

Jim Jacobs Interview (0:21): These books have the ability to sort of get under our skin and become part of us. Where there are lots of books where I read, and like and enjoy, that don’t do that. He somehow, by locking into these themes and making them so credible, he gets that result from the people who read them.

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