

The  
Rowling  
Library

Issue 87  
March 2024

# Magazine



How to write  
a Potter: Part three

A new chapter in  
Harry Potter  
companion books

Marketing &  
Writings

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Bloomsbury announced a new book based on the novels of J.K. Rowling.



# Welcome

## A word from the Founder

Welcome to a new issue of *The Rowling Library Magazine*. This March 2024 edition marks the 87th installment of our magazine dedicated to Harry Potter and its author J.K. Rowling.

The cover story of this issue is based on a recent statement from David Zaslav, the CEO of Warner Bros., who stated that they will strive to have the TV adaptation of the Harry Potter novels, on which HBO is working, released in 2026. We wonder if it's possible to achieve this so quickly, considering it would be within the next two years. To explore this, we compare it with another famous fantasy series from the same television network. Continuing on statements about the franchise, our *Hogwarts Legacy* specialist brings us the latest updates from Warner Bros. Games, which seems to be aiming to change the way they develop games, with the Harry Potter games serving as a prime example.

If your plan is to write a novel "à la J.K. Rowling", the third and final installment of "How to Write a Potter" by Oliver Horton is available in this issue. We also have a brief analysis of why *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* performed better than its sequels, and we ponder on the future of Harry Potter companion books following Bloomsbury's recent announcement.

As always, the Famous Wizard Card of the month and more!

Thank you for joining us!

Patricio





# Marketing & Writings

by Leandro Bensussan Lemme

**The key to the success of *Fantastic Beasts and Where To Find Them* lay in J.K. Rowling's short writings, and they must return for any future films if there are any.**

*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* debuted in 2016, captivating audiences worldwide with its imaginative storyline and enchanting characters. Bolstered by a budget of \$200 million, the film soared to a box office gross of \$812.5 million, marking a resounding success. However, the film's triumph wasn't solely attributed to its cinematic prowess; J.K. Rowling's meticulous world-building, strategically interwoven into marketing campaigns, played a pivotal role in its allure. Following the release of *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets*

of *Dumbledore* in 2022, Warner Bros. opted for a hiatus, a decision publicly confirmed by director David Yates in an *Inside Total Film* podcast episode in October 2023. This pause signified the studio's intent to deliberate over the franchise's trajectory before proceeding further.

The origins of this magical journey trace back to Rowling's prelude writings, notably "Magic in North America," which she released on *Pottermore* (now *Wizarding World Digital*) before the premiere of the

first film. These writings delved into the intricate tapestry of the American wizarding society, introducing elements like Ilvermorny, the North American counterpart to Hogwarts, and MACUSA, its Ministry of Magic equivalent. By expanding the lore, Rowling primed audiences for the rich narrative tapestry of the *Fantastic Beasts* universe.

The sequel, *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* (2018), set against the backdrop of Paris, failed to replicate its predecessor's acclaim. Canonical inconsistencies and a convoluted plot hindered its reception, signaling cracks in the franchise's foundation. However, it's worth noting that none of the subsequent films, including *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* and *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore*, included new short stories from J.K. Rowling. While the second film did see her participation on Twitter, where she engaged with fans and answered questions, her involvement in the promotion of the third installment was notably

subdued, especially after it was confirmed that Steve Kloves was brought on board to co-write it with her.

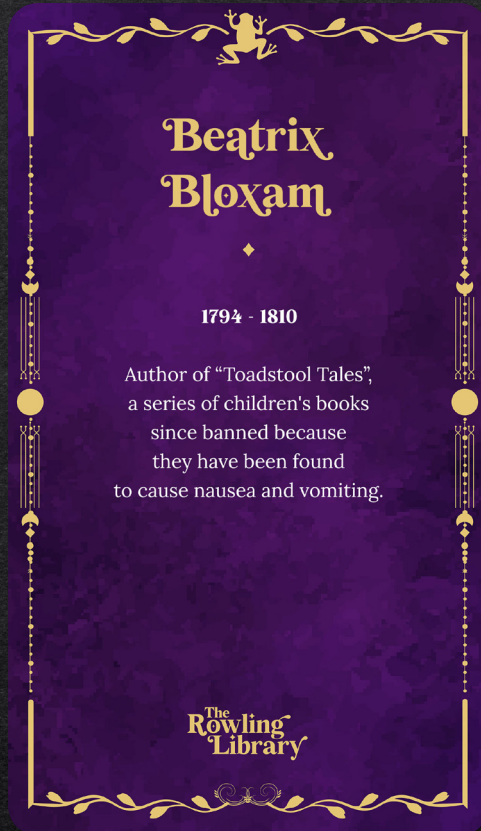
**The absence of new supplementary material from Rowling alongside her reduced promotional involvement could be viewed as contributing factors to the franchise's struggle to maintain its initial momentum.**

As fans eagerly awaited deeper insights into the wizarding world, the lack of fresh content may have impacted audience engagement and anticipation for subsequent films.

If Warner Bros. decides to revive the franchise, Rowling's ongoing engagement becomes crucial. Introducing supplementary texts and narratives that run parallel to the films can serve as the linchpin for rekindling audience interest. By delving into unexplored facets of the wizarding world, Rowling can unravel narrative mysteries, elucidate character motivations, and unveil untold stories. ♦

# Famous Wizards

## Card Collection



**Beatrix  
Bloxam**

1794 - 1810

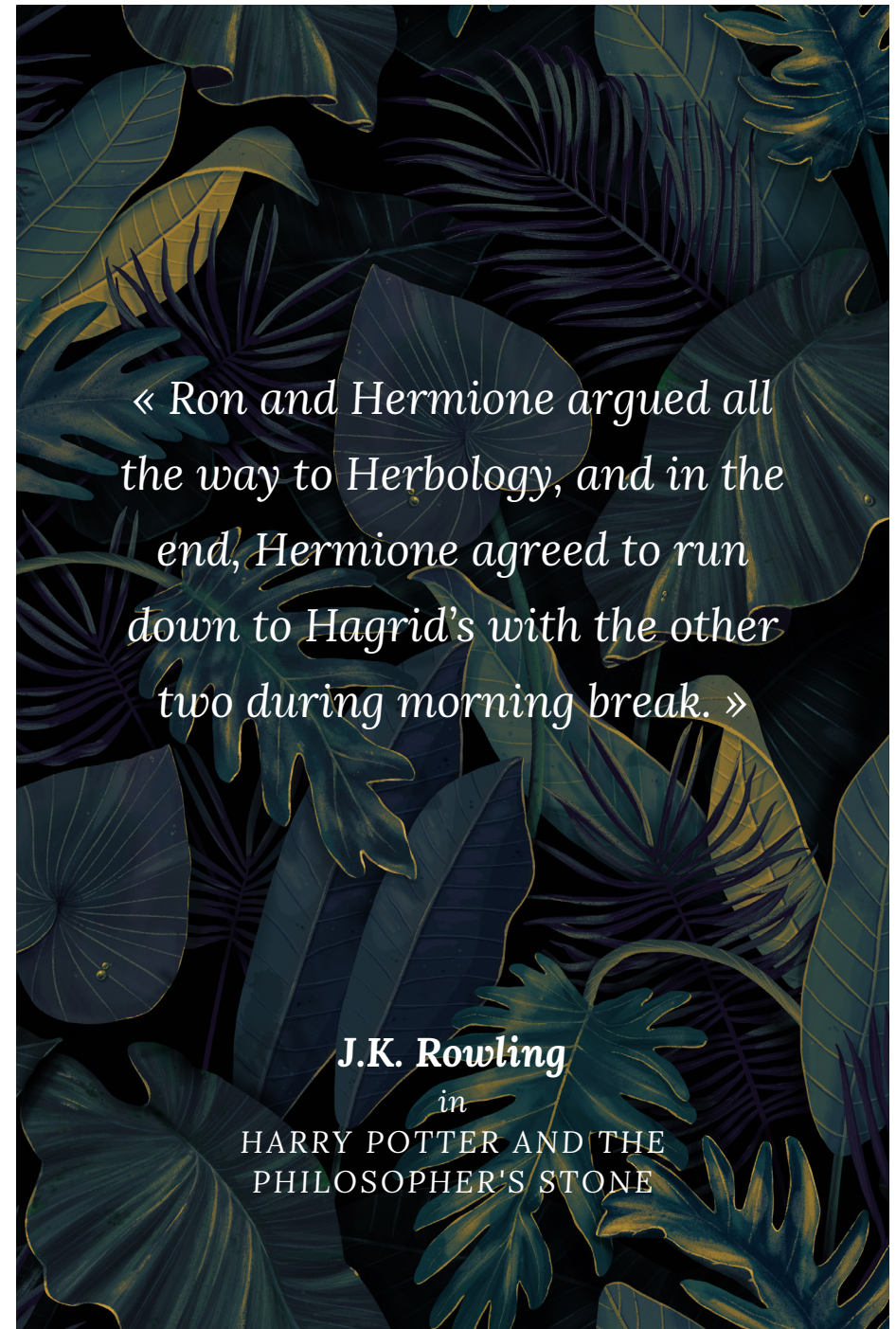
Author of "Toadstool Tales",  
a series of children's books  
since banned because  
they have been found  
to cause nausea and vomiting.

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Library



Cut around each  
side, then stick them  
together to create your  
own collectible card!

#25



« Ron and Hermione argued all  
the way to Herbology, and in the  
end, Hermione agreed to run  
down to Hagrid's with the other  
two during morning break. »

**J.K. Rowling**

in

HARRY POTTER AND THE  
PHILOSOPHER'S STONE



# Will we see a new Hogwarts in 2026?

**Warner Bros.' CEO said they aim to debut the Harry Potter TV adaptation in 2026. Is it possible?**

The adaptation of Harry Potter books into television format continues to be a topic of discussion, even though there are still no official announcements, and according to the latest news, it will be a while before there are any. However, small mentions here and there, and rumors from reliable sources, allow us to talk a little about one of the fundamental aspects of this new television series: when will we finally see it on the screens of our homes?

The starting point is a recent comment from David Zaslav, the CEO of Warner Bros., who managed the

miracle of convincing J.K. Rowling to adapt her precious novels. At an investor conference, where the CEO provides updates on the company's performance, shares new developments, and answers investor questions, Zaslav detailed how this new production is evolving: *"We've not been shy about our excitement around Harry Potter. The last film was made more than a dozen years ago. I was in London a few weeks ago with Casey [Bloys, Chairman and CEO, HBO and Max Content] and Channing [Dungey, Chairman and CEO, Warner Bros. Television Group], and we spent some real time with*



J. K. [Rowling] and her team. Both sides are thrilled to be reigniting this franchise. Our conversations were great, and we couldn't be more excited about what's ahead." And then he added, perhaps, the most important piece of information: **"We can't wait to share a decade of new stories with fans around the world on Max. We're aiming for a debut in 2026."**

Although many media outlets reported that the Harry Potter series would premiere in 2026 as if it had been officially confirmed, it is not exactly what Zaslav said. The CEO of Warner Bros. mentioned that they are currently aiming to do so at some point in that year, without giving more details, and leaving the door open ("aiming" is clear in that sense) to another date. While it expresses an intention or goal to launch by 2026, it doesn't guarantee adherence to

that timeline. This is entirely sensible considering that, in addition to J.K. Rowling's support as a producer, little progress has been made in its production. The Harry Potter TV series still needs a designated writer, and that brings us to the second topic.

Although it didn't come from an official source, it did come from a completely credible one. The portal *Deadline.com* exclusively reported on February 27 that, after a screening process and comings and goings, three candidates remained as finalists to occupy the coveted position. The names of those who dream of pulling the strings of Hogwarts Gardiner, Tom Moran, and Kathleen Jordan. According to the outlet, the preliminary selection went through one round in Los Angeles, followed

by a second one in London, and J.K. Rowling was involved in the process. And if the names don't sound familiar to you, don't worry. Here's a summary of what each has worked on: Gardiner was a consulting producer on HBO's *Succession*, and she was also an executive producer of HBO/BBC *His Dark Materials*. She has also written on shows such as Amazon's *The Man In The High Castle*. Moran is a British writer who created the Amazon series *The Devil's Hour*, and he also worked on Amazon's sci-fi series *The Feed*. On the other hand, Jordan created the Netflix series *Teenage Bounty Hunters*, and she is also working on another Netflix series, *The Decameron*.

Perhaps the most interesting point that *Deadline* reveals beyond the names themselves is that the candidates will have a couple of months to prepare their proposals,

and Warner Bros. expects to make the final decision on who gets the job by June. Considering that the production of the series would only start in the middle of the year and there would be no casting or any other production moving forward until they know what story they are going to tell, is a 2026 premiere feasible? Zaslav's words refer to a debut, so if the first episode were to be released in December, it would fulfill his wish.

It is very difficult to apply futurology on a topic like this, but we can at least compare it with another similar series. When HBO says that the Harry Potter series will be its most expensive production, and we think of another high-budget fantasy book adaptation, we don't have to go far to find something similar: HBO also produced *Game of Thrones*.



What were the timelines for adapting George R.R. Martin's books? Production started in January 2007, once HBO had already acquired the rights and executive producers had been assigned. However, the writing process for the pilot's first draft, presented in August 2008, extended over eight months. And the second draft took almost a year and was ready by July 2008. At that moment, HBO was in doubt but finally ordered

the pilot, which was filmed between October and November of 2009 in Ireland. But in March 2010, the pilot was deemed unsatisfactory and had to be reshot, with new actors and even a new director. It may seem like a setback, but this confirmed to the show's producers that HBO still trusted the idea because they had approved the pilot and wanted to move forward with its production.



Promotional image for HBO's *Game of Thrones*.

The second pilot was filmed again in 2010, under the orders of the new director Tim Van Patten, and some replacements among the main cast, such as the case of Tamzin Merchant, who was replaced by Emilia Clarke. The entire first season was filmed during the second half of 2010, and the pilot aired in April 2011, just a few months after its filming.

If one compares the amount of time from the first production moments in 2007 to the airing in 2011, it would seem that many years have passed for the show to see the light. But the truth is that these are two different types of productions. *Game of Thrones* was not a guaranteed success, so some changes had to take place for HBO to finally approve the investment for at least one season, which happened in March 2010. From that moment until the first episode aired, only 13 months passed, with the filming of the complete season in between. It is worth mentioning that the first season of *Game of Thrones* had 10 episodes: we still do not know if the Harry Potter series will have more or fewer episodes per season.

Considering the timeline of *Game of Thrones*, the Harry Potter series can debut in 2026 on MAX (HBO's streaming platform). Using the

Westeros series as a guide, the first season of the Wizing World could easily go into production by the end of 2025 and become a reality in 2026, just like the CEO of Warner Bros. estimates and wants.

Would that be possible? Absolutely. If by mid-2024 a writer is chosen, it would take almost a year to write the scripts. Casting, locations, costumes, and other production details could go hand in hand, as long as the proposal is clear, and everybody knows where the writers and showrunners want to go. Even if there are no jolts, the entire season could be aired in 2026.

Of course, unforeseen events, which are not rare in this type of production, could cause the release date to be postponed, and we may only see the new faces of Harry, Ron, and Hermione in 2027. But that should not be due to an impossibility posed by the calendar: Zaslav told his investors that they are aiming for 2026 and he knows that it is possible. Of course, now it depends on how smoothly everything works. Considering how lucky Warner Bros. has been lately — not only with the Wizing World but also with other franchises — it is something that perhaps one should bet on. ♦

An article by  
**Oliver Horton**

# How to write a Potter

## Part three: Resolution

**Our advice for would-be novelists reaches the climax in this third and final part.**

Writing a Potter is like Quidditch. There are lots of moving parts and if anyone relaxes they will be hit by a Bludger. There are twists and turns, slow bits and fast bits, and goals for each side. Matches are won and lost, but the winning team is only declared at the end of the year. Every player has a different experience, just as every character has their own point of view. They are all the heroes of their own stories.

For this article, Harry's journey is

presented in nine stages, which are more guidelines than rules. In *The Hero's Journey*, mythologist Joseph Campbell observed 17 steps common to stories heard around the world, and Hollywood script reader Christopher Vogler sculpted these into 12 steps for *The Writer's Journey*, recommended further reading. Dan Harmon, co-creator of the TV show *Rick and Morty*, follows an eight-step story circle to write all his shows based on the same ideas. No matter their number, the stages of the journey are

Illustration by Carla Figueiras



the roots of story structure and tend to assert themselves onto adventure tales as if servant to some cosmic law of harmony and balance. Resistance is futile, yet the framework is malleable. Stages can be dropped or shuffled; they may repeat. In *Deathly Hallows*, for example, an invitation arrives halfway through the story in the form of Professor Snape's silvery doe, a silent herald that recalls Harry to adventure after the Horcrux quest stalls. The challenge for authors is to defy expectations in a way that feels natural and true.

J.K. Rowling had something personal and important to say when she broke ground on the *Harry Potter* books, about living a moral life and how we experience death. Harry's teen angst has a body count but underneath everything is the question, can grief be overcome? To properly explore any



Read Part One of  
**How to write a Potter**  
in the January issue of  
**The Rowling Library  
Magazine**

proposition means investigating its opposite and the stations in between. Bumbling politician Cornelius Fudge, ruthless journalist Rita Skeeter and even the Ministry's sinister shift to propaganda and persecution tell us something about our politicians, our media, our establishments. The wizarding world parallels and parodies the real world. Hogwarts is school, only more so. Magic magnifies emotions: Grimmauld Place reflects Harry's mental state, the Slytherin Locket exaggerates Ron's jealousy and insecurity, and who hasn't felt their brain dulled by Wrackspurts?

In **Part One** of our three-part series, Harry escaped his ordinary world. In **Part Two** he trained and was tested (see *The Rowling Library Magazine*, January 2024 and February 2024). In the third and final part of the journey he faces his greatest fear. The primary antagonist is poised to cover all the land in darkness.

## VIII. The Duel

Get busy living or get busy dying, Act Three begins at pace. This time danger touches not only Harry but reaches for his friends or the entire community. The threat widens, deepens and sharpens. Urgent action is required, such as the desperate dash for Nicolas Flamel's alchemical rock in *Philosopher's Stone*. But the need for speed obscures the evil around the corner, like 100 Dementors or some version of Voldemort. In *Deathly Hallows* the Dark Lord recognises that his secret is out and the clock starts ticking: Harry and co. return to Hogwarts armed with the knowledge of how to defeat Voldemort for good. Welcome to the climax.

A villain targets a hero where s/he is weakest. Voldemort was initially designed to be Harry's opposite:

old, powerful and evil, the anti-love. He is the shadow, the negative self, whose form expresses Harry's worst fears and darkest thoughts. In *Chamber of Secrets*, diary Tom Riddle exploits Harry's identity crisis by pointing out all the ways they are the same; in the climax of *Order of the Phoenix* Voldemort encourages grief-stricken Harry to submit to despair and die. Facing Voldemort forces Harry to face the things he doesn't like about himself. Destroying Voldemort means killing off that negative-Harry and the seductive, corroding fear masquerading as truth in the depth of the soul.

Alone in the duel, the Boy Who Lived experiences a little death (not in the French way) as a metaphor for lasting

change. Tragic heroes Cedric, Sirius and Dumbledore die. In *Philosopher's Stone* Harry is seconds from dying but only for as long as it takes to turn the page. In *Chamber of Secrets*, Harry reflects on the Basilisk fang stuck in his arm then Fawkes the Phoenix saves him with healing tears. In *Deathly Hallows* Harry is dead for an entire chapter and enjoys a philosophical chat with the dead-but-not-gone Dumbledore. And then he is reborn, the best of his old self enhanced by the lessons of the journey: NewHarry. Here is catharsis, an emotional breakthrough, out and into the light.

As with the ordeal, J.K. Rowling double dips the climax to resolve the story's many strands: out of the frying



Voldemort and the Death Eaters in the Forbidden Forest (*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2*, Warner Bros., 2011)



Patronus vs Dementors (*Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, Warner Bros., 2004)

pan and into the fire. In *Prisoner of Azkaban*, Harry faces Sirius Black and co in the Shrieking Shack, a would-be climax that turns into an unlikely group therapy session and an unexpected resolution, kinship with the convicted murderer. Happily ever-after is soon ruined by the Lupinwolf, the escape of Wormtail and the arrival of every Dementor in Scotland. The final duel against the soul-suckers is the ultimate test of Harry's transformation and shows who the boy has become, truly and for keeps: the saviour. "Expecto Patronum!" Harry's victories are rooted in love.

## IX. Clairvoyant

Having survived the duel, Harry and his world are altered forever. He is Master of Death, no longer in its thrall. Coming through the final encounter gifts Harry an understanding of the whole plot. Questions are answered: who, what, where, when, why and how. Clairvoyant = seeing clearly. Harry's reward in a Potter story is knowledge.

Because climaxes are inevitable (the audience knows that the good guys will beat the baddies in the end),

stories benefit from some late-breaking twists: ten points for Neville Longbottom, Professor Moody is Barty Crouch Jr, Rita Skeeter is an Animagus beetle, Severus Snape is the Half-Blood Prince. Poetic justice is the order of the hour, so memory master Gilderoy Lockhart loses his marbles, Dobby the House-elf thwacks Lucius Malfoy and Draco is jinxed within an inch of his life. Enchantments are lifted and healing begins: Ginny is liberated in every sense in *Chamber of Secrets*, and Hermione and co. are revived. Characters and plotlines are unknotted.

Success is shared. So is defeat. Harry often spends time in the hospital wing, to cleanse and to heal before he rejoins society. And he shares his new knowledge for the greater good. Harry ends each book a little wiser and surrounded by friends in contrast to the first stage of the story when he was alone in the Land of Ignorance, aka Little Whinging. Laughter is welcome once more.

The journey is circular and returns the hero, new and improved, to where he started, his position better than before. To help us track the hero's evolution, along comes a reminder of how things were at the beginning: "I'm going to have a lot of fun with Dudley this summer," quips Harry in the last line of *Philosopher's Stone*. Now at the final destination Harry has dispatched the pressing problems from the front of the book and much worse. But the challenges of a new year will still catch him unawares. NewHarry is stronger, he is not yet complete. One book's terminus is the next book's launchpad. Another year, another journey: "I open at the close."

### Notes for Writers

- The more you know about your characters, the more they come alive, the clearer their voices can



Harry and Dumbledore  
(*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, Warner Bros., 2001)



be heard. Keep track of character relationships: how are Hermione and Harry in this book, Hermione and Luna, Hermione and Ron? Monitor the characters' emotional trajectory. Where are they on a scale between pleasure and pain? Know the story from every point of view.

- Break the linear path of your narrative. "And then, and then, and then" quickly falls flat. Inflict the unexpected on events: *but* this happens. Follow up with the fallout: *therefore* this happens. Heroes cannot be allowed to get comfortable.

- Write in Comic Sans and edit in Times New Roman. Or copy J.K. Rowling and write with a pen. Creativity is play, associated with the right side of the brain. Editing belongs to the serious left side and, like revenge, is best served cold. First drafts are always flawed, the quest for perfection comes later.

- Planning is important but is not everything. Plan up to a point and see what happens. Write yourself into a corner then set the document aside until you figure out an imaginative escape. Your future self will surprise you with new ideas.

- The *Harry Potter* books are teaching books. To read them is to learn about writing, about character, conflict, plot, setting and theme... "if one only remembers to turn on the light". But

raise your gaze and explore other authors. *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens are two classics that deserve your attention.

- If the audience is not clear about the premise then the ending will not land. A problem in the final Act suggests a problem in the first Act. What do readers need to understand about your characters and your story world?

- Kill your darlings. You will sacrifice lots of great ideas to make one great story.

- To write the quiet moments as well as the set pieces, dialogue as well as description, to keep track of all the strands, is a mark of significant talent. So how do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice. Lots of practice. Bring to

life an action scene, a tear-drenched argument, or the revealing of a secret. Introduce some new piece of magic. Incarnate a villain hiding in plain sight or a rambunctious family. Map a manor house, a hospital, a school. Try to write jokes, or a first line that is better than *Philosopher's Stone's*. And repeat, until it's "*quicker and easier than falling asleep*".

- A novel, unlike a screenplay, can invade the minds and feelings of characters. The dare is to write what J.K. Rowling has not written, to have a hero or heroine make different choices. The author's camera hardly leaves her hero, but yours can. She never uses first person and only occasionally voices an omniscient narrator, but you can. There's more than one way to skin a Kneazle. ♦

## Potter's Progress Steps of Harry's Journey

### I. Harry

Meet the hero in his innocence.

### II. The Invitation

A call to adventure.

### III. Enter the Mentor

Wise person bearing gifts.

★★★

### IV. King's Cross

Into a new world with new rules.

### V. Hogwarts

Learn, prepare, practise.

### VI. The Ordeal

Serious test of character.

### VII. Consequences

Review, refuel, renew.

★★★

### VIII. The Duel

Face the Big Bad.

### IX. Clairvoyant

Everything is illuminated.

*The journey is circular and returns the hero, new and improved, to where they started. The seven Potter books are together one epic hero's journey. In the first books Harry is the innocent who is called to adventure, meets his mentor and enters a strange new world. Prisoner of Azkaban prepares him for the ordeal, which occurs during Goblet of Fire. Consequences are the grief and anger of Order of the Phoenix, and Harry refuels and recommits in Half-Blood Prince. Deathly Hallows is the climax, one long duel with Voldemort that causes Harry to see clearly his entire story. At the tale's end we find a new innocent, Harry's son, and a new beginning.*

"It is easily the most professional and thorough collection of facts about the 'Wizarding Phenomenon'"

HogwartsProfessor.com

"An extensive and descriptive work of non-fiction, 'Secret History...' is a Harry Potter buff's dream."

MuggleNet.com



## SECRET HISTORY OF THE WIZARDING PHENOMENON

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# The future of Potter video games

**Warner Bros. Discovery looking to live service for future  
Wizarding World video games.**

Despite the incredible success of 2023's *Hogwarts Legacy*, a single player action-RPG, it appears Warner Bros. Discovery wants future titles to go in a different direction.

Speaking at a recent Morgan Stanley event and first reported by *GameSpot*, WBD's President & CEO of Global Streaming and Games, J.B. Perrette said: "Rather than just launching a one-and-done console game, how do we develop a game around, for example, a *Hogwarts Legacy* or *Harry Potter*, that is a live-service where people can live and work and build and play in that world in an ongoing basis?"

Live service titles typically have significant differences in comparison to games developed solely as single player experiences, like *Hogwarts Legacy*. They often include smaller micro-transactions for various upgrades or in-game cosmetics. The core focus of live service games is to keep players engaged on a more consistent basis opposed to being a game you complete once and then move on from.

Although it appears WBD wants live service elements in future Potter games, Perrette didn't explicitly confirm or announce any new *Wizarding World* games. Nor did

he say WBD plans to completely abandon larger single-player games. According to the portal specialized in videogames GameSpot, “just because WBD may push into new places, that doesn't necessarily mean it will stop making big single-player AAA games.”

This news comes on the heels of a disappointing launch for WBD's recent live service title, *Suicide Squad: Kill the Justice League*. Even the company admitted it “has fallen short of our expectations.”

*Hogwarts Legacy* was developed by Avalanche Software and released in November of 2023. The title sold 12 million copies in just its first two weeks on the market, made the company over \$1 billion, and finished 2023 as the best-selling game worldwide. While obviously pleased with the success of *Legacy*, WBD cites increased market volatility in the AAA console market as one of the core reasons for shifting their strategy. They seek to reduce that volatility through a combination of live-service, mobile, and free-to-play games.

*“We're doubling down on games as an area where we think there is a lot more growth opportunity that we can tap into with the IP that we have*

*and some of the capabilities we have on the studio where we're uniquely positioned as both a publisher and a developer of games,”* Perrette said.

Many gaming analysts and insiders have reacted with confusion at these comments. “After releasing *Hogwarts Legacy* which did 22 million units in 1 year and releasing *Suicide Squad* which failed to meet company expectations, this is sure a move,” said *Insider Gaming's* Tom Henderson in a post on X. Recognized video game industry analyst Mat Piscatella was also dismayed by the new direction.

WBD already has two Potter live service games currently available, and



**Hogwarts Legacy**  
(Avalanche Software)

reportedly another on the way. *Harry Potter: Magic Awakened*, as well as *Harry Potter: Hogwarts Mystery* are both live service titles developed for mobile devices. Both are free-to-play games supported financially through in-game microtransactions.

*Harry Potter: Quidditch Champions*, a competitive multiplayer title focused on the Wizing World sport of Quidditch, is also expected to incorporate live service elements. No release date has been set; however, Unbroken Studios conducted a series of playtests last year to gather feedback on the game. *Harry Potter: Wizards Unite*, a free-to-play mobile title developed by Niantic, was shut down in January 2022 after just 2 ½ years on the market. *Wizards Unite* was a game that closely resembled *Pokémon Go*, but with creatures from the Wizing World rather than *Pokémon*.

Avalanche Software, the devs behind *Hogwarts Legacy*, has continued adding to their team in the months since *Legacy's* release. Details on their next project have yet to be officially confirmed.

Back in October of 2023, WBD was looking to hire an Executive Producer with experience in “MMO

development” as well as “open-world RPG game experience.” Avalanche Software then posted a role for a Game Director the very next month. *Hogwarts Legacy* has also confirmed “additional updates and features” will be coming to the game later this summer, alongside content previously exclusive to PlayStation platforms only. Avalanche is expected to release more information on the updates and features in the coming months. ♦

**RetroRaconteur covers the Wizing World on his YouTube channel:**  
[youtube.com/RetroRaconteur](https://youtube.com/RetroRaconteur)



**Harry Potter: Wizards Unite**  
(Niantic)

# A new chapter in Harry Potter companion books

**Bloomsbury announced a new book based on the novels of J.K. Rowling. Could this mean similar books in the future?**

A new official Harry Potter book has been announced in recent days, and unlike most books published about the franchise, it is based on the books rather than the Wizarding World films. This new book joins the already published *Harry Potter - A Magical Year* and the recent *The Harry Potter Wizarding Almanac*, both of which aim to remix original content from the Harry Potter novels.

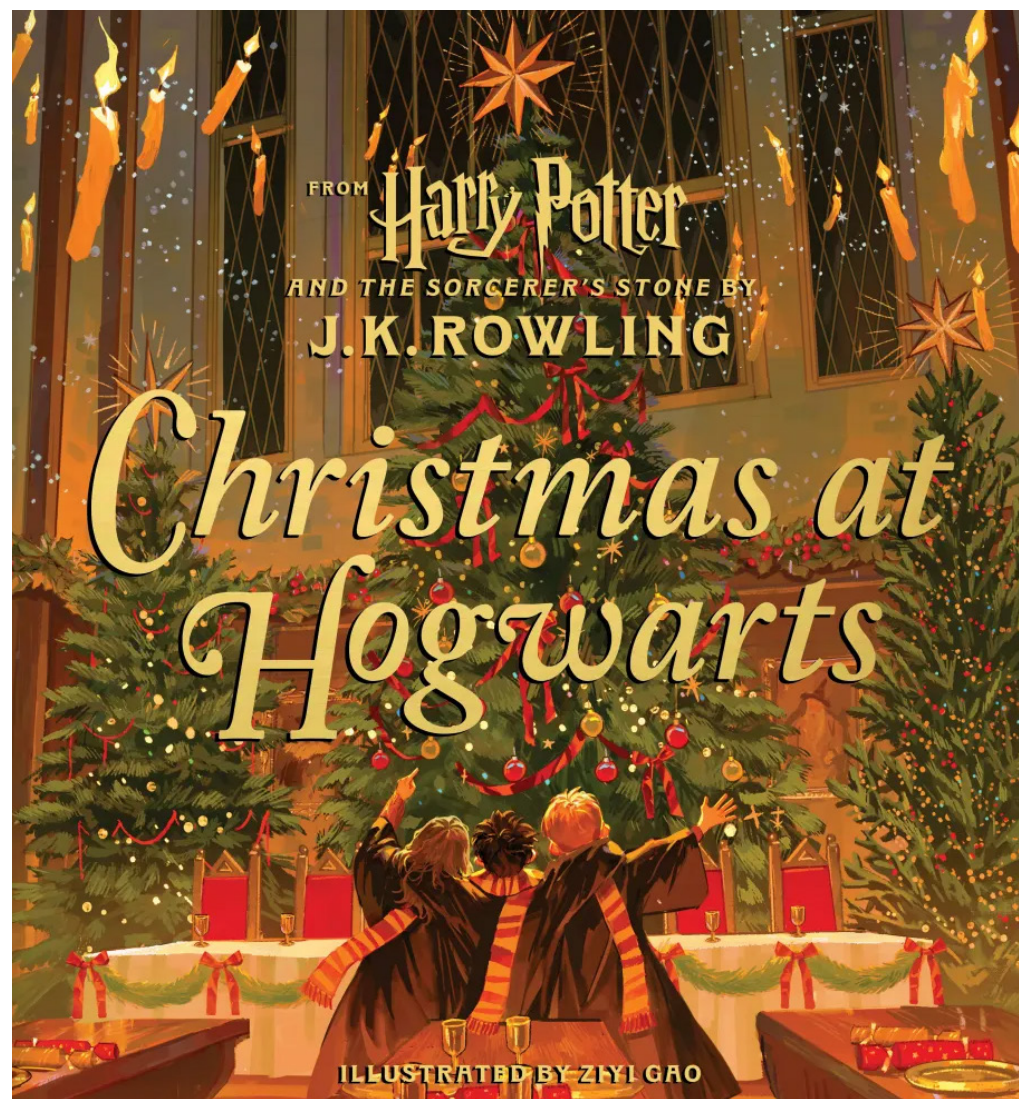
The first of those, published in 2021, functions as a sort of calendar,

where for each day of the year, we have a quote or reference to the original Harry Potter books, along with an illustration by artist Jim Kay. Remember that Kay was the illustrator in charge of the illustrated editions of the Harry Potter novels until *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, where his departure from the project was announced. The second, published just last year, is a kind of official magical encyclopedia of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter. This latter, beyond its content,

was novel because all its pages were illustrated by seven different artists, each bringing their own style.

The new book, announced by Bloomsbury but to be published worldwide in different languages, is called ***Christmas at Hogwarts***, and seems to be closer to *Harry Potter*

- *A Magical Year*. The book plans to celebrate the magical holiday season that holds certain relevance in J.K. Rowling's story, through new illustrations along with passages taken from the first novel of the saga. Ziyi Gao is the illustrator in charge, born in Beijing, China, but relocated to New York, where she continued her studies.



'Ah, Hagrid, the last tree – put it in the far corner, would you?'  
The Hall looked spectacular. Festoons of holly and mistletoe hung all around the walls and no fewer than twelve towering Christmas trees stood around the room, some sparkling with tiny icicles, some glittering with hundreds of candles.



Illustration by Ziyi Gao for the upcoming "Christmas at Hogwarts" (Bloomsbury)

Certain aspects of the book that differ from the others mentioned above are interesting. First, and based only on the previews shared by the publisher, it seems that its content will exclusively consist of quotes and excerpts from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Even the cover seems to indicate this with the caption "From *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* by J.K. Rowling." This could initiate a small debate about whether this book should be included in J.K. Rowling's official bibliography. All clues

would indicate yes, as it would be a reproduction of her own work, albeit in another format and length, but her work nonetheless.

Continuing in the editorial realm, there will also be those who wonder if this isn't a trial for Ziyi Gao. There's a chance that Bloomsbury will pay attention to the feedback the book receives, particularly the illustrations, to decide if Gao is Jim Kay's replacement in the illustrated editions of the *Harry Potter* novels. This might seem a bit stranger due to the illustrator's style, as although

people were very positive about the material already shown, it's hard not to notice that it seems heavily influenced by the *Harry Potter* movies.

Other doubts about the future of these books arise. If this one is successful, will we see more similar books based on the Christmases of the following *Harry Potter* books? Will there be a volume titled "Christmas at Hogwarts #2: From *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* by J.K. Rowling"? Perhaps it's not so far-fetched, considering that Mandy Archer, Head of *Harry Potter* Publishing, said, "The story of *Harry Potter's* first wintry school holiday

is the perfect gift for families to put under the tree this December – and, we hope, the start of a new reading tradition to celebrate every year." The other possibility is to continue this tradition but instead of using the later *Harry Potter* novels, to use the other festivities from the first book that are important in the saga. A book titled "Halloween at Hogwarts" would likely receive as positive feedback as this one possibly will.

Whatever the answers and conclusions to these questions, we know that we will be adding **Christmas at Hogwarts** to our libraries next October 15th when it is published worldwide. ♦

Illustration by Ziyi Gao for the upcoming "Christmas at Hogwarts" (Bloomsbury)



# Auctions

February  
2024

Compilation by  
David Schmeling

These are some of the most important auctions of Harry Potter books in the past month for the collector community, featuring a signed set of the first five Harry Potter books, and signed first edition of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, and a proof copy of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*.

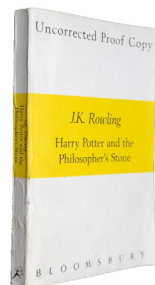


## **Signed Bloomsbury Set of Harry Potter books**

Gift set of the first five Harry Potter books published by Bloomsbury in the United Kingdom, signed by J.K. Rowling in each volume

Sold for £8,820

Lyon & Turnbull, Feb. 7



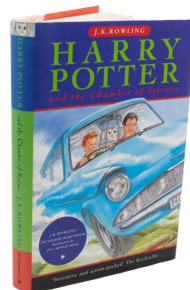
## **The Philosopher's Stone (Proof Copy)**

Bloomsbury. Proof copy for

The Philosopher's Stone

Sold for £13,860

Hansons, Feb. 26



## **The Chamber of Secrets (Signed)**

1st printing, hardcover, signed

by J.K. Rowling

Sold for £5,040

Hansons, Feb. 26

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