

YOUR ALL-PURPOSE GUIDE TO EPIC MOVIES





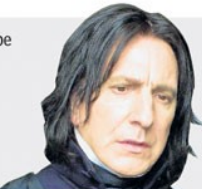











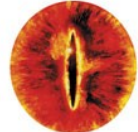









GRAPHIC BY PATRICK GARVIN | GLOBE STAFF

AS YOU MAY have heard, a movie just opened this weekend—the last installment of an epic where a reluctant hero is guided by a wise sage through a dangerous magical world where he eventually confronts a villain of unknowable power. And, of course, there’s a comic sidekick and a traitorous schemer along the way.

That would be “Harry Potter,” of course. Or is it “Star Wars”? “The Lord of the Rings”?

If you ever get the feeling you’re seeing the same movie over and over—well, history agrees with you. In 1949, the writer Joseph Campbell boiled centuries of human fairy tales and quest myths down to an es-

sential list of archetypal characters. Today, his book “The Hero With a Thousand Faces” reads eerily like a plot guide to the great cult-favorite movie franchises of our time, from the elaborate world of “Harry Potter” to...um, Pixar cartoons. Don’t believe it? Just check the chart.

	The Hero “More or less human in character, through whom the world destiny is realized”	The Ancient Mystagogue “The Wise Old Man... whose words assist the hero through the trials and terrors of the weird adventure”	The Enemy “Great and conspicuous in the seat of power”	The Threshold Guardian “The first problem of the hero to surpass”	The Shape-Shifter An ambiguous character whose loyalties and values are not always clear	The Trickster Comic relief, to offset the dramatic tension
“Harry Potter” series  Harry Potter	 Dumbledore	 Voldemort	 Quirrell	 Snape	 Ron Weasley	
“Star Wars” series  Luke Skywalker	 Obi-Wan	 Darth Vader	 Stormtroopers	 Han Solo	 C-3PO and R2-D2	
“The Matrix” series  Neo	 Morpheus	 The Matrix	 Agent Smith	 Cypher	There’s not much to laugh at in “The Matrix.”	
“Lord of The Rings”  Frodo	 Gandalf	 Sauron	 Aragorn	 Boromir	 Merry and Pippin	
“Finding Nemo”  Marlin	 Crush	 Darla	 Bruce	 Gill	 Dory	

SOURCES: Joseph Campbell, “The Hero With a Thousand Faces”; Internet Movie Database

NOTE: Your opinion may vary.

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